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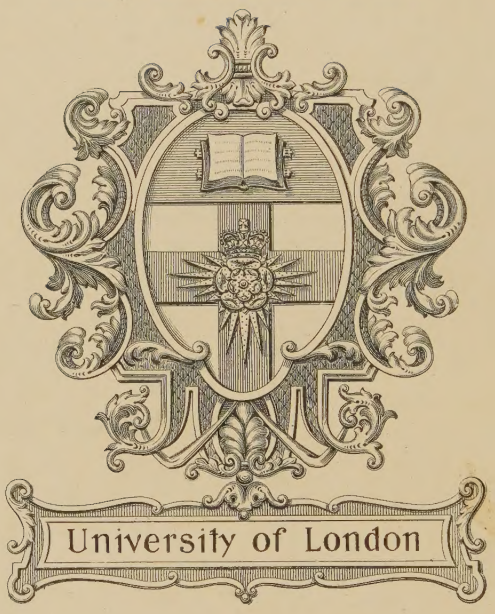

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REPORTS

FROM

Assistant Hand-Loom Weavers' Commissioners.

PART IV.

REPORT by JOSEPH FLETCHER, Esq., Secretary to the Commission, on the Midland Districts of *England*.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET,
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1840.

THE REFORM CLUB
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Hand-loom Inquiry Commission,
3, Trafalgar-square, Westminster,
January 31st, 1840.

Sir,

In obedience to the desire of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, expressed to this Board in your letter of the 20th of February last, that copies of the Assistant Commissioners' Reports, on the subject of its investigations, should be prepared and transmitted to you, I am requested to forward the accompanying Report on the Midland Districts of England, in addition to those sent on the 12th of July last. Two others, which will be forwarded to you immediately, complete the series of Assistant Commissioners' Reports.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,
JOSEPH FLETCHER,
Secretary.

The Honourable Fox Maule, M.P.,
&c. &c. &c.

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1. Name and locality of the school?
2. Name of the master or mistress?
3. Names of the most efficient supporters of the school, or of the committee superintending its affairs?
4. Funds by which the school is supported; the amount, and whether by endowment or voluntary subscription?
5. Salary and emoluments of the master, mistress, and teachers?
6. How many children are there on the school-books?
7. How many generally attend, and what are their ages?
8. What are the leading features of the system of education adopted? Are the plans of Bell and Lancaster, or others, followed?
9. Enumerate what is taught?
10. Enumerate the books and lessons used in the schools?

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11. What maps, globes, or other implements of instruction?
12. How many hours are devoted to each subject daily or weekly?
13. What rewards are given? Is emulation encouraged?
14. What punishments? Is corporeal punishment employed, or punishment by tasks, &c.? Is punishment inflicted for non-performance of tasks?
15. What improvements have been recently introduced?
16. What improvements are considered as highly desirable.
17. Is there a school-library? What books are most read by the children?
18. Is there a play-ground attached to the school? If so, state the size of it?
19. Upon the average, how long does a child remain at the school?
20. Do any of the children leave the school before they can read fluently, or write? If so, what number?
21. Is any religious instruction given? If so, of what kind? Name if catechisms are taught?
22. Do the children attend at any Sunday-school? What? And in what number?
23. Do the masters of the boys apprenticed from the school generally perform their duty to the boys, in superintending their conduct and teaching them their trade, or otherwise?
24. Are any inquiries made respecting the moral character or success in after-life of children who have left the school? With what result?
25. Do the parents belong to the Church of England? Or are any of them Dissenters? Or any Roman Catholics?
26. Do parents, in any case, keep their children from the school through religious scruples?
27. Of what trades, occupations, or professions, are the parents generally? What is the proportion of weavers' children?
28. Do they manifest much desire to have their children properly educated?
29. Do the parents who send their children to the school pay anything whatever for instruction? What sum? Weekly or quarterly?
30. Are any children kept away through the inability of their parents to continue their payments? Or to make good their arrears?
31. Do the children receive gifts in clothes or money?
32. Do they wear a uniform, such as will distinguish them as charity boys and girls from other children?
33. Is there a deficiency of the means of instruction in the neighbourhood?
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REPORT from Joseph Fletcher, Esq., on the Condition of the Ribbon Weavers of *Coventry, &c. &c.*

To Nassau William Senior, Samuel Jones Loyd, William Edward Hickson, and John Leslie, Esquires, Her Majesty's Commissioners for inquiring into the Condition of the Hand-loom Weavers in the United Kingdom.

Gentlemen,

Circumstances of the inquiry.

In obedience to your instructions, I proceeded, at the end of October last, to inquire into the condition of the hand-loom weavers of Coventry and its vicinity, and of the dispersed weaving trades in the midland counties of Warwick, Stafford, Derby, Nottingham, Leicester, and Northampton, with part of Oxfordshire. It was also assigned to me to complete the investigations at Macclesfied a d Congleton, which had been commenced by Mr. Keyser, one of your Assistant Commissioners, who was summoned from them to make a tour through Germany in your service.

Being limited to a sum of £100 to defray every expense attending these inquiries, and called from them weekly to London by my duties as your Secretary during the whole seven weeks of their continuance, a want of some desirable minutiæ of information may be observed in the following summary of the results of my labours. And subsequent occupation in another public service, which did not admit of delay, has interrupted the preparation of my report.

Analytical arrangement of details.

I have, however, endeavoured to facilitate the deduction of just conclusions from the data collected, by adopting an analytical arrangement of them. It would have been a very easy task to select the most prominent features of the condition of the weavers, and to assign their immediate causes; but this course would not have supplied the exhaustive statement of all the circumstances determining their condition which your instructions require.

These circumstances are essentially the same that determine the condition of our whole population, as of every other people; and divide themselves into marked classes, admitting of numerous subdivisions. Intricate as are their mutual bearings, and fleeting as is every phenomenon in the social sciences, a due classification of them is essential to any appreciation of the past, description of the present, or contemplation of the future. It is necessary, also, to trace them to their earliest sources, lest those which should be neglected might contain, as would at least be asserted, the origin of all, or of a large portion, of the evils to be probed, and, if possible, removed. I have therefore, as well as my materials would permit, shown the development of each class of circumstances, during years past to its present state. By this analytic method alone can it be determined whether certain influences are the *causes* and the *sole* causes of depression, and whether any modification or counteraction of them can be applied.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

The weavers of Coventry and its neighbourhood form by far the largest body of those included within the geographical limits assigned to my investigations; and I have therefore arranged the information concerning them strictly in accordance with this system of analysis, which is less distinctly preserved in describing the circumstances of the smaller communities of these labourers.

Coventry.

October 23rd.—December 6th, 1838.

Grounds on which the present form of analysis is preferred.

In a civilized state of society, where the subdivision of labour is very great, each branch of industry forms a separate province, affording means of subsistence to a certain number of inhabitants; and, to describe the *extent* of their resources, nothing more is required than to exhibit the extent and capabilities of the trade, which will vary with the general development and peculiar circumstances of the nation in which it is pursued. Within these limits of physical subsistence, the circumstances affecting as well the productiveness of labour as the distribution and the expenditure of wealth, divide themselves into several great classes, each of which it is necessary to examine before the *physical* condition, which is their result, can be thoroughly understood, and the means of its amelioration detected. These great classes are the circumstances of the industrial character and organization of the trade; those of the moral condition of all employed in it; those of their political position as citizens and as neighbours; and those of the contract for labour as determined by all the preceding. Every influence upon the pecuniary resources and physical condition of the population engaged in a particular trade may thus be exhibited, and the means of modifying them may be succinctly discussed, without danger of that confounding of cause with effect, which too often arises in endeavours to elucidate detached branches of moral and political science. I will, therefore, arrange the information relating to the ribbon-weavers of Coventry and the contiguous districts in the following sections:—

I. Extent of the Trade of Ribbon Weaving.

II. Industrial Condition of the Ribbon Weavers.

III. Moral Condition of the Ribbon Weavers.

IV. Political Condition of the Ribbon Weavers.

V. Contract for Labour in the Trade of Ribbon Weaving.

VI. Pecuniary and Physical Condition of the Ribbon Weavers:—

1. *Earnings of Individual Hands and of Families.*
2. *Physical Condition of the Weaving Population.*
3. *Charitable Efforts directly to ameliorate the Condition of the Ribbon Weavers.*

VII. Results of the preceding Investigations into the Condition of the Ribbon Weavers.

I.—EXTENT OF THE TRADE OF RIBBON WEAVING.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

PROGRESS OF TRADE.

Early Ribbon Manufacture and Prohibition of Foreign Ribbons.

THE manufacture of ribbons in England, though its modern extension and the enlargement of its machinery have made it an important branch of employment for men, was, in its infancy, the occupation merely of women, and confined to London. With the making of laces, and other small articles, it appears to have formed nearly the whole silk trade of the kingdom at the period of the 33d of Henry VI. c. 5, which, for the encouragement and protection of the silk women of London, *prohibited* for five years the importation of ribbons and other small wares of silk. This prohibition was re-enacted for the like term by the 3d of Edward IV. c. 4; for four years, by the 22d of Edward IV. c. 3; for 10 years, by the 1st of Richard III. c. 10; and for 21 years, by the 1st of Henry VII. c. 21. Their importation was finally prohibited, before the expiration of the latter term, by the 19th of Henry VII. c. 21, which expressly sanctions the importation of all other silks, in the manufacture of which it is probable that no British industry had yet been applied.

Ribbon-Trade involved in its Fiscal History with the Broad Silk Trade.

The manufacture of broad silks, to which that of ribbons and smaller articles gradually became so subordinate that its fate has always in recent times been bound up in the same fiscal regulations, appears to have taken root in England in the reign of Elizabeth, and its attainment to some degree of importance is marked by the erection of the silk-throwsters of London, whose business it was to prepare the raw silk for the weaving processes, into a fellowship, by an order of the court of aldermen, in the reign of James I.; the *weavers* of the silk being included in the great company of the weavers, whose jurisdiction extended for 10 miles round the city. In the 5th of Charles I. the silk-throwsters obtained a charter of incorporation, on a petition stating that their trade already gave employment to between 6,000 and 7,000 persons, which, as well as their statement in 1661, that they then employed 40,000 men, women, and children, is probably an exaggeration, although the whole silk manufacture of the kingdom was then almost confined to the metropolis. The minor customs regulations affecting silk are too numerous and various to receive any succinct examination; but the ribbon trade, as well as the broad silk manufacture, enjoyed the supposed advantage of the prohibition of rival articles from France from 1678 to the end of Charles II.'s reign. The refugees who sought protection in England on the revocation of the edict of Nantes, in 1685, not only improved and extended the silk manufactures of the metropolis, but established their art in various provincial towns, of which Coventry appears to have been one.

Extension of the Silk manufacture to various provincial cities by French Refugees.

Commencement of Ribbon Weaving at Coventry.

This city, like the others which first adopted the silk trade, had an earlier manufacture of woven goods, by which the art of producing the more delicate fabric was fostered. It had early been noted tor its manufacture of woollen cloths, which formed its staple trade until the war with France in 1694, when it was superseded by that of tammies, camlets, shalloons, and callimancoes, which occupied a large portion of its work-people during most of the last century, but has gradually dwindled away; as also has a small cotton manufacture which arose on its decline. In the middle of the seventeenth century, silk had been wrought up in some of its woollen articles, and some goods wholly of silk had been produced; but it was not until the commencement of the last century that the silk weavers separated themselves from the company of worsted weavers, after the introduction of the *ribbon trade* from London by Mr. Bird, grandfather of William Wilberforce Bird, Esq., sometime Member of Parliament for Coventry, who is supposed to have been assisted in its first establishment by some of the French refugees. The manufacture of ribbons, though gradually almost relinquished to Coventry, long employed here only a limited number of hands, and within the memory of living witnesses the master manufacturers were very few, notwithstanding the encouragement afforded by an export trade, chiefly to America, which, however, was gradually lost, probably under the weight of heavy duties on the raw material, and of far more excessive duties on thrown silk for the benefit of the throwster, together with the prohibition of all foreign silk goods for the supposed advantage of the manufacturer.

Infancy of the Trade.

Subsequently to the Revolution, restrictions were imposed on the introduction of French goods; but after the re-opening of intercourse with France, on the treaty of Utrecht, in 1713, both French and Italian silks were admitted, though under duties

Re-enactment of the early Prohibition of Foreign Ribbons.

fully sufficient to cover the disadvantage to the English manufacturer of the duties on raw silk. Their rivalry, however, was ultimately thought so serious by the ribbon trade, that, previous to the adoption of a complete prohibitory system for the whole silk manufacture, they procured a re-enactment, by the 3d of George III. c. 21, of the prohibitory statute of Henry VII. which had fallen into disuse. This Act subjected the venders of foreign ribbons, laces, and girdles of silk to a fine of £50, besides the loss of the goods, which were ordered to be *burnt;* the *onus probandi* in regard to the place of manufacture lying on the vender. The hosiers obtained the like prohibition of the importation of silk stockings, mitts, and gloves, by the 5th of George III. c. 48, which statute extends to the case of ribbons the provision framed for those articles, that venders of the prohibited goods shall be subjected to a penalty of £200, but that the goods, in lieu of being burnt, shall, after seizure, be *sold,* under security, *for exportation* to foreign parts. In the following year (1766) the silk manufacturers renewed their complaints; their petition for a total prohibition of French silks was referred by the House of Commons to a Committee; they there adduced, as they have since done, their injury by foreign competition, which was shown even then to be successful more through pattern and style than through price or quality; their men gave evidence as to their own distresses, though these proved to be chiefly in branches of trade unaffected by foreign competition; while the mercers, on the other hand, urged the advantages of importation, even for the interests of the manufacturers themselves in obtaining models from which to copy; but the throwsters brought the weight of their endangered capitals, and reduced workpeople (as they represented) in aid of the manufacturers, and without even a momentary reference to any enlarged principle of commercial intercourse, the 6th of George III. c. 28 was passed, totally prohibiting the importation of foreign wrought silks and velvets *for five years*, under penalties of £100 for each piece on the importer, and £100 for each offence on the vender; the goods, after seizure, to be sold for exportation. By the 11th George III. c. 49, (1771), the preamble of which recites that the Act of 1766 had, by experience, been found useful and beneficial, that prohibitory Act was continued to 1776, and by subsequent statutes to 1782, to 1789, to 1795, to 1802, and to 1809, when Parliament, apparently satisfied from the experience of 43 years that the prohibitory system worked well, deemed any further limitation of the principle unnecessary, and declared the Act of 1766 perpetual. Until 1824 this system remained inviolate.

Complete Establishment of the Prohibitory System.

Character of the Prohibitory System.

It is impossible to express too deep regret at the legislative adoption of a system equally injurious to the consumers at large, to the manufacturers of exportable articles, to the "protected" trade itself, to international peace, and consequently to the progress of civilization:—to the consumers at large, by increasing the price and deteriorating the quality of the article;—to the manufacturer of exportable articles, by depriving him of the profitable trade which he might have carried on, since it is utterly impossible that we can import any foreign articles without giving other produce of our own labour, either directly or indirectly, in exchange for them;—to the "protected" trade itself, by keeping it in a precarious position and unhealthy state, seeking prosperity in fiscal contrivances, instead of its own energies, and even destroying its home market by the consequent disfavour into which its produce altogether falls;—to international peace, by breaking the bonds of mutual service and depriving amity of its reward;—and to the progress of civilization by entering upon a course which, if followed out, would make each nation of the earth an impenetrable mass of ignorant selfishness, refusing every proffered advantage and refinement, and obstructing the interchange of those bounties with which Providence has variously endowed each land for the benefit of all mankind. Want of reciprocity on the part of any particular nation affords no ground for a departure from the duty which we owe to ourselves of going to the best market, wherever it may be, and giving in exchange to those who will take them the articles which we can most readily produce. Had the case of the silk manufacturers, in 1765-6, been doubly as strong as they represented it, every argument which they adduced would have been so much the more forcible against their prayer; for if the manufacture of silks were less profitable in the scale of commerce than that of some other article which furnished the means of purchasing the silks of other countries, competition *ought* to have been allowed to limit it, in lieu of injury being inflicted on both ourselves and others by their prohibition. While nations regarded each other as "natural enemies," the selfish or prohibitory system had an ignorant national feeling in its support

but, in the present stage of civilization, a manufacture which cannot maintain itself against foreign competition, without the sickening shelter of "protecting" duties, has no claim to factitious aid, unless the Legislature shall already have incurred the fearful responsibility of misdirecting the industry of its people, from which it can redeem itself only with the greatest caution.

Growth of the Coventry trade under the prohibitory system.

Under the prohibitory system, which lasted for sixty years, the ribbon manufacture of Coventry became its staple trade, and although there are traditions, the truth of which it is now impossible to determine, that better goods were made previously to those restrictions than during their continuance, and notwithstanding the indubitable fact that the town gradually lost all export trade, the number of looms for the supply of the home market slowly extended, as the numbers and the wants of the home consumers increased. For a long time after the introduction of the trade, the original *single-hand* loom, making only one breadth at a time, was alone used; but about 70 years ago the Dutch loom, or *engine*-loom, for making a number of breadths at once, was introduced; and so lately as fifty years ago the weaving of "twopenny" satins (the narrowest breadth) in this loom was esteemed a great trade mystery.* The *single-hand* weaving early extended itself into the neighbouring villages on the north; the proprietors on the opposite side of the city preventing the settlement in their parishes of hands engaged in so fluctuating a trade; in the apprehension that a grievous burthen of poor's rates might thereby be entailed upon them. But the *engine* trade was, until of late years, confined wholly to the city, where it has, by slow degrees, almost entirely superseded the single-hand loom.

Fluctuations and general increase of trade.

The ribbon manufacture has always been subject to great fluctuations, according to the changes of home fashion; and its most rapid increase was under an excitement of this kind during the last years of the war, when the demand for ribbons with large purl edges was so great that the long-established list of prices for labour was broken through, and a great influx of hands from other occupations ensued, followed by the general depression which occurred at the peace.

"Big purl time."

This period is still in familiar recollection as the "big purl time;" it continued during nearly the whole of the years 1813, 1814, and 1815, and brought into the trade an accession of hands greater than, at the rate of any previous progress, would have come into it in 20 years.†

Extent of trade in 1818.

In 1818, a census was made of the hands engaged in the ribbon trade in Coventry and the neighbouring parishes, presenting the following results:—

TOTAL NUMBER of LOOMS and PERSONS employed in the RIBBON TRADE, in the CITY and COUNTY of the CITY of COVENTRY, and COUNTY of WARWICK, in the Year 1818.

Names.	Looms.			Weavers.			Warpers and Winders.				Total of hands of ten years and upwards in the trade.
	Engine Looms.	Single Hand Looms.	Total of Looms.	Males.	Females.	Total of Weavers.	Warpers	Winders.	Quill Winders.	Total of Warpers and Winders.	
City of Coventry	2,260	1,008	3,268	2,089	1,406	3,495	226	614	638	1,478	4,973
Foleshill . .	110	1,622	1,732	790	1,129	1,919	162	438	25	625	2,544
Bedworth . .	26	1,007	1,033	600	538	1,138	110	403	6	519	1,657
Nuneaton . .	500	1,000	1,500	1,010	590	1,600	190	540	120	850	2,450
Coton . . .	12	110	122	69	83	152	3	31	17	51	203
Atherstone . .	..	70	70	57	51	108	20	11	..	31	139
Bulkington . .	15	160	175	95	190	285	60	40	4	104	389
Ryton . . .	2	60	62	48	34	82	12	18	1	31	113
Stoke . . .	29	54	83	43	60	103	1	14	8	23	126
Stockingford .	9	110	119	66	73	139	30	47	3	80	219
Sow	10	108	118	68	80	148	2	28	16	46	194
Ansty . . .	5	30	35	25	30	55	8	4	2	14	69
Exhall . . .	1	15	16	12	19	31	4	2	1	7	38
Barnacle . .	17	50	67	40	47	87	7	9	5	21	108
Shilton . . .	..	36	36	18	22	40	6	5	..	11	51
Keresley . .	12	43	55	26	33	59	8	4	2	14	73
	3,008	5,483	8,491	5,056	4,385	9,441	849	2,208	848	3,905	13,346‡

Note.—There were besides many hundred children under ten, employed in winding.

* Herbert. Poole. † Gregory.

‡ Minutes of Evidence before Committee on Coventry Weavers' Petitions in 1818, p. 7.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

PROGRESS OF TRADE.

Backwardness of the trade until near the repeal of the prohibitory system.

Nothing but common small ley figures had heretofore been made in the engine-loom; all larger figures being produced in the single-hand loom, with sets of eye-lashes called "tyers," of various number, and moved by a great many treadles. Both satins and sarcenets were much heavier and less laboured than those now made; and the figures put upon them were clumsy, and little superior in style to the shawl borders now making of cotton and silk intermixed. Previous to the peace, indeed, few articles were made in the trade besides plain sarcenets and satins, and seldom anything in the engine-loom of more than a "sixpenny" breadth (about an inch); and in a single-hand loom nothing above "18dy" (2½ inches), mostly plain, with a very few sarcenet leys and damask figures. It was but seldom that any breadth was made beyond "14dys," equal to the present "16dys" (2¼ inches); and down to 1818 the engine-loom was seldom making anything broader than "12dys" (about 1¾ inches). *Gauzes were scarcely attempted until* 1820, when opening the ports to French goods began to be contemplated; and they were made to no mentionable extent until 1824, when the Bill abolishing the prohibitory system was passed.* During the interval, indeed, a strong spur was given to invention, and the weavers made many excellent improvements in the methods of producing figures, ultimately superseded by the jacquard machine; but the backwardness of the trade previous to the excitement of this period was lamentable; the figured goods being scarcely superior to cotton ribbons.†

Considerations in returning to free trade principles.

The coming change was not anticipated without reason, for in 1821 a committee of the House of Lords reported on the subject of the silk trade that "upon the whole, although it might be detrimental to a manufacture which had so long enjoyed exclusive protection abruptly to take off prohibition and duties upon foreign articles, yet, *under a reduction of duties on raw and organzine silks*, our manufacturers would have nothing to dread from the competition of French silks, even if permitted to be introduced upon a duty of from 12 to 15 per cent.; and a considerable augmentation upon the export might at the same time be reasonably expected." The sacrifice of the duties on raw and organzine silks (justifiable as revenue duties, when a drawback on exportation was allowed) enabled the Legislature to redeem its previous error, not without alarm to the manufacturer, but without just cause of complaint, as the conduct of the trade under the transition sufficiently evinces; and the return to a more healthy system was not made without an anxious regard for the capital and the labour devoted to this branch of industry, which, by deferring the admission of foreign goods for some years after the cheapening of the raw material, even encouraged an unwise speculation.

Repeal of the Prohibitory System.

By the 5th of George IV., c. 21 (1824), the existing duties on the importation of raw and thrown silks (on the former, 3*s.* 9*d.*, 4*s.*, and 4*s.* 6*d.* per lb.; and on the latter, 14*s.* 8*d.*) were *immediately* repealed, and a duty of 3*d.* per lb. on the former, and 7*s.* 6*d.* on the latter, substituted; and, by the same statute, it was provided that, *from and after the 5th day of July* 1826, the prohibitory laws should cease to be of force, and silks be admitted at an *ad valorem* duty of 30 per cent., changed, at the request of the trade, by the 7th of George IV., c. 53 (1826), to a duty *per lb.*, varying with the several descriptions of goods, so as to yield the proposed duty *ad valorem*. A drawback was allowed, on very favourable terms, on all silks unconsumed, which had already paid duty, whether manufactured into saleable goods or not; and the supplementary Act of 1826 gave also a drawback on the soap used in the dying of silk, and repealed the duties on the printing of silks, and on the importation of gold and silver wires and threads with which it is occasionally interwoven. In framing the scale of duties on the importation of foreign silks, the principle upon which Government proceeded was that 30 per cent. on the article (tantamount to about 60 per cent. on the labour of its manufacture) should be the maximum protection allowed to the home manufacturer in any trade, subject to deductions if this were found to be a rate at which smuggling could not, by any ordinary resources of Government, be prevented; but it was thought that smuggling of silks at 30 per cent. duties would not be extensively attempted. In 1829, such had been the decline in the prices of silk goods, that a revision of the tariff of duties became necessary, the fixed duty per lb. having become much more than the per centage intended; and, on this occasion, some departures were made from the abstract arrangement of 30 per cent., to meet and check the operations of the smuggler; some articles, least advantageous for the smuggler, being left under duties really of more than 30 per

* Herbert.

† Herbert.

cent., while those on plain silks were reduced to 25 per cent. An option was likewise reserved to the custom-house officers to demand a duty of 25 or 30 per cent., *ad valorem*, on any plain or figured goods respectively which it should appear to them were entering, under this tariff, much under their fair rate. By this Act also (10 George IV., c. 23), a new drawback on the exportation of silks was given, of a somewhat singular character. Under the prohibitory system, "bounties" had been granted on the exportation of silk goods, which were, in fact, or, at least, were meant to be, only drawbacks of the duties paid on the raw material, and were greatly increased, so late as 1819, by the 59th of George III., c. 112. These "bounties" had been repealed with the repeal of the duties; but they were now partially re-established in a new form. The Act of 1829, which now regulates the external relations of the trade, imposes a merely nominal duty of 1*s.* per *cwt.* on waste silk imported, and 1*d.* per lb. on raw. And because the duties on the importation of foreign thrown silks, which had been further reduced in 1825 and 1826, were still left for the protection of the British *throwster*, at 3*s.* 6*d.* on organzines, 2*s.* on trams, and 1*s.* 6*d.* on singles, a drawback to the amount of this duty was henceforth allowed on *any* manufactures of silk exported, *whether they were or were not made of the foreign thrown silk which had paid the duty*, and of which, in fact, they have seldom contained any portion.

Former and present duties and drawbacks.

So immediately does industry mould itself to the form and pressure of these fiscal influences, and so largely have the modern progress of the trade and its present interests been influenced by them, that I have deemed it important to subjoin the tabulated chronological statements of the late changes given in evidence by J. D. Hume, Esq., of the Board of Trade, before the Commons' Committee of 1832.

An Account of the Duties payable on the Importation of Raw and Waste Silk, and of Thrown Silk; showing the changes which have been made therein, since the year 1824.

RAW AND WASTE SILK.

Dates.	From British India.		From other Places.	
	Raw.	Waste.	Raw.	Waste.
	£. s. d. Per lb.	£. s. d. Per lb.	£. s. d. Per lb.	£. s. d. Per lb.
Prior to 25 March, 1824	0 4 0	0 3 9	0 5 6	0 4 0
,, 25 March 1824	0 0 3	0 0 3	0 0 3	0 0 3
,, 5 July, 1826	0 0 1	0 0 1	0 0 1	0 0 1
		Per cwt.		Per cwt.
,, 5 July, 1829	..	0 1 0	..	0 1 0

THROWN SILK.

Dates.	Dyed.			Not Dyed.		
	Organzine and Crape.	Tram.	Singles.	Organzine and Crape.	Tram.	Singles.
	£. s. d. Per lb.	£. s. d. Per lb.	£. s. d. Per lb.	£. s. d. Per lb.	£. s. d. Per lb.	£. s. d. Per lb.
Prior to 25 March, 1824	2 5 6	2 5 6	2 5 6	0 14 8	0 14 8	0 14 8
,, 25 March, 1824	..	..	..	0 7 6	0 7 6	0 7 6
,, 5 July, 1825	0 7 6	0 7 6	0 7 6	..	..	..
,, 5 Nov., 1825	..	..	..	0 5 0	0 5 0	0 5 0
,, 5 July, 1826	0 6 8	0 4 0	0 4 0	..	0 3 0	0 3 0
,, 5 July, 1829	0 5 2	0 3 0	0 3 0	0 3 6	0 2 0	0 1 6

DUTIES on the IMPORTATION of MANUFACTURED SILKS, showing the RATES of the DUTIES per lb., and their AMOUNT upon the VALUE of the ARTICLES.

Classification of Fabrics.	These Rates gave at the time 30 per Cent. on the Value. Act of 1826.	These Rates gave at the time, and still give, various per Centages on the Value.		
		Act of 1829, yet in force.	Per Centage intended at the time.	Per Centage in 1832.
BROAD SILKS.	£. s. d. Per lb.	£. s. d. Per lb.		
Silk, plain	0 15 0	0 11 0	25 per cent.	30 per cent.
,, figured	1 0 0	0 15 0		35 ,,
Satin, plain	0 16 0	0 11 0	30 per cent.	30 ,,
,, figured	1 1 0	0 15 0		
,, tissue or brocaded	1 0 0	0 15 0		20 to 30 per cent.
Gauze, plain	0 17 0	0 17 0		30 to 35 ,, on broad goods
,, striped, figured, or brocaded	1 7 6	1 7 6	30 to 35 per ct.	40 to 70 ,, on ribbons
Crape	0 16 0	0 16 0	. .	40 to 45 per cent.
,, lisse	0 17 4	0 18 0	30 to 35 per ct	30 to 40 ,, on plain crape lisse
				20 only ,, on printed
,, China, plain, or figured	0 18 0	0 18 0	. .	30 to 40 ,,
Velvet, plain	1 2 0	1 2 0	35 per cent.	40 to 45 ,,
,, figured	1 7 6	1 7 6		
RIBBONS.				
Silk, plain	0 15 0	Ribbons since charged as broad silks of similar description.		
,, figured	0 17 0			
Satin, plain	0 16 0			
,, figured	0 18 0			
Gauze, plain or figured	1 11 6			
Velvet, plain	1 2 0			
,, figured	1 7 6			

*** The subsequent general decline in prices has made the *ad valorem* per centage still greater now (in 1838) than is above stated.

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DRAWBACKS on the EXPORTATION of SILK GOODS Manufactured in the UNITED KINGDOM, granted by the ACT OF 1829.

	£.	s.	d.
For every lb. of stuffs or ribbons of silk, composed of silk only, and being of the value of 14*s.* at the least	0	3	6
For every lb. of stuffs or ribbons of silk and cotton mixed, whereof one half at least shall be silk, and being of the value of 4*s.* 8*d.* at the least	0	1	2
For every lb. of stuffs or ribbons of silk and worsted mixed, whereof one half at least shall be silk, and being of the value of 2*s.* 4*d.* at the least	0	0	7

Effects of the change on the silk trade generally.

The effect of these changes, in augmenting the silk trade of the country generally, although the manufacture of ribbons has been exposed to peculiar influences, will be sufficiently evinced by the following tabular statement of the importation of raw and thrown silks, under the prohibitory system, and subsequent to its repeal; being a statement by the same witness, continued from 1832 to the present time.

QUANTITIES of RAW SILK, WASTE SILK, and THROWN SILK imported at successive Periods.

In 1765 and 1766 Prohibition of Foreign Manufactures enacted.	Raw Silk.	Waste Silk.	Thrown Silk.	Total.
Average Import	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.
Of 1765-66-67, commencement of prohibition	352,000	. .	363,000	715,000
Of 1785-86-87, being a period of 20 years after prohibition	544,000	. .	337,000	881,000
Of 1801 to 1812	760,000	. .	350,000	1,110,000
Of 1815-16-17, being 50 years after prohibition, and the first years of peace	1,095,000	27,000	293,000	1,415,000
Of 1821-22-23, being the last three years prior to the change of the law	1,970,000	74,000	355,000	2,399,000
Of 1829-30-31, being the three first years in which French competition was felt in its full force	3,075,000	515,000	374,000	3,964,000
In 1832 the quantity entered for home consumption was	3,391,721	651,594	329,932	4,373,247
In 1833	3,838,795	654,381	268,367	4,761,543
In 1834	3,346,751	1,007,932	165,669	4,520,352
In 1835	4,151,008	1,382,872	254,578	5,788,458
In 1836	4,372,498	1,599,354	294,934	6,266,786
In 1837	3,730,427	875,782	213,368	4,819,577
In 1838	3,683,722	960,128	243,569	4,887,419

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Progress of Trade.

During the whole interval from the first excitement in 1820 to the admission of French goods in 1828, the ribbon trade of Coventry, notwithstanding some slight reductions in weaving prices about 1824, was improving and extending, since it yet had exclusive possession of the home market, and was forced into activity by anticipated rivalry; while the unwise *delay between the lowering of the duties on raw silk and the admission of French goods* encouraged speculation in branches wherein rivalry with the French, at the first brunt of competition, was quite hopeless. The manufacture of figured ribbons by the jacquard machine was commenced in Coventry in 1823. There were then only five jacquard machines in the city;* and the capital invested in this branch of the trade, being that from which the most complaints of foreign competition have of late years emanated, was therefore embarked in the face of the law passed in 1824, the enactment of which had for several years previously been anticipated. One of the principal manufacturers of Coventry visited Lyons in 1824, and seeing the impossibility of immediately rivalling the French fancy trade at any price, refrained, although possessing the greatest facilities, from purchasing the new machinery, and entering into that branch of the manufacture;† but others were not so cautious or so well informed, and the jacquard machines employed in Coventry increased between 1823 and 1826, from 5 to 219; and at the end of 1831, there were between 650 and 700, notwithstanding the reverse which had come upon the trade in 1828-9. At that time the total number of engine-looms had increased, including the jacquard looms, to about 4,000; in 1832, it was estimated at 4,400; and it has since been considerably augmented. The figure engine-looms in use before the jacquard machine was introduced were quite insufficient to produce the style of goods made by the aid of that machine. The articles made with it may therefore be regarded as an entirely new branch of trade, introduced expressly to meet the French competition; not unexpectedly subjected to it; and not, therefore, capable of supporting any claim to protection, except upon the abstract ground of general prohibition, which no civilized nation will recognize. The modern gauze trade was introduced only about 1820; the fancy trade altogether, was exceedingly limited until it was extended in the face of the French competition; and even now it maintains a firm ground in the middle class market, notwithstanding the want of success felt by the manufacturers of the highest style of goods.

Effects of the Change on the Coventry Branch of the Silk Trade.

The Jacquard Trade almost wholly undertaken since the Repeal of the Prohibitory System, although the most urging its Re-enactment.

The repeal of the duties on raw silk necessarily augmented the demand for goods through their cheapness, long before any foreign supply was legally admitted to share this demand. The silks which had been made by the foreign manufacturers to supply the English market on the expiration of the prohibition in 1826, were unworthily excluded from legal importation by regulations contained in the explanatory Act of that year, demanding that each piece should be of the English *lengths*, since it was well known that the French custom, which had been the guide in making them, differed from ours. This *ruse*, though partly defeated by the smuggling of these very goods when jobbed off at a cheap rate, served, with the general ignorance of our markets among foreign manufacturers, practically to continue the prohibition nearly two years longer; and it was not until 1828 that the force of French competition really began to be felt by the Coventry trade, and in 1829 it was found to be a most formidable check upon it. During the interval from 1824, the consumption of ribbons was greatly augmented; and Coventry, by the improvement of its machinery, notwithstanding very considerable smuggling, was enabled to supply a large portion of the best wear in London, to the order of its mercers. But the introduction of French goods gave a blow to the best branch of the rising fancy trade which it has never yet recovered; nor, with their long possession of the markets of the world, their practised taste, and other facilities, is it probable that it ever will recover but by slow degrees, and with many concurrent aids. This was the shock anticipated and avoided by the more sagacious manufacturers, but encountered with full consciousness by others. So far from preparing for the change, for which purpose the interval of continued prohibition was granted, they found themselves betrayed, by a short-lived prosperity, into severe losses, and into an unprofitable and overcrowded branch of trade, in which only those manufacturing the lower classes of articles had fair chance of success. Even the plain trade was weighed down by the first influx; but the Swiss, who sent in the plain ribbons to an enormous amount, were soon beaten out of the market, notwithstanding a decline

Extension of the Trade between the Reduction of Duties on Raw Material and the Admission of Foreign Ribbons.

Increased severity of the Check by Foreign Competition, owing to the factitious impulse given to the Trade.

* David Smith, before the Commons' Committee of 1832. Q. 1264.

† Cleophas Ratliff; Evidence before Commons' Committee of 1832. Q. 1878, 1881.

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in their price from 1827 to 1832 of 10 to 12½ per cent.; those manufactured by Coventry, through the increase of engine-looms, the use of better materials, the reduction of wages, and the augmentation of skill, being offered of better quality at a reduction of 20 per cent. The general distress was now such that it was found necessary to resort to distributions of bread and soup in every ward; and under such circumstances the sacrifice of 15 per cent. in the price of labour, which then took place, is not at all remarkable or unjustified by the alarm of the masters. It is obvious, however, that, had the French competition been admitted before the extension of the trade on a factitious basis, there would have been no such pressure for employment as to occasion this reduction.

Endeavours to obtain a re-enactment of the Prohibitory System, *without* Duties on Raw Material.

The capital (partly derived from the liberal drawback allowed on the old stocks) and the labour which had rushed into the silk trade, both in throwing and manufacturing, now began to feel the pressure which ought to have been earlier introduced to moderate their progress. The complaints of all parties were loud and deep on the decline of their profits and wages; the revision of the silk duties in 1829 was visited directly on the wages of the Coventry men by the ribbon masters in the above-mentioned reduction of 15 per cent. on their wages; and in 1832, with a view to return to the old system of prohibition, *but without the duties on raw silk*, which had been sacrificed by the Government to obtain its abolition, they procured, in the House of Commons, a Committee to "examine into the state of the Silk Trade, and inquire what effects had been produced by the changes of the laws since the year 1824, and whether any and what legislative measures, compatible with the general interests of the country, might be adviseable in order to promote it, or to check smuggling in Silk Manufactures." This Committee, before whom every maintainble argument was adduced, reported its Minutes of Evidence in a volume of upwards of 1000 pages, containing much useful information which has never yet been reduced to any available form; but its labours had no further result. It was attended by a committee of masters and a committee of men from Coventry, where the zeal of the operative weavers was strongly excited in the endeavour to procure a supposed relief from the depression to which they had been subjected.

Endeavours made in 1834, and their final abandonment.

Notwithstanding the abortiveness of these efforts to re-establish the prohibitory system, the weavers and manufacturers of Coventry still hoped to induce Parliament to change the commercial policy they had for ten years been pursuing. In July 1833 a great number of the manufacturers petitioned the House of Commons, stating that they were "unanimously of opinion that the only measure which could afford them relief would be the entire prohibition of foreign manufactured ribbons." And in 1834 deputations were sent up to London, and one of the Coventry members, Mr. H. L. Bulwer, gave notice of a Bill to re-enact a prohibitory system for the protection of the ribbon trade; but Mr. Ellice, the other city member, at once remonstrated with the local leaders of this endeavour, in a public letter pointing out to them its hopelessness. "Admitting the evil to its full extent," says this letter, "is it probable that the principle of removing prohibitions on the whole foreign trade from the statute book will be sacrificed for the hope of securing protection to this particular manufacture? I say in the hope, for already the duties imposed for the purpose of protection encourage the introduction of these goods by the smuggler."* A motion for a Committee on the Ribbon Trade was also made in the House of Lords this session, by Lord Strangford, but negatived without a division; Lord Auckland observing that even to alter the existing scale of duties, though confessedly imperfect, would occasion so much excitement and alarm that it was better it should continue than this evil be encountered; and to the present day it has therefore remained unaltered. Henceforward all hope of a return to prohibition appears to have been generally abandoned, at least by the manufacturers, who now directed their attention to urging upon Government a more rigid collection of the duties imposed by the existing law; the adoption of more active means to prevent smuggling, which they were convinced was carried on to a considerable extent; and the granting of a "bounty," under the name of a "drawback," on the exportation of ribbons. The latter has not lately been urged, but the two former are objects of constant solicitude to the trade.

Fiscal Aids now sought.

Home Competition of Steam Looms and endeavours to meet it.

In 1835, however, the attention of the trade was fully awakened to a rivalry much nearer home than that of the St. Etienne looms, in the rising manufacture of plain ribbons, chiefly black sarcenets, in the factories of Congleton, Leek, Derby, &c., with the aid of steam power, for the employing of which one small

* Letter, dated Cleveland Square, June 11, 1834.

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factory had been erected in Coventry; but, during some trade excitements in 1832, it had been destroyed by a mob. A discussion was commenced in the public papers, and in December of that year, a meeting of manufacturers was held, to form a Company, for the purpose of sharing in the erection of a factory, and bearing jointly the unpopularity to which the introduction of steam power and a factory system would be exposed, though now apparently necessary to preserve the trade in any shape to the manufacturers and to the weavers of Coventry. The Company was ultimately formed, and the factory and steam engine erected; the joint adventure extending no further. Difficulties then arose as to the apportionment of the facilities thus created among parties who might be willing to venture their capital in looms in the different flats of the factory, to be worked as a personal speculation; neither was any satisfactory offer made for the whole; and the factory is now being applied to the spinning of cotton. Under this excitement three other steam factories were erected; one on a very small scale, as an experiment, which has scarcely answered;* the second on a large scale, as a speculation, which has failed; † and the third was an injudicious tampering with trade and industry by the parochial authorities of Nuneaton, whose works are now closed.

Recent Progress of the Ribbon Trade.

Since the full encounter with French competition in 1829, the trade, always subject to depressions, has gradually revived and extended in channels collateral with those in which French goods keep possession of the market; the productive power being increased by the augmentation of the number of engine looms, as compared with the single hand looms, and not by any accession to the number of weavers. The quantity of silk dyed ought to afford a fair index to the state of the trade, and the return made to this Commission by the office of Excise, from the data furnished by the drawback on soap, gives the following results:—

A Return of the Quantity of Silk dyed at Coventry in each Year since the drawback has been allowed to the Dyers, (so far as can be ascertained from Documents in possession of the Excise Department):—

Years.	Pounds weight of Silk dyed.	Years.	Pounds weight of Silk dyed.
1827	490,299	1833	484,689
1828	589,618	1834	402,711
1829	550,756	1835	465,132
1830	438,511	1836	482,845
1831	845,690	1837	413,549
1832	490,638		

Excise Office, London,
16th January 1839.

G. H. COTTRELL,
First General Accountant.

This return presents some discrepancies which the circumstances of the trade do not explain; and it is probable that the following approximate statement of the quantity of silk dyed by the only two extensive dyers in the city, given by themselves, will show more accurately the real course of the trade:—

Approximate Statement of the Quantity of Silk dyed by the two principal Dyers in Coventry, during each Year since the allowance of the drawback on Soap:—

1827	339,956	1833	381,917
1828	318,721	1834	349,960
1829	236,645	1835	448,685
1830	378,488	1836	306,281
1831	365,170	1837	451,110
1832	406,281		

The quantity of silk dyed in 1838, it is generally allowed, must have been greater than in any preceding year; the looms having been in constant employment, and the heavier classes of goods favoured by fashion. The whole trade suffered considerable depression in 1836-7, partly through the disturbance of the exchanges consequent on the embarrassments in the American market, when the fall in silks occasioned a few minor failures; but a revived demand has made some compensation by keeping nearly all the looms employed from the accession of Her Majesty to the present time.

Present Extent and Dispersion of the Coventry Ribbon Trade.

The ribbon manufacture not only forms the staple trade of the city of Coventry, but affords occupation to a considerable rural population scattered over the contiguous country on the north, to the distance of about twelve miles. The following Table gives a statement of the present extent and dispersion of the trade, compared with its condition in December, 1831. The looms were then numbered by some of a committee of weavers, on occasion of the application to the House of Commons for the Committee of the ensuing session, in the hope of re-establishing the prohi-

* Cope. Day.

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EXTENT OF TRADE.

bitory system. The results of this census are given on their authority; since it has been taken as the ground for an estimate of the present number of single-hand looms in the rural districts, made by some of the most competent "undertakers" or master weavers, and inserted in the following table.*

The number of engine-looms in the rural districts is stated on the authority of some of the principal owners of them.† But the looms of the city and suburbs of Coventry were the subject of a census, made expressly for the purposes of the present investigation, in November last, on a system demanding great exactness, by several of the most intelligent "first-hand journeymen."‡ The books of the census, which, notwithstanding the laboriousness of the task, was carried out with a perseverance, intelligence, and accuracy which do great credit to the parties, form part of my minutes of evidence. They state the name and class of each weaver, and his place of residence; the sex and age of each member of his family, and their total number; the masters for whom they work; the members of the family who weave; the kind of loom they use; the work upon which they are employed; and the number of looms unemployed. The value of these details will appear from their tabulated results.

CENSUS TABLE I; showing the POPULATION in 1801, 1811, 1821, and 1831; the LOOMS EMPLOYED and UNEMPLOYED in 1831; and the NUMBER of each DESCRIPTION of LOOMS in 1838, in the City and Suburbs of COVENTRY, and in the neighbouring PARISHES through which the RIBBON TRADE extends.

City and Parishes.	Acreage stated in the Population Abstract of 1831.	Population.				Looms in December, 1831, of every Description.			Looms in November, 1838, nearly all employed.			
		1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.	Employed.	Unemployed.	Total.	Plain Engine.	Jacquard Engine.	Single Hand.	Total.
Coventry city with Radford	4,920	16,034	17,923	21,448	27,298	2,464	1,997	4,461	3,350	1,270	101	4,721
Stoke, suburban parish	950	505	481	572	848				102	8	28	138
Total of city and suburbs	5,870	16,539	18,404	22,020	28,146	2,464	1,997	4,461	3,452	1,278	129	4,859
REST of the WEAVING PARISHES contained wholly or partly in the COUNTY of the CITY.												
Foleshill	2,810	3,026	3,480	4,937	6,969	1,062	1,629	2,691	50	400	2,250	2,700
Exhall	1,750	694	568	775	840							
Anstey	990	189	218	205	268	52	103	155	..	..	10	10
Shilton	850	280	348	396	460						50	50
Sowe	2,300	825	937	1,212	1,414	104	281	385	..	30	250	280
WEAVING PARISHES beyond the COUNTY of the CITY.												
Bedworth	2,240	3,161	2,794	3,519	3,980	371	1,481	1,852	..	320	1,000	1,320
Bulkington	4,600	1,311	1,378	1,699	1,792	272	567	839	..	..	800	800
Chilvers Coton	3,730	1,877	1,873	2,169	2,494							
Nuneaton	7,020	4,769	4,947	6,610	7,799	737	3,482	4,219	..	200	3,000	3,200
Hartshill (Hamlet)	1,000	398	449	662	909					..		
Total of Rural Parishes	27,290	16,530	16,992	22,184	26,925	2,598	7,543	10,141	50	950	7,360	8,360
Total of City and Rural Parishes	33,160	33,069	35,396	44,204	55,071	5,062	9,540	14,602	3,504	2,228	7,489	13,239

Fulness of Employment.

In 1831 it will be seen that nearly two-thirds of the looms were without work; but of the few looms described as unemployed in the succeeding table, only a very limited number, designed for the highest branches of the fancy trade, were unemployed for want of work to put into them; the greater proportion being unemployed actually through the want of weavers, which, at the time of my visit, was equally felt in the engine and in the single-hand trade. The following is a more detailed statement of the looms in the city and suburbs:—

* Holmes and others.
† Williams at Bedworth, Payne at Nuneaton, Marston at Foleshill.
‡ Goode, Baddeley, and others.

CENSUS TABLE II.; showing the NUMBER and KIND of LOOMS EMPLOYED, also of those UNEMPLOYED, in the City of COVENTRY and the suburban Villages of RADFORD and STOKE.

WARDS.	Looms Employed.						Looms Unemployed.						Total Number of					Total Number of Looms.
	Plain Engine.	Jacquard Engine.	Single Hand.	Power.	Alabar.	Total.	Plain Engine.	Jacquard Engine.	Single Hand.	Power.	Alabar.	Total.	Plain Engine.	Jacquard Engine.	Single Hand.	Power.	Alabar.	
Bayley-lane	24	2	1	..	..	27	..	1	..	..	..	1	24	3	1	..	..	28
Bishop's-street	498	273	14	45	4	834	22	52	..	..	2	76	520	325	14	45	6	910
Broad-gate	139	13	6	..	..	158	17	..	..	..	..	17	156	13	6	..	..	175
Cross-cheaping	126	23	4	8	..	161	12	4	..	..	..	16	138	27	4	8	..	177
Earl-street	126	47	5	..	..	178	12	5	..	..	..	17	138	52	5	..	..	195
Gosford-street	529	204	12	..	..	745	19	9	..	..	..	28	548	213	12	..	..	773
Jordan-well	568	222	15	..	..	805	53	4	..	..	..	57	622	226	15	..	..	863
Much Park-street	341	264	20	..	..	625	36	8	..	..	..	44	377	272	20	..	..	669
Smithford-street	28	..	..	..	..	28	3	..	..	..	..	3	31	..	..	..	..	31
Spon-street	712	116	17	..	..	845	52	13	3	..	..	68	763	129	20	..	..	912
Total in City	3,091	1,164	94	53	4	4,406	226	96	3	..	2	327	3,317	1,260	97	53	6	4,733
SUBURBAN VILLAGES.																		
Radford	33	10	4	..	..	47	..	..	1	..	..	1	33	10	5	..	..	48
Stoke	98	8	25	..	..	131	4	..	3	..	..	7	102	8	28	..	..	138
Total in Suburbs	131	18	29	..	..	178	4	..	4	..	..	8	135	18	33	..	..	186
Total in City and Suburbs	3,222	1,182	123	53	4	4,584	230	96	7	..	2	335	3,452	1,278	130	53	6	4,919

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Recent Variations in the comparative Number of Single-hand and Engine-looms.

Although there appears, in the first of the preceding Tables, a slight decrease, since 1831, in the total number of looms, (including the unemployed in the comparison,) this is by no means indicative of a decrease of trade; for, during the year 1838, more goods have undoubtedly been made than in any previous year since the commencement of the manufacture. It is merely the result of an encroachment of the engine-looms, by which several breadths are made at once, upon the single-hand looms, by which only one at a time can be produced; and that this is a change of the most beneficial character will admit of little dispute, since it gives existence to a better paid class of workmen, many of them taken from the single-hand trade. Ten years ago there were very few engine-looms out of the city, but the number has since greatly increased, especially in the parishes of Foleshill and Bedworth, where that of the single-hand looms has proportionately declined.

Hands employed in preparatory Processes.

The ribbon manufacture employs, besides the hands at work in the looms, many others in the preparatory processes which the silk has to undergo after it is received in a thrown state. Besides the dyers, there are the winders and the warpers, chiefly women and children, of whom it is reckoned that there are nearly three to every ten single-hand looms, and two to every five jacquard looms. This would make the total number of persons engaged in weaving, and in the preparatory winding and warping, between 17,000 and 18,000, of whom between 6,000 and 7,000 are in the city and suburbs, and the remainder in the rural parishes.

Division of the Trade into "Plain" and "Fancy,"

and into "Engine" and "Single-hand" branches.

The manufacture of ribbons divides itself into the *plain* and the *fancy* trades, which are for the most part carried on by separate firms, and differ considerably in the influences to which the hands employed in them are exposed. Transversely to this distinction of fabric runs that into *single-hand* and *engine* trades, according to the machinery by which the goods are made; both plain and fancy goods being made in the one as well as in the other. But so completely does the economy and the dispersion of the single-hand trade, separate it from all the rest, that, whether making plain or figured goods, it is regarded in all trade regulations as one independent section of the manufacture, which therefore divides itself into only three portions,—the *plain engine* trade, the *fancy engine* trade, or jacquard trade; and the *single-hand* trade; separate lists of prices being framed for each of these on general movements of the trade, and each looking, in the intervals, after its own peculiar interests. The *plain* trade comprises the manufacture of plain satins, sarcenets, gauzes, and pads of all colours, and also of "loves," which are chiefly gauze and satin, in stripes of mourning colours. The *fancy* trade consists in the manufacture of the same fabrics with figures of various texture, applied, when small, to ribbons of considerable breadth by a number of treadles in the single-hand loom, but more commonly by means of the jacquard machine attached to the engine looms. One class of fancy ribbons are of homogeneous texture, but various colours,—clouded, barred, or plaided. Another consists of the

Three great Branches of the Trade.

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Chinas and China gauzes. The proportion which the fancy trade bears to the jacquard trade may be approximately estimated by the number of jacquard looms; but some fancy articles are made in plain looms. A better test of that proportion for the city and suburbs is contained in the following table of the application of the looms.

Geographical disposal of the different Branches of Trade.

It will be seen that nearly the whole manufacture of plain ribbons in the engine-loom is confined to the city and suburbs of Coventry, together with upwards of one-half of the figure trade, carried on by means of the engine-loom with the jacquard machine attached; while nearly the whole of the single-hand trade is in the country; a circumstance in which Coventry precisely resembles St. Etienne, the seat of the French ribbon manufacture. The following table will show in fuller detail the appropriation of the looms in the city and suburbs of Coventry:—

CENSUS TABLE III.; showing the DESCRIPTION of GOODS making in NOVEMBER last in the LOOMS of the City and Suburbs of COVENTRY, then EMPLOYED.

Application of the Looms in the City and Suburbs.

WARDS.	Plain Sarcenet.	Plain Satin.	Plain Gauze.	Plain Pad.	Loves.	Figured Sarcenet.	Figured Satin.	Figured Gauze.	Figured Pad.	Satin Gauze.	Satin Pad.	Ley Gauze.	Ley Satin.	China.	China Gauze.	Shawl Borders.	Total.
Bayley-lane	11	10	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	4	..	..	..	..	27
Bishop's-street	271	185	6	1	16	112	39	136	23	..	..	..	..	2	20	23	834
Broad-gate	83	42	5	1	7	..	..	10	1	1	..	..	..	1	3	4	158
Cross-cheaping	110	28	..	..	..	1	..	19	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	161
Earl-street	85	26	..	..	10	6	19	25	..	3	..	3	1	..	..	..	178
Gosford-street	294	171	..	8	23	25	32	145	4	11	..	1	..	6	15	10	745
Jordan-well	281	211	3	1	19	22	15	173	5	30	..	3	..	7	16	19	805
Much Park-street	175	120	3	2	29	18	32	175	1	1	..	7	..	18	10	34	625
Smithford-street	18	9	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	28
Spon-street	425	249	3	5	20	13	25	75	..	7	..	1	..	4	10	8	845
Total in City	1,753	1,051	20	18	125	197	162	760	36	53	1	19	1	38	74	98	4,406
SUBURBAN VILLAGES.																	
Radford	18	12	..	..	..	8	2	3	..	2	..	1	..	..	..	1	47
Stoke	26	75	..	2	2	6	1	10	..	2	..	..	..	2	5	..	131
Total in Suburban Villages	44	87	..	2	2	14	3	13	..	4	..	1	..	2	5	1	178
Total in City and Suburbs	1,797	1,138	20	20	127	211	165	773	36	57	1	20	1	40	79	99	4,584

Application of the Looms in the Rural Parishes.

The engine-looms in the Foleshill district, the rural part of the county of the city, are principally employed by Coventry manufacturers, in the various kinds of work above enumerated; but those of Bedworth belong chiefly to little masters resident there, who are engaged for the most part in the manufacture of cheap figured gauzes. Similar goods also occupy a large portion of those of Nuneaton, which belong to manufacturers resident there. The single-hand loom was formerly used in producing all the richest goods; but the introduction of the jacquard machinery has brought the figure trade into the engine-loom; the same jacquard machinery which, in the single-hand loom, could give the pattern only to a single breadth, being equally available in the engine-loom for all the breadths that it may contain simultaneously. When it is considered that little increase of speed can be obtained by making only one breadth at a time with the jacquard machinery, while all the expense of machine, pattern, and cards, is the same for the single-hand as for the engine-loom, it is obviously but for a few extraordinary purposes that this machinery will be applied to the former; in fact, chiefly to produce a few extremely broad and rich goods, which could only with difficulty, or at a very deficient speed, be worked in the engine-loom. The single-hand loom is therefore extensively superseded by the engine-loom, because of the new economy imposed by the jacquard machinery, requisite to the production of figures; and it is now chiefly employed in producing some of the broadest and richest of the plain ribbons (a branch largely carried on in the very poor district of Nuneaton Common and Stockingford); ribbons ornamented with only small patterns, called *leys*, which can be made by a number of treadles, without the aid of the jacquard machine; and chequed and barred ribbons, where the shuttle has to be changed at short intervals, of which it yet retains complete possession. This latter, however, is a style of goods for which the manufacturer is generally little pressed as to time: it is given out when he has nothing else to give, and it is consequently the worst paid.

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Shawl Borders.

The shawl borders, which employ so considerable a number of engine-looms in Coventry, are composed of a silk warp and cotton shoot, the figure being made by the jacquard machine. Other jacquard engine-looms are employed on the same fabric out of the city, and a considerable number of single-hand looms,—full one-half of those in the parish of Bedworth.

Supply by Coventry of Plain Goods generally, and of the middle-class and lower-class fancy Markets.

Coventry supplies with plain ribbons the great body of the demand in England, and with fancy ribbons the whole of the home middle-class and lower-class markets, notwithstanding that even in plain satins (especially eight-leish satins*), such is the richness given to their best goods by the French manufacturers, that some of the largest houses in Coventry, who have their own warehouses, are compelled to deal in them, as well as in their own articles, by the necessity of having a perfect assortment of the best goods that are accessible to the customer; and this is experienced not only in the London but in the country trade. Except goods jobbed off to the Colonies or America, as no longer salable in England (in like manner as French goods, towards the end of the fashionable season, are sometimes brought here, to the injury of the Coventry imitations), it is probable that none of the produce of the English ribbon looms is exported; and, in the supply of the home market with plain black ribbons, the Coventry looms have been largely superseded by the factories of Congleton, Leek, and Derby, at which latter place the rivalry is now extending to colours.

Rivalry of Leek, &c., in plain Black Ribbons.

Command of the highest fancy wear in England by French Goods.

Before the Committee of 1832, abundant evidence was given by the houses at the west end of the metropolis to show that, in the most fashionable wear, Coventry was entirely outrivalled by St. Etienne, to which place they accordingly gave their orders, and on no account to Coventry, since, unless the goods were in the French taste, which could not be precisely known until the French goods came over, they would be wholly unsaleable at a remunerating price, however intrinsically beautiful. Since that period the proportion of the French ribbons worn in England has apparently increased, although the augmented wear of this article by all classes has permitted an actual extension in the trade of Coventry, for the supply of the great middle-class trade. The wear of French fancy ribbons by the highest classes, in consequence of their *prevailing* taste, beauty, and variety, maintains, in the middle ranks of society and in the provinces, a demand for ribbons of a good though secondary quality, which Coventry supplies, and which might not exist, as formerly it did not, but for this circumstance. And, certainly, if it be little reflection upon Coventry that it had no fancy trade worthy of the name for nearly the whole period that it had the exclusive command of the home market, it is none that it should now, in successfully rivalling the skill of the French in execution, copy from their practised taste until it can raise a school of its own.

"The supply of fancy goods," it is stated by Mr. Hands, one of the largest manufacturers of gauzes in Coventry, "of as good qualities as ever were made here, or even better, has not positively declined, but the proportion of French goods introduced to the highest English markets has gradually increased," since the French manufacturer has become fully acquainted with English business. The French manufacturers, he also states, are peculiarly favoured, by their choice of the raw material, by the public patronage of the arts of design, and by the fiscal regulations on both sides the Channel, for the supply of silks generally to this country, and of the highest wear of ribbons more particularly, on account of the varied field which this affords for their greatest advantages. "The result of these advantages is a superiority of style, pattern, and, more especially in gauzes, even of fabric, which compels the manufacturers of Coventry to be mere copyists. *They are mere copyists in every branch of the fancy trade.* There are attempts at originality, but in my own experience, those articles which have been servile copies of the French have been more successful than anything that has been original. In fancy goods, whether heavy or light, the French supply the highest English market." By far the greatest proportion of the gauze trade of Coventry is in the merely mourning colours of white, black, and lavender; and those of varied hues are chiefly for country wear, and by no means the class of articles on which high profits are obtainable. But the most rising branch of the trade has of late years been that in floret gauzes, carried on by many small manufacturers; and the increase of engine-looms has long been chiefly in those having the jacquard machinery attached.

No positive decline in the Coventry Fancy Trade in consequence, but the contrary

"There is," says another witness, "nothing worthy the name of invention in patterns at Coventry, which is always a season behind St. Etienne. * * * For the

No attempt at rivalling the French in Fancy Ribbons.

* Cope. Hands.

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spring market, the London and Paris buyers go to Lyons and St. Etienne to make purchases in the loom, in December, of goods to be delivered about the commencement of February; and with the houses making these purchases interest is made by some of the Coventry manufacturers to get hints as to the coming fashions; other patterns being likewise obtained from agents in Paris. So soon as the French goods arrive it is known what is the style for the season; but the style of Coventry goods varies but little; a few new combinations, often very childish, being patched together, commonly with the scissors, and serving very well for a second class trade. The highest class of French ribbons, the Coventry manufacturers can only look at, not copy; for they have not jacquard machinery of the requisite 'numbers' (of needles which guide the warp threads). The highest machines at St. Etienne are about 1050; 900 are common, as also 600 and 400; while in Coventry the highest is 600, and the greater number are 400, with some 250. The manufacturers say they have no market to pay for the higher machinery, the French having possession of the first-class market, for which alone it could be worked; and in entering that market they must enter into a struggle with the whole force of French taste and fashion, for which they are quite unprepared. There are now in Coventry a few intelligent weavers, who have taken up the business of designing, but it consists only in making up combinations from French patterns and bits of prints, which they do now draft; a thing but a few years ago quite unexampled. For a design they frequently get nothing, *and never more than half a crown;* their livelihood being derived from the merely mechanical operation of drafting the patterns upon chequered paper for the reader, who, with the stamper, transfers the pattern from the chequered drawing to the cards of the machine. The reading and stamping is done on the premises of the larger manufacturers; but at the houses of those who make it a profession, for the smaller. The Coventry manufacturers never use a trial loom, consisting of a single-hand loom with a jacquard machine attached, as the French do, for the purpose of trying patterns before they are put into the engine-loom; and hence results much loss and mischief." *

Empire of French Taste in Female Dress.

Not only have the English manufacturers to contend with the local possession of practised taste in style and design by the French manufacturer, but it is impossible to wrest the empire of taste in female dress from Paris. It must be Lyons and St. Etienne that supply Paris; and they supply London at the same time with all its articles of the first taste, as part of the general market. There is, however, one advantage in this supply of the highest fashion by the French; viz., that Coventry is exempted from the effects of its caprices. Coventry is never doubtful of what will be the fashion in the great body of its trade, for that is already determined. Its trade runs parallel with that in French goods; and it is only a few houses, bordering on the highest market, that feel the full effects of competition. Still, within the limits of the style set by the French, there is considerable scope for good and pretty ribbons, which one of the manufacturers in the fancy trade says he has never yet turned out without success. Moreover, though triumphant in gauzes, the English heavier goods are so much cheaper than the French, after the latter have paid duty, that the French can get no very extensive sale; and the fashion is at present decidedly in favour of the heavier goods.†

French advantage in Taste and Finish, and not in Price of a given quality of Fabric.

It is, in fact, in taste, and not in price, that the English fancy ribbon manufacturer is outrivalled; and double the existing duties, were it possible to levy them, would not exclude the French goods. Although the number of looms now *in employment* is far more than double what it is represented to have been in 1831, yet the proportion of French goods imported appears to have steadily increased in the interval.

Collateral Progress of French and English Sales in the English Market.

The progress in the sales of French and of English ribbons respectively in the great middle-class and provincial markets, in which they come most into rivalry, is perhaps best evidenced by the experience of the house of Messrs. James Morrison and Co., who have obligingly supplied to the Commissioners the following memoranda of their proportional purchases of English and French goods:—

* Charles. † Browne.

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Course of Messrs. Morrison's Trade in Ribbons,—English and French.

TABLE of the PROPORTIONAL PURCHASES of ENGLISH and of FRENCH RIBBONS by Messrs. MORRISON.

Places of Purchase.	5 years ending 31 July, 1826.	5 years ending 31 July, 1831.	Year ending 31 July, 1838.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
1 English (Coventry) .	100 0 0	88 8 6	75 13 5
2 French (St. Etienne) .	..	11 11 6	24 6 7
	100 0 0	100 0 0	100 0 0

"Among the causes of the increased proportion of French purchases in 1838 may be suggested the decrease of smuggling as compared with the former period,—that decrease enabling the house to do a larger share of the trade, which was before in other hands.

"With regard to the duty paid, the rates are so various, part by weight and part ad valorem, that the particulars would be very complicated; the result for the year upon *all* the French goods imported by J. M. and Co. is an average duty of £27. 9*s*. 9*d*. per cent.; the ribbons being above that average, and the broad silk goods somewhat below it.

"As more fully showing the proportion of goods bought in different markets, English and French, the following Table has been prepared. It shows for five years past the proportion per cent. of J. M. and Co.'s purchases in broad silks and ribbons, distinguishing Spitalfields from Manchester, and both, together with Coventry, from the French markets. The calculation is made to show *proportions*, not actual amounts; but is carefully made upon purchases, occurring regularly during the term in question, and amounting to considerably more than three millions sterling.

TABLE of the Proportional Purchase of all Silk Goods by Messrs. Morrison.

Year ending 31 July,	1834.	1835.	1836.	1837.	1838.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Broad Silks.—Spitalfields . .	35 2 11	37 2 3	33 18 5	34 14 6	31 3 9
,, Manchester . .	33 16 7	33 4 2	31 15 6	32 7 4	37 8 11
,, Lyons . . .	13 4	3 5	3 8	1 14 1	3 8 5
Ribbons.—Coventry . . .	23 5 0	21 16 10	24 6 6	18 15 4	21 2 11
,, St. Etienne . . .	7 2 2	7 13 4	9 15 11	12 8 9	6 16 0
	100 0 0	100 0 0	100 0 0	100 0 0	100 0 0

The decline in the proportion of ribbons imported in 1838, as compared with the years immediately preceding, was undoubtedly owing to the fashion in favour of the heavier satin goods prevailing over the taste for gauzes, in which the French manufacturers have the greatest advantage. The extent of this advantage may be estimated from the larger proportion of gauze than of any other ribbons purchased from France by the same house, as stated before the Commons Committee of 1832.

Advantage of the English Manufacturer, when, as now, the fashion is in favour of the heavier fabrics.

TABLE of the PROPORTIONAL QUANTITY of each KIND of FRENCH and of ENGLISH RIBBONS purchased by Messrs. MORRISON in 1831.

Ribbons.	English.	French.	Total.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Gauzes	11 2 6	6 9 10	17 12 4
Satins	27 19 6	1 17 9	29 17 3
Sarcenets and Lustrings . .	36 11 2	3 4	36 14 6
Pads, Belts, Petershams, &c. .	3 17 10	3 0 7	6 18 5
Galloons and Doubles . . .	7 19 9	..	7 19 9
Velvets	17 9	..	17 9
	88 8 6	11 11 6	100 0 0

The increase exhibited in the transactions of this house from 11½ to nearly 25 per cent. in the proportion of French to English ribbons, is a very remarkable fact, and shows that the total consumption of ribbons must have enormously increased, to take off also the augmented produce of the Coventry looms.

Increase in the *proportion* of French Ribbons.

The progress of the total importation of foreign silks will be seen from the accompanying Table; neither the schedule of duties nor the customs officers making any distinction between ribbons and broad silks, by which the importation of the former may separately be known.

Imports of all Silk Manufactures for Five Years.

A Return of Foreign Manufactured Silks Imported into the United Kingdom (for Home Consumption), in each Year, from the 5th January 1834, to the 5th January 1838 (Sess. 1838, No. 458).

Species of Silks. (Stated agreeably to their designations in the Schedule of the Rates of Duty which regulates the Entry at the Custom-house.)	Year ending 5th Jan. 1834.	Year ending 5th Jan. 1835.	Year ending 5th Jan. 1836.	Year ending 5th Jan. 1837.	Year ending 5th Jan. 1838.
	lbs. oz.	lbs. oz.	lbs. oz.	lbs. oz.	lbs. oz.
Silk or Satin, plain	40,775 9	57,132 1	51,101 14	59,402 12	76,744 9
,, figured or brocaded	17,268 3	22,580 13	38,038 7	68,346 10	37,488 15
Gauze, plain	1,043 1	1,751 1	1,525 1	361 2	1,152 0
,, striped, figured, or brocaded	63,937 15	70,104 4	31,282 7	14,109 1	21,711 13
Gauze, tissue, Foulard's	..	658 0	25,630 1	15,397 4	8,165 4
,, plain	5,686 5	3,871 3	3,048 5	3,122 12	4,607 15
Crape, figured	20 13	10 13	23 15	7 2	0 1
Velvet, plain	8,194 8	5,742 6	5,894 9	12,712 9	15,659 9
,, figured	2,867 15	1,892 15	1,825 10	2,404 14	1,307 7
Ribbons, embossed or figured with Velvet	722 14	180 1	108 13	539 11	1,562 14
Fancy Silk Net or Tricot	1,619 8	2,120 6	2,154 10	3,389 13	4,245 2
Silks mixed with Gold, Silver, or other metal, viz.:—					
Silk or Satin, plain	60 14	88 3	43 3	22 8	24 13
,, figured or brocaded	22 15	76 10	90 14	193 13	152 3
Gauze, plain	19 2	23 0	10 4	10 2	..
,, striped, figured, or brocaded	8 1	11 0	15 12	11 12	8 9
Crape, plain	..	1 8	24 10	8 14	..
,, figured	..	..	..	..	..
Velvet, plain	2 8	1 5	4 13	0 8	8 14
,, figured	16 12	15 2	16 15	37 4	20 0
Ribbons, embossed or figured with Velvet	..	..	..	..	..
Total entered by weight	142,266 15	166,260 11	160,840 3	180,078 7	172,860 0
	Square yards.	Square yards.	Square yards.	Square yards.	Square yards.
Plain Silk Lace, or Net, called Tulle	45,424	31,010	10,104	10,028	10,555
	Number.	Number.	Number.	Number.	Number.
Millinery: Turbans or Caps	430	400	367	336	357
Millinery: Hats or Bonnets	620	524	422	478	458
Millinery: Dresses	154	156	106	143	113
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Millinery: At value	15 3 0	..	46 0 0	5 15 0	21 10 0
Manufactures of Silk, or of Silk and any other material not particularly enumerated, and manufactures of Silk made up, value	67,177 19 7	83,572 1 2	79,323 13 5	86,430 7 8	84,843 0 4

Variations, with little total increase.

This table, it is obvious, presents no very serious cause of alarm to the English silk manufacturers generally; for, although the increase in plain silks, including the plain satin ribbons, was, in 1837, very considerable, the total of imports presents rather a decrease, and the decline in the gauzes during the last two years is very remarkable. The following table exhibits the progress of the British export trade in silks of home manufacture:—

An Account of the Amount of Drawback paid on the Exportation of British Silk Manufactured Goods, from the 5th January 1830 to the 5th January 1831, and in each succeeding Year to the 5th January 1838; distinguishing the Amount paid upon Stuffs or Ribbons of Silk only, upon Stuffs or Ribbons of Silk and Cotton mixed, and upon Stuffs or Ribbons of Silk and Worsted mixed.

Years ended 5th January.	Stuffs or Ribbons of Silk only.	Stuffs or Ribbons of Silk and Cotton.	Stuffs or Ribbons of Silk and Worsted.	Total Amount of Drawback Paid on British Manufactured Silk Goods.
	£.	£.	£.	£.
1831. . . .	24,973	9,296	2,421	36,690
1832. . . .	32,466	10,022	4,170	46,658
1833. . . .	30,723	6,968	2,056	39,747
1834. . . .	49,750	7,761	3,133	60,644
1835. . . .	32,840	5,006	3,560	41,406
1836. . . .	38,728	17,333	5,288	61,349
1837. . . .	36,382	12,461	3,645	52,488
1838. . . .	19,803	4,255	1,038	25,096

Inspector-General's Office, Custom-House, London, 29th May 1838.

William Irving.

The falling off in the export branches of the silk-trade in 1837 is accounted for by the monetary derangements of that year. Their limited extent generally, and their slow progress, notwithstanding the assistance of the drawback or bounty, shows, however, but a moderate native vigour.

Causes of a low range of wages in the limitation of trade, and remedies for it in its extension.

It is to the limitation of the ribbon-trade that both masters and men largely attribute the existing low range of wages; and, from its extension, producing an augmented demand for labour, that they as largely expect an advance of them. The remedies by which they seek this extension are, of course, such as it is supposed will remove the causes to which they attribute the limitation. These alleged causes, as might be anticipated from the preceding details, are:—

1. *Foreign Competition*, by which is chiefly meant the rivalry of French ribbons with Coventry goods in the home market.

2. The *Corn Laws*, which are regarded as affecting the trade most materially in whatever attempts may be made to supply the markets of foreign countries.

3. *Duties* on foreign thrown silks, and on various other materials used in the processes of manufacture.

4. *Want of instruction in design, and of protection for patterns.*

5. "*Currency Gambling.*"

1.—Foreign Competition.

Foreign competition, and its proposed termination.

The origin and the abolition of the prohibitory system have been fully described. The arguments against the admission of foreign ribbons to English consumption are stated, as follows, by one of the Weavers' Committee:—

"With regard to the *introduction of foreign ribbons*, considers that the evidence of the Custom House returns is sufficient to show that a large amount of goods is imported, which must be sold and worn, and the place of which, were *they* not worn, might be supplied by goods from Coventry. There are sorts of work, which are brought up by fashion, on which we meet the French competition most severely. These are more especially the gauzes. Does not know the prices at which they are sold respectively, those of France and those of Coventry; and has no data for directly comparing them. Cannot say whether there are not some classes of gauze articles (figured gauzes) in which the English have equalled the French. Thinks that, could we equal them in the article itself, it could not be brought to market for the same price, because of the Corn Laws and general system of taxation rendering living dearer in England than abroad. Cannot say in what proportion the importation of French goods is a triumph of *taste* or of *price*, but thinks that it is sometimes neither, but the triumph of caprice in the ladies, who will have them merely because they are French; since they sometimes have English goods palmed upon them as such, which they would not purchase as English. Can tell of no branch of Coventry trade superseded and annihilated by the introduction of French ribbons; but the gauze-trade has long been flat, he believes from importations of French goods. Cannot state any other branch which is seriously suffering from French competition. Knows of no markets which we formerly supplied from which we have been stopped out, or where we are outrivalled; and in our own market the case he considers to

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be as stated above respecting the rivalry in gauzes only. In producing gauzes the French have a superior choice of silk, and avail themselves of it. At the present moment considers the trade of Coventry in a state entirely exempt from any temporary depression from fashion. In addition to the ordinary trade, many looms are employed in making cotton and mixed cotton and silk trimmings, for ladies' shawls, &c.; and, for three months back, the trade has been in as favourable a condition as, from past experience, there is reason for the future to anticipate under the present system."*....."One reduction of wages particularly is attributable to the throwing open of the ports, viz., the instance already given, in which the manufacturers, on the 30 per cent. duty on plain goods being reduced to 25, lowered the men's prices 15 per cent; considers, therefore, that his wages have been directly and positively lowered by the throwing open of the ports to French ribbons.†....."In the case of gauzes is unable, as already stated, to say whether the advantage is one wholly of skill and beauty, or one of price. Does not know that they are brought in cheaper, but knows that they have a preference. It must also be observed that it is with a reference to the present prices of labour that we do not fear French competition, except in gauzes. If wages were raised 10 per cent., is not prepared to say that French ribbons, besides gauzes, might or might not be brought in; but has heard manufacturers say that they would be brought in, if wages were raised, especially in the plain trade. Is inclined, however, to think that 10 per cent. on the wages would form such a small addition to the total cost of the goods, that it would not allow the introduction of French goods; perhaps 20 per cent. might. Supposes this from the opinion of the manufacturer already referred to, who considered 5 per cent. on the article equal to 15 per cent. on the wages; and in that view, in which the whole trade joined, the men were accordingly lowered at the reduction of duty. French competition is always alleged, and, from its being alleged, the weavers have been accustomed to regard it as a cause of depression. Cannot discriminate in the masters' proceedings, in giving or withholding wages, except through their statement, what reductions are produced by foreign and what by mutual competition, but believes that if there were any misrepresentation on the subject of foreign competition, the masters would expose it.....The reason why the hardware and cottons of this country are exported, while ribbons are very little exported, is that they are *more natural manufactures* of England; and has no doubt that, in like manner, gauze ribbons are a *more natural manufacture* of France than of England. In England we have mines of coal and iron, and other means which enable us to produce the goods mentioned under unequalled advantages; and in France they grow the best silk, have the pick of it, and have laws to prevent the export of this choice silk, besides long-standing skill, and the encouragement of schools for arts and design."‡

Purpose of the legislature to exchange national advantages, without injury to vested interests.

It is precisely with the purpose of exchanging these advantages that Parliament threw open the ports to French silks, on the payment of as high a duty as can be levied (merely for the protection of the vested interests of the English manufacturer), without offering a premium to the smuggler. And, although one house in the Coventry trade, that of Messrs. Coxe, which formerly sold to a London West-end house to the value of 10,000*l.* per annum, is now not selling to it more than 500*l.* worth of ribbons yearly, though pursuing the trade in other channels, it is not to be supposed that Parliament will disregard one of the first principles of commerce, for the sake of making a few more *gauze* ribbons in England, under the protection of laws which would exercise the most baleful influence on other branches of industry, and ultimately even on the ribbon-trade itself, which is pursuing a collateral course with the French trade on a scale more extensive than was that of the whole trade under the prohibitive system. Mr. Odell, on the part of Messrs. Coxe, is the only one of the manufacturers who urged that prohibition should now be re-adopted, as the only *effectual* remedy for "the evils and fluctuations of the trade;" "because French ribbons very often obtain the preference, even when higher in price than the English, not because they are *always* better, but merely because they *are* French." But it is not here observed that, the French being generally superior in some articles, the guarantee of their being French is a supposed *insurance* of general superiority, which is willingly purchased by an advance of price, the more readily the more incapable the individual purchaser may be of forming an independent opinion.

Opinion among some manufacturers that French competition has benefited the Coventry trade.

Mr. C. Bray states that "the *taste* of the French has increased the wear of ribbons altogether; and the French ribbons that are introduced are not in an amount to overbalance the general increase of consumption. Considers that all the ribbons that have been introduced have been sold *extra* to the Coventry produce. If the milliners had not something besides Coventry ribbons, they would much oftener have used less fancy ribbons than they have done. Does not think, therefore, that, up to this time the French competition has been very serious. But the French trade has been gradually rooting itself. Many warehouses, and

* Weavers' Committee. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

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even shopkeepers, send buyers to Paris; and the French have studied and become acquainted with the English markets. Probably improvements in England may progress, and meet this. Thinks that French goods are coming in more extensively and at lower prices than formerly, but that French competition has not heretofore been injurious to any great extent. Messrs. Newcome and Bray buy large quantities of French ribbons themselves for the country trade. By mixing a few French ribbons with their own, they sell more of their own. A better assortment being thus made, the French ribbons tempt a dealer to give orders to the agent travelling with them jointly with his Coventry stock, when he would not order Coventry ribbons only."* "Foreign competition has constantly been assigned by the masters to the workmen as the ground for reductions, until within these two years; and now they say *they are more than a match for the French in the market in all but gauzes*."†

Complaints of foreign competition not latterly made by manufacturers when reducing wages.

Neither the weavers, nor the master manufacturers generally, mentioned *prohibition* as a remedy to which they now laid claim.

All hope of prohibition nearly relinquished; but rigid levy of existing duties strongly urged.

"Still," states Mr. Odell, "it would be an advantage to have the duties at the Custom-house properly levied, and this can only be done by appointing a person who understands the nature of the ribbon-trade to superintend the levying of the duties. French ribbons, which may really be *fancy* goods, if they are of homogeneous texture, and have not positively a *figure* upon them, are admitted by the Custom-house officers at the lower rates of duty as *plain* goods, though checked, striped, shaded, and even clouded, which latter requires an expensive process of manufacture. But, as *fancy* goods, the fancy which adds to their cost ought to pay duty as much as the *figure*, which is but another department of fancy. Some one who understands the trade ought to class the goods imported, and levy the duties accordingly; and smuggling should be punished by incarceration rather than fine."‡ The latter recommendation is addressed to the fact that whatever smuggling now takes place in the silk-trade is accomplished by a few large capitalists on a great scale; and not, as under the system of absolute prohibition, by a desperate and lawless population on the coast. To the former, a criminal punishment would, of course, be a far severer infliction than a fine, the chances of which they have already calculated. How far the adoption of personal punishment in this case would interfere with the gradation by which it is necessary to distinguish offences, I am incapable of estimating.

Appointment of especial officers for the collection of silk-duties desired.

Punishment for smuggling to be rendered more severe.

I am informed by Dr. Mitchell, one of your Assistant Commissioners, that the like proposal has been brought more fully under his notice, in the course of his investigations in Spitalfields, by Mr. Frederick Martin, who represents that the agents of the importers vary the value which they assign to goods, according to the various proficiency of the officers with whom they have to deal. The mode in which the silk-duties were levied was also a subject of examination before the Commons' Committee of 1832 on the silk-trade, when it certainly appeared that the landing of goods in various parts of the port of London, under the inspection of whatever officers might chance to be disengaged for that service, was one affording an opening to irregularities, of which several witnesses in the service of the Customs stated their private knowledge. Moreover, the ignorance of the officers of the value of the goods renders almost nugatory their option to take them at the price at which they are valued by the importer or his agent, with 10 per cent. addition; an option given to them as a safeguard against a fraudulent valuation by the importer. And, as a subject of fiscal police, it may therefore be worthy of the attention of the Board of Customs, to organize a silk-office, to which all silk goods may be brought by lock-up boats. This may, perhaps, be effected at as little expense as the present collection of the duties; the articles being exceedingly portable in proportion to their value. Dovor and Dublin are the only other ports besides London at which it is permitted to land foreign silks; and it is urged by several manufacturers that, for the sake of rendering the better police fully effective, the privilege should be restricted to London only.

Better fiscal police as regards the silk trade urged from various quarters.

If, however, the statement furnished to your Board by Messrs. Morrison be correct, that the average duty which they now actually pay is 27*l.* 9*s.* 9*d.* per cent. *ad valorem*, and also the calculation, made by the manufacturers who urge a stricter system, that a much larger amount of duty would be collected by the new arrangement, then the present duties per lb. would have further to be reduced, to meet the smuggler, who would otherwise extend his trade very rapidly. Still,

If heavier *ad valorem* duties would by this means be collected, the tariff *per lb.* must be reduced to meet the smuggler.

* C. Bray. † Holmes and others at Foleshill.
‡ Odell, 163, 164, and annexed Memoranda.

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the police of the Custom-house ought to be such as to give literal force to the enactments of the legislature, any departure from which should be made through their revision by the same authority from which they emanated, and not through any asserted insufficiency of means on the part of the executive. It is also much desired by the Coventry manufacturers that the ribbons should be scheduled by the Custom-house officers distinct from other silk goods, so that they may be enabled to know the extent of their importation, through the medium of separate returns.

Case of the modern extension of the silk trade often quoted to prove more than it really evinces.

It must be allowed that the case of the silk manufacture has been quoted to prove more in favour of a free-trade system than it really substantiates. The advantages of free-trade are much dispersed, while those of a prohibitive system will always be concentrated at the seats of the several manufactures which are the objects of its preference. It is much more the dispersed manufacture of exportable articles, which ultimately purchase foreign silks, that bears testimony in favour of a free-trade system, than the increase of the English silks manufacture itself since 1824, which, it is obvious, must be attributed chiefly to the general cheapening of silks by the abolition of the duties on the raw material; great as has been the improvement in its processes through foreign rivalry. The great principle of freedom of industry needs no such support as the evidence afforded by a single trade. Prohibition, were it possible to revert to it, would again be found, as formerly it was, much the same guarantee for the prosperity of a trade relying on these political contrivances in lieu of its own energies, as would be checks to population, other than those dictated by a sound morality, for the worldly welfare of a people who should rely upon them rather than upon their industry, intelligence, and frugality. At the same time, however, that the general advantage was consulted, rather than that of a particular branch of industry, in the throwing open of our ports to foreign silks, the sacrifice of the duties on raw material, and the concession of the existing protective duties, have given to the home manufacture an unexampled extension.

Sufficiency of existing fiscal protection of the home trade in its competition with the French, proved by the statistics of the French ribbon trade.

It will remove some vague fears as to the extent of danger to be apprehended from French competition in the ribbon-trade, under existing duties, if I refer to the evidence of Dr. Bowring, amid the mass of valuable information adduced before the select Committee on the Silk Trade in 1832.—

Extent of the Trade.

St. Etienne is the Coventry of France, and possesses about 5000 engine-looms, 800 of which are employed in plain sarcenet ribbons, 200 in velvets, 700 in galloons of sarcenet, 800 in stout and light satins, 500 in striped gauzes; and the remaining 2000 are jacquard looms for figured goods of various description. There are besides at St. Etienne and St. Chamond 500 single-hand looms of a superior kind called "haute lisse," applied generally to the production of large patterns, and about one hundred of which have the jacquard machinery attached. The common single-hand "basse lisse" looms, chiefly used to make plain satins and sarcenets, are about 18,000 in number, and are largely dispersed through the neighbouring mountains, where many of the inhabitants work upon them only during the suspension of their labours in husbandry. The latter class of looms cannot be so productive as the same number in the Coventry district, not more than two-thirds of them being employed on the average; but the trade has gradually increased from 1812, when there were only about 9000 looms. Of late, Lyons, where taste is far more developed than at St. Etienne, has employed nearly 900 of its broad jacquard looms in the production of the most costly ribbons; four breadths in each loom. There are also a very few single-hand looms of the highest class at Lyons. At St. Etienne "there is nothing that can decidedly be called a school of design, but there is a great deal of attention paid to the subject of drawing; there are many students not collected in the schools; and there are a considerable number of draftsmen at St. Etienne. At this moment there are 58 artists at St. Etienne employed in the production of ribbon-patterns." *One-third of the silk used by the St. Etienne manufacturers is foreign*, a fact which decides that its advantages in the price of raw material must be very trifling, as compared with England. The following were the prices paid to the "ouvrier," or journeyhand, by the "passementier," or first-hand, for weaving at St. Etienne, in 1832; the "passementier" himself receiving as much more from the manufacturer. They are given by Dr. Bowring on the authority of M. Hedde, a resident at that city, who has written a history of its trade.

Pattern drawing.

Raw material, and prices of weaving.

St. Etienne, 22d April, 1832.

TABLE of the WAGES paid to the Workmen per 12 ells for Weaving.

English Numbers	2d.	4d.	6d.	..	8d.	10d.	12d.	16d.	20d.	24d.	30d.	40d.	..
French Numbers	1¼	2	3	4	5	6	7	9	12	16	22	30	40
Satins and Tafetas	20c.	30c.	40c.	50c.	60c.	75c.	90c.	1f. 0c.	1f. 25c.	1f. 50c.	1f. 75c.	2f. 0c.	2f. 25c.
Cords (Cordons).	..	..	..	..	..	2f. 50	3f. 0	4	4 50	5 0	5 50	6 0	6 50
Striped Gauzes .	..	..	..	..	..	..	1 0	1 25	1 50	1 75	2 0	2 50	3 0
Figured Gauzes .	..	..	..	..	..	..	1 25	1 50	2 0	2 50	3 0	3 50	4 0

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There is a fluctuation spread over the whole field, ranging from 7½ per cent. below to 7½ per cent. above, on these prices; but these may be fairly represented as the average prices of labour.

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Present English duties nearly tantamount to the whole cost of weaving, in which the main advantage of the French consists.

The French "aune" being 3 feet 11¼ inches, the pieces for weaving which the prices above stated are paid must be 47 feet 3 inches long, in lieu of 36 feet, which is the English length. The franc is worth nearly 9¼*d.*, and the centimes are the hundredth parts of that coin. With these data some idea may be formed of the relative cost of labour at St. Etienne and at Coventry; and the extent of protection really afforded by the duty of 25 to 30 per cent. imposed in England for the protection of the English manufacturer. The cost of the raw material does not differ very materially in the two countries, while a duty of 25 to 30 per cent. on the manufactured goods, it will be perceived, is nearly tantamount to the whole cost of weaving, which is the sole process in which any mentionable advantage is possessed by the French. Thus, in manufacturing 1000 kilogrammes of silk into ribbons, the proportions of material and labour in the cost of the article are as follows:—

Fabric.	Value of Silk.	Dyeing.	Winding.	Warping.	Marabout-age.	Weaving.	Finishing.	Total.
Satin or Sarcenet Ribbons	70,000	4,000	3,000	1,500		52,000	1,500	132,000
Gauze Ribbons Striped .	73,000	4,000	3,000	1,500	3,000	56,000	1,500	142,000
Gauze Ribbons: richest figures . . .	73,000	..	..	..	..	..	..	162,000

Weavers earn in France less than any other class of labourers.

In the town of St. Etienne the minimum earnings at the prices above stated appeared to be 1¼ franc, or just a shilling a-day; and the maximum 4f. 40c.; but the gains of the country weavers were far less. Sixty per cent. of the ribbons made at St. Etienne are striped and clipped gauzes. The Conseil des Prud'hommes at this place does not appear to be a very efficient institution. The French weavers are paid less than any other class of work-people.

Return to a prohibitory system impossible.

Except under the first effects of fiscal changes, the limitation to a trade imposed by foreign competition has obviously no more influence upon the condition of the hands engaged in it than the limits imposed by want of further demand, or by change of fashion, by which a trade must be restrained, though in exclusive possession of the home market under a prohibitory system. I have described the shock felt by the Coventry trade in 1829, chiefly through its previous factitious extension; but from this it rapidly recovered, as the subsequent account of the successive list prices of labour will evince. Once in equilibrium, foreign competition, or home competition, or decline of demand through change of fashion, are limits to the trade equally beyond the justifiable interference of the state, although each and all may temporarily affect the trade. The wants of society, and their supply, will ever be left to the free will and the free industry of individuals in a country enjoying civil and political liberties. The legislature, it is obvious, will never interfere to benefit one class of manufacturers at the expense of still greater injury to those who are producing exportable articles, and to deprive whole classes of a favourite luxury, *without permanent advantage to any one class whatever.* To increase the protecting duties, which are themselves a sacrifice of principle to vested interests, would be a futile attempt; for the efforts of the smuggler would thereby be advanced to a high premium. The strict enforcement of the existing duties is, however, claimed by the whole nation; and, if the premium which they offer to the smuggler be sufficient to counterbalance the obstacles which Government can oppose

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to his illicit transactions, they must be revised. The existing protective duties are simply a gratuity to the silk-trade from the nation at large, granted because capital and industry have been unduly directed into this trade by its fiscal system; and this protection is extended so far as is possible without exposing it to be undermined by the smuggler. From no new fiscal arrangement whatever, in regard to the importation of foreign manufactured silks, can any prospect of material influence upon the Coventry trade, therefore, be held out.

No prospect of material influence upon the trade from fiscal arrangements as to the importation of foreign silks can be held out.

2.—THE CORN LAWS.

Demand for free trade in corn if free trade is to be maintained in manufactures.

"If we cannot have prohibition," say the Nuneaton weavers, "we require the repeal of the Corn-laws. The return to prohibition would increase our trade. The repeal of the Corn-laws would cheapen bread, and increase trade, through ribbons, among other goods, being taken in exchange for corn.*"

Masters deem these laws an obstruction to foreign trade.

The manufacturers themselves generally regard these laws as the great obstacle to their obtaining a foreign trade, which the language of Mr. Huskisson led them to hope from a free-trade system. "Coventry," they state, "has no export trade worthy of mention. But a great many more ribbons have been exported during the last two years than previously. Messrs. Morrison are undoubtedly exporting Coventry ribbons to America. In looking for an export trade to counterbalance the loss of the highest class English market, the Coventry manufacturer finds that his ribbons have a limited proportion of the labour of fixed capital in proportion to the manual labour, and they cannot therefore so readily compete with the cheap labour of the continent. The cheap labour of the country is already in competition with that of the town, and, through the comparative cheapness of foreign labour, both are outrivalled by the continent. We have now no foreign trade in ribbons which we know to be worth much. For if we enter a foreign market, we there feel the greater cost of living to which our workmen are subject, and find ourselves upon the same ground as the cotton manufacturer, who is also complaining of the existing Corn-laws.†" The corn and provision laws appear certainly to be obnoxious to every charge which has been urged against a prohibitory system in manufactures; with the further disadvantage of imposing a denial, not of some particular articles of luxury, but of food itself. Their operation to the disadvantage of the Coventry trade, the Weavers' Committee endeavoured to trace; and although their views possess little of originality, they claim a full statement.—

Arguments of the weavers against the existing system of corn-laws.

"Such laws prevent the weaver having more employment; there are other countries which have corn, and little else, to give in exchange for manufactured goods. They are lost as customers, and the field for English labour is narrowed. This comes upon the weavers, in a great degree, directly, but, in a much greater degree, indirectly. Were the restrictions removed, we might have a direct exchange of ribbons for corn with those parties, as well as an exchange of other goods; which exchange is prevented by the existing laws. Indirectly, the Corn-laws restrict the trade in hardware and English manufactures generally; and, supposing those of our countrymen producing those goods had more labour and a better price for it, and their manufactures generally extended, they would purchase more freely of us the article of luxury we produce; in fact, not only should we get customers immediately abroad, but the number and wealth of our customers in Great Britain would be increased.

Limitation of trade.

Enhancement of the price of food.

"A third effect of the maintenance of the Corn-laws, besides preventing these advantages, is, that it renders bread dearer, because our own country does not grow sufficient for its own population, and the Corn-laws, preventing the free importation of more of the article of bread which is thus wanted, inevitably keep up the price of the quantity internally produced. Consequently, with the same amount of wages we now receive, we should, but for these laws, obtain a greater proportion of comforts than we at present enjoy.

Corn-laws part of a general restrictive system.

"Has no documents to prove the fact that Great Britain does not grow enough food for its own inhabitants, but he believes so, because the Corn-laws themselves permit corn to be held in bond against cases of emergency; which proves that the governors of our own country are aware that our island does not at all times supply us. 1. Consider that these laws, therefore, deprive the workmen of some portion of the comforts which their wages ought to give the men. 2. They also prevent the English weaver meeting the foreign weaver on equal terms. The Corn-laws form part of a system of which the part which protected our labour has been removed, while that which affects our subsistence from the fruits of our labour is maintained. That system is the anti-free-trade system, which we understand to be the denial of a free permission for the various manufactures and produce of other countries to enter into this. Consider that permitting the free introduction of foreign silks, without as free an introduction of foreign grain, is an injury to us. The throwing open the ports to ribbons, while we are bound to pay a certain large proportion of taxes, especially on corn, had the effect of lowering our wages, with which we had to purchase the corn which was still taxed, as

Injury by exposing the weaver alone.

* Nuneaton Committee.

† Cope, Ratliff, and Caldicot.

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well as other things."* "It exposed the English weaver to an unfair competition with the foreign weaver. Is unprepared to say that the 25 or 30 per cent. duty now paid on ribbons is insufficient to counterbalance in the British market the greater price of bread; but thinks that, were it so, the Corn-law would still prevent any chance of a foreign trade. Except in gauzes, we do not feel any apprehension of French competition in the British markets." † "The man who produces the ribbons must first have had bread to eat in order to produce them, and the cheaper the man has that bread the cheaper he will be enabled to labour; and therefore thinks that, for a third market, under the restrictions imposed by the Corn-laws, England cannot produce ribbons so cheap, of the same quality, as a country where bread is cheaper. Supposes, therefore, that foreign countries may be now prevented from purchasing English ribbons on that account ..... Although France might still supply the world with gauzes, the Coventry weavers think they would stand a better chance in the competition of the world, if they were under a system of taxation not so severe, and of which system the Corn-laws are the portion which press upon them most severely.‡ ..... Would not be in the same position as now when *working cheaper* with *cheaper bread*, because employment would be more regular. The trade and prosperity of the country being generally increased, the demand for a luxury like ribbons would be more extensive and more constant. Supposes that a repeal of the Corn-laws would benefit the master by extension of his business, and the weaver by greater regularity of employment."§

Advantages to be derived from corn-law repeal.

Experience of the cotton-trade, referred to by the Coventry manufacturers, as illustrative of their own position in commencing a foreign trade.

It is in the impossibility of such of our goods as comprise the most manual labour sustaining the force of foreign competition in foreign or in neutral markets, that the effect of a restricted supply of food first shows itself. Recent discussions have brought forward the experience of the cotton, the hosiery, the hardware, and other trades to this fact; and the following evidence, given to me by Edmund Ashworth, Esq., of Egerton, near Bolton, previous to their occurrence, explains the whole theory of those obstacles, for experience as to the nature of which the Coventry manufacturers refer to the cotton-trade, since their own has never been able fully to encounter them. The cotton-weavers referred to in the following evidence are a class much resembling in condition the single-hand weavers of Coventry.—

Evidence of Edmund Ashworth, Esq., to the effects of a restricted supply of food on the export cotton trade.

"Are there many hand-loom weavers in your immediate neighbourhood?—Some years ago, there were a great number; they are now fewer in our immediate neighbourhood, owing to the low rate of wages paid for weaving, in comparison with other trades. I find, from a return made by the committee of hand-loom weavers of Bolton, that there were 6500 hand-loom weavers in Great and Little Bolton in 1818; that in 1836 there were only 4005, and in 1838 only 3139. The general population has increased, during that time, from 30,000 to 50,000.

"What do you consider the cause of the decline in the weaving trade which this report indicates?—The wages of hand-loom weavers have been continually lowering, whilst the wages of other artisans have been, in some cases, improving, and in all they are much better than those of weavers.

"Has the decline in the prices paid for weaving been gradual and constant?—It cannot be said that their wages have been continually lowering, as, by the fluctuations of trade, they have occasionally risen; but, on the whole, they have fallen to the lowest possible level, as will be seen by a printed return, compiled in November 1837, of the incomes of 35 families of hand-loom weavers, having in all 69 looms employed, taken from an actual survey of the various sorts of hand-loom weaving in Bolton at that time. The average weekly earnings of each loom, according to this statement, are 5*s.* 7*d.* within a fraction.

Decline of the trade of hand-loom weaving at Bolton, though the total number in the trade may not have declined.

"Since the number of weavers has declined as well as the amount of their earnings, their distressed state must arise from a decrease of the amount of employment, and not from an influx of new hands?—I do not know that the whole number of hand-loom weavers in the kingdom is much fewer; because the art of weaving, being easily learned, has spread more towards the agricultural districts, where other employment was more difficult to obtain; however, it is quite certain that weavers have not increased in proportion to the increase of the cotton-trade.

"Can you oblige me with data exhibiting this disproportion?—It is seen in a decrease of the quantity of *manufactured* goods sent out to France and the Ionian Islands, to Naples and Sicily, to Russia, to Sardinia and Tuscany, to Trieste and Venice, to Turkey and the Levant. To those countries our export of *made-up* goods has decreased, and of *yarn* increased. The returns are made in the number of yards of cloth, and of pounds of yarn, and not in money; so that there can be no doubt as to the actual or relative increase or decrease of quantity; and these circumstances are fully exhibited in Burn's Commercial Glance for 1837, compiled from the Custom-house papers.

"The cotton piece-goods exported to Russia, Germany, and Prussia, were as follows:—

Weaving in England has not experienced the same prosperity as other branches of the cotton trade, because it is outrivalled by the cheap labour of the continent, which has imported our yarns instead of our manufactured goods.

	1820.	1837.
"To Russia	13,203,851 yards	847,022 yards
Prussia	5,442,535	None
Germany	47,658,285	38,581,533
	66,304,671	39,428,555

* Weavers' Committee. † Baddeley. ‡ Ib. § Ib.

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"Cotton-yarn as follows:

	1820.	1837.
"To Russia	8,762,347 lbs.	23,910,019 lbs.
Germany and Prussia . . .	11,682,683	36,109,100
Netherlands for Germany viâ Rhine	232,574	17,457,232
France	None	352,025
Gibraltar	61,182	280,114
Malta and Ionian Islands . . .	108,464	271,760
Italy and Italian Islands . .	1,291,261	9,118,938
Turkey and Levant	542,093	4,047,871
Total	22,680,604	91,547,059

"To what do you attribute the increase in the proportion of cotton exported in the shape of yarn, compared with that exported in the shape of cloth?—To the advantages which the continental manufacturer has over the English manufacturer in the price of labour for weaving, even with the low rate of wages in England to which the weavers are now reduced.

"Have you any documents showing precisely the prices which are paid for weaving on the Continent?—I have no documents showing the precise wages paid; but, judging from the state of markets on the Continent, where the yarn we export, woven by foreign hands, appears in fabrics, which undersell our cloths, while the demand for yarns is still increasing, I conclude that the foreign manufacturer must have an advantage in the lower rate of wages for weaving. The export of yarn to Russia is very great, and on the increase. General Wilson, one of the Emperor of Russia's engineers, stated at my house that the peasant weavers in Russia were glad to work for a sum equal to three-halfpence per day in English money.

Conclusions based on the increase in the export of yarns and the decrease in the export of manufactured goods.

"What is the rivalry with which we have to contend in the Mediterranean and the southern states of Europe, which you have enumerated as importing less of our woven goods than formerly?—I have only evidence as to rivalry in these ports by their own manufactures against ours, by the fact of those ports taking more yarn and less of manufactured goods than formerly.

"Can you give me any especial instance of the rivalry of Continental with English weaving on yarns spun in England?—A most conspicuous instance is that afforded by the cotton hosiery of Saxony, which Mr. Porter, of the Board of Trade, has well described. 'The manufactures,' he says, 'are greatly encouraged by the miserably low rate of wages in Saxony. It is stated, on the best authority, that, in October, 1837, 'a man employed in his loom, working very diligently from Monday morning until Saturday night, from five o'clock in the morning until dusk, and even at times with a lamp, his wife assisting him in finishing and taking him the work, could not possibly earn more than 20 groschen (2*s.* 6*d.* sterling) per week; and that another man, who had three children, aged 12 years and upwards, all working at the loom as well as himself, with his wife employed doing up the work, could not earn in the whole more than 1 dollar 8 groschen (5*s.* 4*d.*) weekly.....The quantity of cotton hosiery made in Saxony has increased immensely of late, and, from its cheapness, has not only secured the monopoly of the markets afforded throughout the Union, but has also been shipped largely to the United States, to the exclusion so far of the goods made at Nottingham. It may be stated, on the respectable authority already quoted, that cotton gloves are furnished by the Saxon manufacturers as low as 6 groschen, or 9*d.* sterling, per dozen pairs; stockings at 1 dollar, or 3*s.* per dozen pairs; and nightcaps at 8 groschen, or 1*s.* per dozen. Stout cotton caps, which are worn by the carmen and common people in that part of Germany, having stripes in six different colours upon a black ground, cost 12 groschen per dozen, or 1½*d.* sterling each.'* The Leipsic fair also affords an illustration. A great quantity of yarn is sent to the Continent through the ports of Holland and Belgium. Cloth woven from this yarn meets cloths woven in Lancashire, at the great continental fair of Leipsic. From the fact of the export of our piece goods to that fair not increasing in proportion with that of yarns to Germany, Holland, and Belgium, it is a fair inference that those countries find an advantage in weaving the goods for themselves. The Custom-house returns of the exports to Holland and Belgium, for the years 1836 and 1837, exhibit these circumstances in a very strong light. In confirmation of low wages being the only advantage possessed by those countries over us, I can mention that I know some very clever, well-skilled young men, who have recently gone from Manchester to settle in Austria, and have invested a very large sum of English money in mills and machinery there, whose only advantage is in the cheap labour they find there, and they are well received and encouraged by the Government. I have myself seen, in France and Switzerland, many very excellent cotton-mills, the owners of which acknowledged to me that their only advantage over England was in cheap labour. I also found they were making greater profit than similar establishments in England. An extensive exporting establishment in Manchester informed me lately that their yarn-trade to Lombardy was now superseded by the Austrian and Swiss spinners in numbers below 30's.

Especial instance of English yarns being manufactured by foreign hand labour in the Saxon hosiery.

Cheapness of labour extends its advantages to the continental spinning factories also.

"May not the increase of English yarns exported, and the positive or comparative decline in the export of piece-goods to certain countries, be the result of duties imposed by those countries, or other causes, as much as a difference in the price of labour?—Tariff-duties may, under *our* present disadvantages in price of food and wages, exclude our goods; but, if we would receive their corn or other produce into our ports, we should then have food and wages

* Progress of the Nation, by G. R. Porter, Esq.

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nearer on a level with them; our superior skill would soon create a premium upon smuggling, if our merchants could effect their exchanges in corn or other productions of the soil, rather than in nett money. It is evident that our trading interests with all Europe (for the protection of which we spent so many millions of money and thousands of lives in a cruel and protracted war) have been strangely mismanaged, when it is seen that we do not export half as many goods to all the European states as we do to the United States of America, containing only one-fifteenth of the population.

Tariff duties may produce some of these phenomena, but our own policy in refusing grain has brought this evil into existence.

"If cheapness of labour be the sole cause of this rivalry by foreign manufacturers, why does not Ireland, where men will labour for 4*d.* and 6*d.* per day, outrival Britain in weaving, in lieu of the contrary?—Because the Irish are not so tractable, or in that state of society to induce English manufacturers to intrust their property amongst them; and, further, wherever weavers are become scarce, the English manufacturer has extended the circle of his employment by sending out his webs to be woven in the agricultural districts, where young people were but partially employed, and consequently glad to fill up their spare time for a very trifling remuneration. The weavers in these districts are for the most part young persons of either sex, between the ages of 12 and 20; younger children winding the picking cops. Plain goods are woven in my neighbourhood for a much less average income a-week than has previously been stated. In fact, weaving is so much now connected with agricultural labour as to become rather a subsidiary means of employment to the junior branches of agricultural families than a primary employment for the heads of them. This combination of agricultural labour and weaving in the same family is yearly extending; so that, low as wages may be in Ireland, they cannot be much lower than those to which the poor hand-loom weavers are now reduced in Lancashire.

Modern extension of cotton weaving into the agricultural districts.

"Cheapness of foreign labour, consequent on cheapness of food, you consider, then, so that there be security for capital, as a sufficient explanation of the outrivalry of our manufacturers, and the distress of the cotton weavers?—There can be no doubt but that the high price of food must greatly increase the distress of the English weavers; inasmuch as that the finished goods, whether woven in England or on the continent, sell at the same price in the foreign market: the yarn, in both cases, being spun in England, the advantage of labour must be in favour of that weaver who can obtain food at the lowest price, as compared with the money price at which the finished fabric can be sold in a third market; and the loss arising from this state of things is not confined to the weavers alone, but extends itself to the subsequent operations of dying, printing, &c., as will be seen from the Custom-house returns of last year, in the relative values of goods and yarn exported:—

Advantages in supplying a neutral market obviously in favour of the continental weaver, who can obtain his food cheapest.

Piece-goods . .	100,371,129lbs., at 2*s.* 0½*d.* per lb. . .	£10,066,685
Yarn	105,106,529lbs., at 1*s.* 1½*d.* per lb. . .	5,912,224

"Take from each of these sums the value of the raw cotton, say 8*d.* per lb., and we have then the following:—

For goods	£6,720,981
For yarn	2,408,673
Balance	£4,312,308

in favour of piece-goods; and, as we now export at least four-fifths of the cotton imported into this country, it becomes a matter of serious consideration to the legislature as to how they will protect so extensive a means of employment to the labouring population of this country. I see no remedy but in an alteration of the corn laws.

Effect of corn-laws to limit the national wealth, and keep the land itself from attaining its highest value.

The effect of these impolitic laws, in virtually preventing the importation of wheat until it reaches 70*s.* per quarter, is to produce, on the average, a dearness which, under a system of free trade, would belong only to the period when our commerce could extend its sales no further in the trade for corn in exchange for our manufactures; a period when prices would be still higher at home than under any artificial system, and when the wealth which would share the public burthens might be enormously beyond its present amount. Adherence to the existing system, of which some of the evils are plainly felt by the classes into whose circumstances you have directed my investigations, can therefore only be dictated either by the fear of temporary inconvenience in the transition from an artificial system, or by an indefensible political jealousy in one class of society of the increase in wealth, numbers, and influence of another.

Apparent advantages of the landlords at the cost of the rest of society in great part lost.

Those who may be supposed to have immediate interests at stake in the maintenance of the existing system of corn-laws, do not profit to the extent which a merely arithmetical calculation would evince. The fiscal fetters which deny to the whole nation an increase of wealth and numbers, and to the world at large a vast amount of services which our energies and advantages might render to it, by creating a fluctuation of prices, which a free interchange of corn between different countries would never permit, confuse and dispirit the farmer, and thus bring home to the acres of the landlord a comparative sterility, going largely to consume the apparent advantage which he enjoys. To his advantage alone can the present laws contribute: the apparent advantage is to the extent of several millions per annum; but it may be doubted whether the loss by inferior cultivation does not annually counterbalance

this advantage, and declare the whole system to be a gratuitous sacrifice of our means and our industry, unredeemed even by the very insufficient plea of service to a particular class at the cost of others. That the agricultural labourers of England, Scotland, or Ireland have no interest in the maintenance of the corn-laws, a brief survey of their condition would immediately prove; and that the farmer has not profited by his hazardous trade, he is too ready to confess; his only chance for steadily thriving being equality of prices; for the mere chances of a prize always induce him, like other gamblers, to bid above their real value. The unfortunate manufacturing poor, who are most the sport of this state of things, through the consequent variations in the price of their food, and the disturbances in the channels of commerce, are the most to be pitied; for they are the deepest and most helpless sufferers, as the medical statistics of "slack times" would most painfully prove.

Oscillations resulting from the existing system of corn-laws not only inflict occasional discomfort on the labouring classes generally, but bring positive misery among manufacturing labourers, such as the Coventry weavers.

That the limitation of our supplies of food, unless at excessive prices, to the ordinary produce of the British islands, must cause an unnecessary fluctuation in its cost, needs as little demonstration as that such fluctuation must be immediately and severely felt by the labouring classes, whose wages, so far from advancing as its price advances, will, at least in manufactures, have a rapid tendency to depression. But it is not merely discomfort to a whole population which is thus produced. Positive misery, with all its demoralization, starts into life with the monetary derangements which paralyse the efforts of the less secure manufacturing capitalists, and benumb all commercial industry. Unable to export agricultural produce in years of abundance, unless prices reach a depression utterly ruinous, the bounties of Providence are, to the farmer and landlord, perverted into a curse; while the scarcity, which we are restrained in our efforts to relieve, and which partially compensates them by excessively high prices, raised higher by the habits generated during abundance, ruins large bodies of manufacturers and pauperizes their labourers, through the sudden withdrawal of a large amount of the national income to ransack the world for food. The gold which represented this amount is gradually returned, it is true, but only in exchange for goods of which our own population are deprived by the scarcity that compels their sacrifice (by the manufacturer for the home market) to a foreign market for which they are little adapted; and for others with which our capitals manufacturing for exportation, like a large proportion of the cotton trade, may be best prepared to meet the augmented demand, probably at some profit, notwithstanding the tendency to a glut from decreased consumption at home. The real character of these commercial oscillations, injurious alike to industry and morality, is sometimes unperceived amid the monetary phenomena which accompany them; but they must continue to disorder society so long as we maintain the prohibition of foreign supplies of food at less than exorbitant prices; and the Coventry weavers are a class assuredly among the first to suffer in consequence.

Limitation to our own island for food defensible only on moral and political grounds which are untenable.

The corn-laws are a self-imposed barrier, by which we are restrained to the limits of our own island for a supply of food in all ordinary years, although in possession of resources which, were they made available, might enable us to draw a large additional subsistence from other countries. They limit both our population and our wealth; but the latter in the same larger proportion that the population engaged in manufactures and trade are generally more wealthy than those scattered on the soil in the production of food. Defensible they can be only on moral and political grounds, which are scarcely ever advanced;—on the ground that it would be injurious to extend the population employed in manufactures, or that it would be unsafe to draw part of our daily food from foreign shores. But neither proposition can be maintained; for assuredly the manufacturing portions of our population are, in every respect, in a more satisfactory state than that of at least one-third of the kingdom (Ireland) which is wholly agricultural; and to the fallaciousness of the latter proposition, all history, including our own during the last war, can bear testimony.

Reference of the condition of the labouring classes to moral influences, no argument for restraining the nation from developing all its resources.

It is true that with a highly moral population the corn-laws would not necessarily produce extensive and permanent distress, much more than the nation's arrival at the utmost possible limit of its wealth and numbers, under a free-trade system. But we have no such population; and, even if we had, the new fortunes and the new families which may be founded beyond the artificial barrier of a corn-law, are sufficient plea for its abolition. Both capital and labour would temporarily be freed from the competition which restrains the growth of the one, and presses the other towards misery. A respite would thus be obtained to allow of moral improvements, which might prepare us for the slow-returning pressure of augmented prices.

The average price of food being somewhat lowered, if wages were at first propor-

tionately lowered, the labourer would be under no more disadvantage than before, while the increase of foreign trade consequent on the cheapening of the articles which he produced would not only enable him more readily to get profitable occupation for his children, but might so increase the demand for hands as to raise his wages to their former amount in money, which would be tantamount to an advance. That temporarily somewhat lowering and permanently much equalising the general price of food would not both benefit our labourers and increase our manufactures and commerce, will scarcely be contended, however difficult it may be to calculate the immediate form and extent of the change which a repeal of the corn-laws would produce.

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Lowering and equalizing the general price of food must benefit manufactures, and the workmen engaged in them.

In all endeavours to trace the effects of the existing corn-laws upon wages, it will be borne in mind that the circumstances which determine an interchange of commodities between nations are independent of their *positive* cost, and governed by the relative facility of producing certain articles in each country. Wages may be a fixed quantity in each, higher through moral influences in the one, even according to the work done, than in the other, yet the exchange will take place; it is obvious, therefore, that a sound foreign trade will not be injured by good wages to labourers of every description. The articles imported from abroad will sell at such a rate in the dear country, as will repay nominal sacrifices on the exports, which are proportioned only to the internal demand for foreign articles in exchange, depending on the general well-being of the community. So long as other countries produce articles which we want, but cannot obtain without giving others which we can produce with greater facility in return, so long shall we continue to manufacture these and export them; but to attempt to extend this process through a general reduction of real wages would be suicidal in its nature, and produce no other result upon the communitty at large, were it practicable, than would ensue from a general reduction of wages in the home trade. Moral and political considerations are here quite sufficient to forbid such a course; and their daily operation prevent its being attempted. Population must limit itself, as in all civilized states, to the extent of subsistence at the *accustomed* standard; for to urge the lowering of this standard that a greater number may be employed, is obviously a course which it would become necessary to pursue still further on the very principle of its commencement, until the lowest limits of animal subsistence were reached. Where capital and labour are more fully developed and more efficiently combined than in other countries, and intelligence and freedom prevail among the people, there the standard of real wages will be higher, while the foreign trade also is greater; since the desire for foreign articles, and the means of gratifying that desire, by giving others in exchange, which alone give birth to foreign trade, are greater. This principle of the relative facility of production entirely dispenses with the necessity of any present investigation into the effects of direct and indirect taxation, or even of a corn monopoly, upon the prices of labour in rival manufacturing states.

Foreign trade dependent on the relative and not the positive cost of producing articles in different countries.

The higher range of *real* wages in one country than another does not therefore interfere in the least with healthy foreign trade.

The existing corn-laws do not *necessarily* make the real wages of labour generally low, though they inflict fluctuations in the price of food of the most cruel character where moral influences have made them low, and subject occasionally to utter destitution some classes of manufacturing labourers, and especially silk weavers. They limit our manufacturers and our manufacturing population, working for exportation, to such a foreign trade as will supply in return the foreign wants of the population which can ordinarily get food from the surface of the British islands. Were they abolished, and population and capital unfettered, the same pressure of prices must some day return, though with less fluctuation; and it can be met, in its tendency to depress the labouring masses, only by the moral elements of society.

Existing corn-laws a factitious limit to population and wealth, although the condition of all classes within that limit must mainly depend on moral influences.

Were food, which is one of our foreign wants, permitted to be supplied to us, it would be difficult, however, to form any estimate of the extension which our population might take; and, to ensure its healthy character and permanent prosperity, we need only that higher moral development, which is equally necessary under the existing system. This extension is a purpose which of itself demands the repeal of the existing corn-laws; and that the greater freedom so given to industry would benefit the hand-loom weavers more than any other labourers, I sincerely believe.

Their repeal would tend to augment our resources, and would benefit the weavers.

3.—DUTIES ON FOREIGN THROWN SILKS, and on various other Materials used in the Processes of Manufacture.

The nature of the small duties yet paid by foreign thrown silks, as a protection

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to the English throwster, and the use of the drawbacks in the exportation of goods, the materials of which never paid the duty, have already been stated. These duties, or rather the drawbacks, have served to foster a manufacture of the commoner goods for exportation; and are esteemed of vital importance to their interests by many of the throwsters and manufacturers of the north, where this trade is chiefly carried on. A large portion of the silk which pays the duty is consumed in the Coventry trade, and the duty, therefore, somewhat enhances the price of the articles made from it to the consumer; but this enhancement being in an article of luxury, the manufacturers generally do not consider the duty of such importance that its removal or its continuance would have any material effect on the trade. The objection to these duties, which, it is true, have no principle for their support, is thus stated by Mr. W. Brunskill:—"Those who, like myself, cultivate the higher branches of the trade, feel this to be a decided evil. A reference to the import of silk will show that the thrown article is gradually diminishing in comparison with the raw material, a result which almost deprives us of a supply of Piedmont organzine, the silk best adapted for fine purposes, particularly gauze ribbon."*

Arguments for their repeal and in favour of their continuance.

Though the Piedmont organzine will assuredly be brought as long as Mr. Brunskill and his brother manufacturers want it, yet it is obvious, from the ground upon which the drawback is claimed on goods which never paid the duty, that this duty can be of no advantage to their branch of the trade; for it is said to be a compensation to the exporter for *the enhancement of price in all silks* caused by the duty on the foreign-thrown; the goods made from which cannot be supposed to escape the enhancement. It is very probable, however, that, while large private interests have moulded themselves to this singular fiscal arrangement, the public interests, or those of the trade generally, are little affected by them. One ingenious argument for its maintenance is, that the largeness of our share in the silk-trade is owing to the advantageous application of our machinery and systems of industry to the throwing, to the locality of which the weaving has a constant tendency to attach itself, and any discouragement of which must therefore at least proportionately injure the weavers, whose labour is certainly not cheaper here than abroad, low as their wages may be.† It must also be observed, that no further reduction of these duties can now be compensated to the throwster by any reduction on raw silks, to increase the general demand.

Error in the project for procuring debentures on paying duties on foreign *manufactured* silks.

A device for extending the Coventry trade by a drawback on debentures to be given on paying the duties on foreign *manufactured* silks, was a most unfortunate invention of some of the Coventry manufacturers, which, had Government acceded to it, would have worked to an end the very contrary to that contemplated by its advocates. The price fetched by the debentures would have been, *pro tanto*, a reduction of the import duties, which would therefore have let in more than ever of the better qualities of goods, at the same time that a further bounty was given by the debentures on the exportation of the commonest, *which are not the produce of Coventry*.

Proposed repeal of excise duties on cards, and customs duties on timber.

Mr. Richard Hands also recommended the remission of the paper-duty on cards used for the jacquard machines, and a remission of the timber-duties on the wood used in looms; both which measures would assuredly render some little service to the trade; the timber-duty, especially, being as impolitic as those on corn. It is not to be supposed, however, that the repeal of all these duties would have any important or even perceptible effect on the condition of the operative weavers.

3. Want of Instruction in Design, and Protection for Patterns.

Desire to procure assistance from government in establishing a school of design.

"Our Government having exposed the ribbon-trade to the full force of competition from the French, whose Government expends large sums in encouraging the arts of design, we consider that the trade of Coventry has a claim to the like assistance from the English Government, in the establishment of a *local school of design*, where the adaptation of the arts to the local manufacture can alone be fully tested and profitably cultivated."‡ "Measures of this kind will, however, be thrown away without an unexpensive protection of patterns from piracy. At present there is literally none."§ Such are the views of the Coventry manufacturers generally, and they have great justice. They were also expressed in a petition of the inhabitants of Foleshill to the House of Commons in 1835. At present they are doing actually nothing in original design. But to establish schools for educating the rising

* Letter to Mr. P. Thompson, April 23, 1834. † John Brocklehurst, Esq., M.P.
‡ Ratcliff, Cope, Hammerton, and Caldicott. § Ibid.

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talent in the trade, and to employ professed designers who should be sent periodically to London to collect ideas, they are fully aware are the first steps towards the creation of an original fancy trade. "At Lyons, manufacturers, seeing what has last been worn, invent for the next wear to the best of their taste. A manufacturer sends his designer twice a-year to Paris. A good designer is the prop of a house, and, indeed, generally becomes a partner. He gathers ideas wherever he can in Paris, and invents for the next season. The designs most approved are then set in the loom, and the patterns are shown to the warehousemen of Paris, &c., who order accordingly, and reiterate orders, when an article proves particularly successful." *

Mode in which government may most effectually render local assistance towards industrial instruction in design.

The drawing class at the Mechanics' Institute, accessible only to the subscribers, is the sole opening that has yet been presented for the commencement of a school of taste at Coventry, and the facilities which it affords are quite insufficient to the great object of creating a native taste, and applying it to the purposes of the local manufacture. A central school of design can be little other than a normal institution for the instruction or improvement of masters, for providing models and materials, and for maintaining a correspondence which should diffuse new ideas, new methods, and new compositions with the greatest rapidity. The school of design which is to educate the scions of a manufacture must be at or near the seat of the trade; and it may become a nursery, not only of proficients for the purposes of the local manufacture, but of masters for other schools, drafted from pupils locally instructed, who shall complete their education at the central school. Invaluable assistance might thus be rendered by a central institution, which should be empowered to aid the local authorities, or voluntary associations, in modes and to an extent to be prescribed by directors appointed by Government. This assistance should not be limited to a single effort, but made continuous by inspection, advice, and additions to local collections of models, &c.

Absolute necessity for some protection of patterns.

But at Coventry it is impossible, without some improved institution of police for the protection of patterns, that talent can be embarked in their production; for even now, when almost every one is copying from the French, there are many little masters, especially in the rural parishes, where they call themselves "undertakers," who drive a thriving trade in pirating the ideas, in the way of taste, which they see about them. "Some workmen will even use, for one master, the patterns of another, on being paid somewhat extra." †

Recommendations for the protection of patterns anticipated by a Committee of the House of Commons.

The Report from the Select Committee on Arts and their Connexion with Manufactures, in 1836, which recommends the institution of local schools of design on the principles above described, at the same time shows that, though there are statutes giving in some branches of trade considerable protection to copyright, yet that "the expensiveness of a remedy through the courts of law or equity is a virtual bar to invention, and almost affords impunity to piracy in art." The same report embodies in few words all the recommendations on this subject that here made to me at Coventry:—

"The most obvious principle of any measure enacted for the protection of invention appears to be the constitution of A CHEAP AND ACCESSIBLE TRIBUNAL. The French have long possessed a prompt and economical court of judgment for cases of this kind. The constitution of the *Conseil des Prud'hommes*, prevalent in the manufacturing districts of France, is a subject of interesting development in the evidence of Dr. Bowring. These local tribunals form a kind of jury or board of arbitration, composed of master-manufacturers and workmen, empowered to decide on priority of invention in design, as well as on many other subjects connected with manufactures. It has, however, occurred to the Committee that, when a dispute arises concerning originality of invention between designers residing at a distance from each other, local tribunals would not readily afford a final adjudication.

"In addition to cheapness, the greatest promptitude of decision is another obvious element in the constitution of such a tribunal. For this and for other reasons a SYSTEM OF REGISTRATION appears to be indispensable.

"Another element in the consideration of this subject is the varying DURATION OF PROTECTION to be extended to different inventions in manufactures. The various periods of invention form a question of minute and exact detail, fit for separate investigation, and dependent on evidence too specific to be comprehended in the more general inquiry undertaken by th Committee.

"The Committee consider the elaboration of any comprehensive measure for the protection of designs in manufactures to be well worthy of the serious attention of the Government."‡

Benefits attainable from schools of art, and protection for patterns.

The institution of the central school of design at Somerset House gives earnest,

* Charles. † Slingsby.
‡ Report from Select Committee on Arts and Principles of Design, p. vii.

it is hoped, of the adoption of a wider system for the education of taste in manufactures. And that tribunals of summary and popular jurisdiction, for the protection of property in taste, may readily be constituted, a subsequent opportunity occurs to demonstrate. Influences from these sources upon the condition of the weaving population generally can, however, be but slowly developed and limited in extent.

5. "Currency Gambling."

Desire for the adoption of measures which would give more stability to the general credit, and so diminish fluctuations in trade.

By this name some of the manufacturers* described those operations of the Bank of England and other banks, to which they largely attribute the revulsions in credit of which they have of late years repeatedly felt the effects. Some of the weavers expressed the same opinions, but candidly declared their inability to state the measures to which they specifically objected, or to describe their operation. One party maintain that the change in the currency effected by the Cash Payments Resumption Act caused a general depression, from which the nation has never recovered. That it increased the public burthens is indisputable; but that it had any other prolonged effect upon the nation is much to be doubted; and assuredly the best relief from public burthens is not to be found in a fresh revolution in private credit. It is unnecessary, however, here to discuss the policy of measures which have affected nearly all industry as much as that employed in textile manufactures, or to urge the suppression, so far as it can be effected, of all tampering with the general credit, whether for private interests, or under the excitements of speculation; since the fluctuations necessarily resulting from natural, political, and commercial changes and calamities are, of themselves, inflictions upon a manufacturing population among the severest to which mankind is subject. A strong conviction has been wrought in the public mind by the writings of some of the ablest financiers in the kingdom, that the existing monetary system of England is liable to mischievous and even perilous oscillations, through the exercise of incompatible functions by the Bank of England. And the statement made by the Coventry weavers that the effects of all such oscillations must ultimately descend to them and to others of the labouring classes in the shape of physical privations and moral suffering, tending to disease and death, is mathematically demonstrable. Both the manufacturers and the weavers of Coventry attribute much of the fluctuation in the silk-trade to the operations of the Bank of England; and that they have some ground for such supposition, I cannot but admit. The effects which fluctuation thus produced or aggravated have upon the operatives are not only felt in immediate pecuniary afflictions, but are perpetuated by the demoralization which a fluctuating occupation is sure to entail. At present it is complained in the Coventry trade that the times of abundant employment are insufficient to enable a great body of the weavers to extricate themselves from the difficulties and obligations in which a want or deficiency of work in the frequently recurring slack times involves them; and thus they drag through a life of hopelessness and degradation. A feeble morality must inevitably succumb before such fluctuations; and, whatever portion of so mighty an evil can be discovered to result from causes within the control of the legislature, that portion ought assuredly to be interrupted at its source.

Advantages supposed by a few to be derivable from arbitrary augmentations of the currency.

The idea that the currency is essentially an extraneous agent, not depending for its very extent and being upon the actual commercial wants and resources of the country, here, as elsewhere, leads some of the labouring classes into the supposition that it might at any moment be augmented by acts of the legislature, to the general enhancement of wages and diffusion of prosperity.† That this seductive notion should have some prevalence, after the pains which have been taken by a few individuals of a superior class to disseminate others very similar, is not surprising; but its refutation is needless in this place.

Causes affecting the extent of the trade insufficient alone to account for depression; and remedies to be applied in extension of the trade insufficient to its removal.

After a close examination into the former and present extent of the trade of ribbon weaving, and the influences affecting it, I cannot discover in them a cause sufficient to account for the permanently depressed condition, as compared with that of other operatives, of a large proportion of the hands engaged in it; much less can I perceive the means of removing that depression. Although the remedies which have been suggested in this department, contain much which would benefit the trade consistently with general interests, it cannot be supposed that the extension or permanency which it would derive from their adoption would be so great as to influence very materially the condition of the great body of the weavers.

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* Mr. Cope and others. † Shaw of Nuneaton, and others.

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II.—INDUSTRIAL CONDITION OF THE RIBBON-WEAVERS.

Former Industrial Organization.

Having thus briefly examined into the extent of the trade, and its capabilities of further extension, it is next incumbent on me to describe its organization and its supply of hands. The probable increase of the latter, as compared with any possible extension of trade, is, of course, a necessary part of any estimate as to the prospects of the whole class of weavers, and the means of their improvement. I shall briefly describe, therefore, the formation and the circumstances of each existing class of hands, with the means of access to each.

Formation of each existing class of hands, and access to it.

Early in the present century the master manufacturers in the ribbon-trade at Coventry were much fewer than at present, and at Nuneaton there were only one or two; but all were men of property, since it was impossible for persons who had not a considerable capital to find a vent for any quantity of goods by keeping warehouses in London, and by having their own commercial travellers. These manufacturers were thus secured from the competition of smaller masters, to which rank the undertakers or master weavers might have aspired but for this difficulty of finding a vent for their goods. The master employer was rather a merchant than a manufacturer; buying the thrown silk; giving it out, in the proportions which he deemed advisable, to the dyer, to be returned of various colours; and then redistributing the hanks to the "undertakers," who returned the thrown and dyed silk in the shape of marketable ribbons.

Former Class of Master Manufacturers.

The undertaker, or master weaver, held much the same position in society that the master mechanic or tradesman held in the towns throughout England from the earliest periods till towards the close of the last century. He was the proprietor of the tools of his trade; frequently, also, of his house and his shop; the working master of all its operations; the head of a family which comprised his apprentices; and the foreman among his own journeymen; the latter having their own homes, often very wretched, from under his roof. Nearly all the male weavers in Coventry, before the "big purl time," had thus served their seven years' apprenticeship in the house of an undertaker, and by virtue of it were entitled to the freedom of the city. Those who, after emerging from their apprenticeship and perhaps continuing for some years to work as journeymen, were provident enough to save money, or had friends to advance it to them, in their turn became master weavers; while those who would not, or could not, attain to this position, formed the permanent body of journeymen. No women were yet employed in the engine-loom, though they worked in the single-hand trade; and an attempt of a journeyman to get his wife employed in the engine-loom gave rise to the only strike of the journeymen that is remembered to have occurred in this early period of the trade. "The men, succeeding in preventing it, had a 'goose-riding,' which, among the Coventry sports, was then a common mode of celebrating a victory: a live goose was hung by its legs from a rope across the street, with its neck greased, and the fun consisted in running at and retaining its head in the hand if possible.*" About the end of the last century a few of the journeymen began to take apprentices, though working on the looms of an undertaker, especially when the latter had more than an usual number, some of which might not be on his own premises; but the half-pay apprenticeship system was not introduced until at or near the "big purl time." Whether employed on the engine-loom or on the single-hand loom, the undertaker gave to the journey-hand two-thirds of the price which he received from the master manufacturer, retaining to himself the other third for the use of his shop and looms; for payment to the winders and warpers, who wound the silk from the hanks upon bobbins, and from the bobbins formed the warps; and for remuneration for his own trouble and responsibility. The journey-hand, for his two-thirds, had to fill his quills (wind the shute or weft on the little pins contained in the shuttle), and to perform all the operations of weaving. In other words, "winding," "warping," "loom," "room," and "fetching and carrying," were found by the *undertaker*; "quill-filling," "shooting down," "picking up," and "picking," or "cleaning," by the *journey-hand* weaver and the apprentice. The winding and warping was

Former Class of Undertakers or Master Weavers.

Former Class of Journeymen Weavers

Winders and Warpers.

* Herbert.

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always, to a great extent, the work of women and children, usually of the undertakers' own families, aided by others if they were insufficient for the service of all his looms.

Sale of goods and payment of wages by list prices.

The trade thus constituted, its commercial heads, who gave to their customers on an average nine months' credit, and received still longer credit from the silk-broker, had a mutual understanding on two essential particulars. They sold their goods by one agreed list, subject to a discount of thirty per cent. for ready money; and paid the undertakers, for the work done, by another agreed list, which, though not printed, was perfectly well known to all, whether manufacturers, undertakers, or journey-hands. The price of labour was never a subject of discussion with any party; whenever there was work the same invariable price was given, whatever might be the price of commodities, or the number of hands wanting it. Sometimes there was more work than hands could be found to perform; but scarcely a year passed without serious want of employment at some period of it, and frequently more than half the men were out of work and in the greatest distress, especially from the latter end of October till towards Spring.*

Breaking up of the Apprenticeship system by the "Big Purl Time."

During the war a great number of the young weavers went into the army,—chiefly the single-hand weavers of the rural districts,—as the preceding table of their comparative population will bear evidence; and when the great demand for hands at the "big purl time" occurred in 1813, prices were offered which caused an excessive influx of hands from other occupations, especially of young people of both sexes; a system of apprenticeship for short periods was begun, on which the learner was taken, not into the house, but only to work on the loom of the master; half his earnings being taken by the master for teaching him, and the other half received by the apprentice or his parents. Children of both sexes were taken into both kinds of looms on this system of "half-pay apprenticeship," which appears to have been previously in use among the single-hand weavers of the country, where there was no municipal or political franchise to be obtained by a regular apprenticeship. The period served had heretofore, however, been seven years; the children being put very early into the loom, even when no more than ten years of age; according to the prevailing custom of working the children at a very early age.†

Change from the "Undertaking" to the "Journeywork" system.

This influx completely broke up the old constitution of the trade, and when, contemporaneously with the return of many weavers from the army and militia in 1815, came the general stagnation of all manufacturing industry which ensued on the peace, the whole trade fell into anarchy, from which a new system emerged. The labour-market was overburthened by an excess of hands; many of the undertakers, who had been induced to manufacture on their own account, now failed; and the manufacturer was severely pressed by the operations of the large silk warehouses of London, which had risen into commanding importance during the war. By their agents the latter threw open the channels of trade to the little capitalist, and assumed the business of distribution, which had heretofore been exercised solely by the master manufacturer having his warehouse in London. The capital of the manufacturer, compelled to yield a great portion of its mercantile business to the superior combinations of the warehouseman, invaded in turn the business of the undertaker; and, in the engine trade, took three-fourths of it to itself, and gave the rest to journey-hands. The whole trade of the undertaker, or master weaver, was thus rapidly forced out of existence; those undertakers who could, became little masters; and those who could not, had no resort but to take journeywork on the new system. The journeymen, as a class, were thus *advanced;* but the middle class was annihilated; a change which was largely effected almost contemporaneously in other branches of industry. But the half-pay system of apprenticeship reduced ribbon-weaving in the engine-loom from the rank of a skilled trade almost to that of a common labourer's occupation. All who remained mere journeymen, or "journeymen's journeymen," as they are now called, under the new system, were reduced to a much lower position than they formerly held; but the journeyman at "first-hand," who became proprietor of his own loom, and perhaps of one or two more, and who received his work direct from the warehouse of the manufacturer (by whom the winding and warping were now done on his own premises), had acquired, in his little capital, an ingredient of respectability which promised to yield him the means of comfort, if not of advancement.

Consequent modern struggles for List Prices of labour.

Notwithstanding occasional periods of full employment, there have generally been more hands than work to occupy them in the engine as well as in the single-hand

* Herbert. Stevens. † Stevens.

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trade; and the old system, by which the local capitalist had as undisturbed possession of his trade as the landlord had of his estate, being broken up, while the warehouseman acknowledged none of the ancient bonds by which the former had allowed himself to be fettered, competition was extended in its full force to the *price* of labour as well as to the extent of employment which a journeyman should get from his master. To meet these new circumstances, it was endeavoured, in 1818-19, to obtain an extension of the Spitalfields Act to Coventry, but this attempt failed; and from that period has occurred a series of struggles in regard to the price of labour, the merits of which can be estimated only by tracing out the constituent classes and interests of the trade. The large industrial combinations effected by great capitalists, developing new talent and industry, and performing with matchless economy the vast services which they render to society, are the great engines of a material civilisation, the results of which it is important to trace in their effect upon the local constitution of society.

Changed position of Manufacturers.

The warehousemen extended their operations rapidly from about 1820, and the effect of this change of system is, that, aided by the great central capital of the warehouseman, the same amount of capital that was employed in the whole trade twenty years ago, being now all locally applied and more rapidly turned, does ten times the business. The leaders of the trade were formerly the 25 or 30 manufacturers at Coventry; now, they are the 16 or 18 warehousemen of London and Manchester, who deal largely in ribbons. Profits of course were reduced with quicker returns, and the silk-brokers were compelled to shorten their credit to the manufacturer, who might otherwise trade entirely upon their capital; the payments to him by the warehouseman being monthly. The credit given by the broker used to be twelve months for tram (shute), and ten months for organzine (warp), until 1820, when it was first reduced to a credit of eight months for both, and now it is three months* for both, with a discount for ready money of two and a half per cent. on organzine, and somewhat extra on tram; but it is the general custom to take the credit. Having credit with the dyer, credit with the silk-broker, and money enough for one month's wages, any one may enter the trade. Little masters are constantly entering the trade, and, by their endeavours to extend their operations, push on the whole trade in the race of competition; and the difference in habits, feelings, and position, between the master manufacturers under the old system, and those of the present day, is sufficiently obvious.† Some of the larger manufacturers, who had ceased to have warehouses in London, have recently re-opened them, in the supposition that the warehouse system does not give them all the advantages to which they were entitled.

Present Manufacturers.

The master manufacturers employing the hands in the whole district reside for the most part in Coventry. Of the looms in the city and suburbs—

1	manufacturer employs	nearly	400.
5	„	„ from	200 to 300.
6	„	„ from	100 to 200.
16	„	„ from	50 to 100.
29	„	„ from	10 to 50.
70	„	„ under	10.
127	manufacturers.		

Of the last-mentioned number, forty are of the class of journey-hands owning their looms, working them on their own account, and selling their goods to the agents of the London warehouses, who make purchases in any quantity. The number of manufacturers, in the larger sense of the term, in the city of Coventry, is therefore only about sixty. In Foleshill there is only one small master; in Bedworth, six small firms; in Nuneaton, four manufacturers. All the hands in the rural districts not employed by these, work for Coventry manufacturers, except when an undertaker or master weaver temporarily works on his own account, or when work is given out by a few speculators to meet a particular demand, commonly in the spring season, whence they have obtained the vulgar designation of "cuckoo masters." These sometimes injure the regular trader by occupying the hands whom, in a time of slacker trade, he had been endeavouring to keep together by manufacturing without profit, or for stock.

Price of raw material a large proportion of the cost of the goods, as compared with that of weaving.

The price of the silk forms a large proportion of the total cost of the manufactured article; and, under the constant liability to fluctuations, the trade therefore

* Herbert five, Odell three.

† Herbert.

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requires a sufficient and cautiously bestowed capital for securely conducting it on any extensive scale. The loss on stock has sometimes been very severely felt; and the same loss attaching to any depreciation of price, whether in the material or in labour, the manufacturers of capital have some immediate interest in maintaining any existing rate of wages from depression, so long as the whole trade is not in danger of being outrivalled by the manufactures of other places. The average proportion of the labour of all the processes of weaving to the price of the manufactured article is about 25 per cent.; the rest of the price is for the thrown silk, and for dying. In figured goods, however, and especially in gauzes, the proportion of labour is much greater*. Much of the silk is bought by the manufacturer ready thrown, such as the Italian organzine; but some is purchased raw, and is thrown for them at the mills in the neighbourhood (four in number) and by some smaller throwing establishments having hand machinery. The next process is that of dyeing in the hank, an important business, carried on chiefly by two firms, the extent of whose operations has already been stated. The silk is then ready for winding, warping, and weaving; the two first being merely the preparatory processes in the whole business of a weaver, as formerly understood. The *winding* consists of winding the silk from the hank in a connected thread upon bobbins, ready for being transferred to the warping machine, if it be organzine, or to the pins of the shuttle, if it be tram. The "organzine," of which the warps are usually composed, consists of several threads of silk twisted together, of which each thread has previously been twisted; while the "tram," which commonly forms the shute, consists of threads twisted together, without having previously been twisted into "singles," as the one twisted thread is called. By the aid of the *warping* machine, the several threads of organzine upon the bobbins are brought together to form the warp, which is first transferred to a hand-roll, and hence to the beam or roll of the loom. In *filling*, the threads of tram or shute have simply to be wound singly from the bobbins upon the little revolving pins successively inserted in the shuttle, as the silk contained upon them is exhausted. These processes of winding, warping, and filling, are a part of the occupation of the weaving population of Coventry, which it is essential not to omit from any estimate of their condition.

Transactions and Processes preparatory to Weaving.

Winding, Warping, and Filling.

Various existing Systems of Employment in Weaving.

The weaving is now done on various systems, one of which has gradually risen upon another, the old *undertaking*, or "master weaver" plan of manufacture, being at the base of all. Each system subjects the hands employed in it to industrial influences, which make their position and circumstances remarkably distinct. They may be severally described, as—

1. The Undertaking system;
2. The Journey-work system;
3. The Hand-factory system;
4. The Separate "Picking-up" system;
5. The Steam-factory system.

It has already been stated that the looms employed are of three principal classes; the old *single-hand* loom, producing only one breadth of ribbon at a time; the *plain engine* loom, producing several breadths at a time; and the *jacquard engine* loom, which is the plain engine loom with the jacquard machinery attached, for the purpose of producing figures on all the breadths simultaneously. The first of the industrial systems above enumerated applies to the single-hand loom only; the four latter, to the engine-loom only. The "undertaking system" alone appears to be known to the French ribbon-trade, which has never emerged from this primitive industrial economy. On this system the dyed silk is given to a master weaver, or undertaker, in the hank, and he returns it in the shape of finished goods, according to the instructions of the manufacturer; having taken charge of all the processes of winding, warping, filling, weaving, and picking or cleaning, which are included in the price paid for weaving. On the "journeywork system," the master manufacturer gets the winding and warping of the warp-silk done, generally on his own premises, and gives to the first-hand journeyman the prepared warp, with the shute-silk in hank, for the winding of which, generally done in the journeyman's family, the master gives to him 1*d.* per ounce, besides the price paid for the weaving, which, however, includes the *filling*. On the "hand-factory system," the manufacturer gets every preparatory process done, with the exception, commonly, of *filling*, which is still included in the price paid for

* Cope, &c.

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weaving. The "separate picking-up" consists in dividing the labour of working a loom between two pair of hands, one of which is employed incessantly in "shooting down," or passing the shuttles and making the ribbon, while the other is wholly occupied in "picking-up" or mending threads, picking out knots, &c. On the "steam-factory system," the manufacturer gets every preparatory process done, and, by the steam power, does *one-half* of the final weaving process itself, viz., the "shooting down;" while to the weaver is left only the general superintendence and the "picking up." The custom of the trade, from its commencement, has been to pay for weaving *by the piece;* and it is but recently that any deviation has been made from this plan.

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1. The Undertaking System.

"Undertaking" the system of the Single-hand Weaving.

The system of manufacturing by the agency of undertakers, or master weavers, on which the whole trade was long conducted, is now in full vigour only in the rural parishes. The whole of the single-hand country trade is on this system, because of the want of some responsibility between the manufacturer and the dispersed journey-hands (chiefly women and children), and because the minutiæ of its detail render this the best economy of labour. The undertaker fetches the work from Coventry and takes in the finished goods generally once a week, on Saturday, or sends them by a carrier, who brings back the money, charging at Nuneaton 2*d* for each parcel, 2*d*. for every 10*s*., 3*d*. for every higher sum up to 3*l*., and 1*d*. for every additional 1*l*. The undertaker is allowed generally one ounce in twenty for waste, through all the processes, and in some fabrics, as gauzes and pads, rather more; but by some houses he is limited on other goods to ten or twelve drachms, which is thought a hardship, all deficiencies of weight being deducted from the price of weaving.

Looms belonging to each undertaker, and difficulties in the way of change to the jacquard trade.

Each undertaker has generally seven or eight looms; a few have a greater number, up to sixteen; and one even fifty; but the man who has seven or eight looms finds himself fully occupied in managing the business of them, and when he has more than that number he requires the aid of an assistant, of nearly the same ability as himself, at wages. The workshops of the single-hand trade are, almost universally, low rooms on the ground-floor, with the sleeping apartments above, though sometimes they form a projecting part of the house; and hence arises a great difficulty in the way of a transition from the single-hand to the jacquard engine-trade, the undertaker requiring a new house, as well as new looms. Floors and roofs are, in fact, sometimes broken through to accommodate the machinery.

Personal occupations of the undertaker.

Besides fetching and carrying the work (which he sometimes, not very gallantly, leaves to his wife), and superintending the work in the whole of the looms, the undertaker, with the aid of a boy to turn the machine, does the warping, which is the most difficult and the nicest of the operations; but he does not weave unless he have only two or three looms, one of which he will then work himself. The number of single-hand looms in the rural parishes being about 7500, assuming that there are on an average about seven looms to each undertaker, the number of these master weavers, who are nearly all heads of families, will be upwards of 1000.

Employment of the women and children in winding and warping.

The winding is the work of women and children, and is generally done in the undertaker's family: when it is not, the undertaker gives often to the families of labourers who are not weavers, 1½*d*. per ounce for winding fine warps, and 1¼*d*. for coarse warps, and for shute, which is commonly of a heavier thread. When an undertaker's looms are at full work, they generally find employment for all his family in winding, since it would require two pair of hands, if both women, or a larger number, if part of them children, as is usually the case, to wind for every ten looms. The undertaker's wife, if she have very good silk, may earn 5*s*. per week; if silk of an average quality, only 4*s*., 3*s*. 6*d*., or 3*s*. The value of the children's services may be known from the rate at which they are hired from other families. Their parents are paid 6*d*. per week for their services during the whole of the first year; 9*d*. for the next six months; and 1*s*. or 1*s*. 3*d*. afterwards: the advance in the hire of the children is sometimes earlier. Children never get more than 1*s*. 6*d*. per week for winding, the usual hours being from seven A. M. to eight P. M.; but at from ten to fourteen years of age (generally about twelve) the little winders of both sexes are put into the loom*.

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* Nuneaton Weavers' Evidence—Bunney of Bedworth.

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First introduction of children to the trade.

The weaver's children are employed at an extremely early age in little operations of the manufacture,—filling the shute, picking at the back of the loom, making eye-lashes, clipping plaided or figured ribbons, and otherwise acting as little "servants of all work to the trade," as one of the witnesses described their occupations*. They commence winding the shute about eight years of age and sometimes earlier, but winding for the warp is one of the last occupations to which the child attains, because of the nicety required to avoid waste. The winders for warp, having the full management of this process, are, in fact, chiefly young persons of more advanced years, whose health would not allow them to continue the stooping posture in the loom.

The journeyhands, *seven-eighths* women and children.

Three-fourths of the actual weavers in the single-hand loom are females, and of the remaining fourth, who are male hands, about one-third are under sixteen, when a number go to the engine-loom,† and one half under twenty; so that the earnings of the single-hand weavers are to the extent of seven-eighths, those *merely of women and children*, and in any general view, are rather to be considered as wholly such,‡ than as the pittance upon which adult male hands generally have to support a family, the members of which can render scarcely any supplementary aid, as was represented by one of the witnesses from Nuneaton, before the Commons' Committee of 1835.§ It is, in fact, this very opening for the employment of women and children that has made the ribbon-trade here, as on the Continent, so extensively a rural manufacture. It allows the heads of families to be engaged in more hardy ocupations, or obtain a livelihood as undertakers (without actually being weavers), in which capacity they obtain, if the winding be done by their own family, one half as much as the gross earnings of all their hands. Two-thirds of the price paid by the manufacturer to the undertaker is paid by the latter to the weaver, and the other third retained as his own remuneration for his care and responsibility, his fetching and carrying, his warping and winding, his shop-rent, and the use of his looms, the wear and tear of gearing, &c.; the weaver supplying nothing but dexterity in the one mechanical operation. Nor can it be considered that with this share the undertaker is overpaid; since the personal management of hands often irreclaimably careless, especially in a time of good trade, is alone no little labour. The families of all kinds of labourers and handicraftsmen,—carpenters, bricklayers, colliers, farm-labourers, &c.,—throughout the weaving district, are very numerously employed by these men in the single-hand trade; and the possession of another source of livelihood by the heads of so many families, will account for so large a number of looms, though thrown out of work by a slack time, remaining for employment on any fresh impulse in the trade. The manufacturer, during the slack time, delays the undertaker, or puts him on half work; and the undertaker discharges part of his journey-hands, and lessens the employment of others; the manufacturer leaving the onus of the fixed capital on the undertaker, and the undertaker being enabled to get rid of his excess of hands, and yet have them at his call.

Their share in the price which is paid to the Undertaker for weaving.

Admission of hands to the Single-hand Loom.

The children put into the single-hand loom are not considered "anything like weavers," until fourteen or fifteen years of age. In 1819, the undertakers of every parish entered into a bond to refrain from taking any apprentices except by indenture, but in less than a year it was generally broken and abandoned. Apprenticeship in any form is now fast going out of use. The few apprentices are on the half-pay system, which seems to have taken its rise in this branch of the trade. They are indentured; but the contract generally is only a private agreement, very various in its terms, seldom written, and often broken by the parents of the child on any spur in the trade, when it can be taken away, with imperfect skill, to do more profitable journey-work for a "cuckoo master." The young hands are chiefly girls, to whose parents it is common at Bedworth, and in other places, for the master to pay 3*s.* or 4*s.* per week, and they are very commonly domestic servants, as well as apprentices, though they still live with their parents. They are generally hired from year to year, or for several years, with advancing wages; the master finding nothing but loom and light to work by. On the ordinary half-pay system, it is provided that the master shall pay to the apprentice one half of the earnings, and bear one half the cost of filling, and light to work by. At sixteen or seventeen, both sexes are qualified journey-hands, and work as such, at the usual two-thirds pay, which, with the young

* Holmes. † Ib.—Holmes, Slingsby. ‡ Hands. § David Shaw, Q. 3829, 3830.

women, is much preferred to going to service.* At a very early age, therefore, the children are able to assert a pernicious liberty from domestic control. There is no apprenticeship or servitude but to the undertaker, for it is he who owns the looms, and keeps them employed, although they may be worked in the house of another: no apprentices whatever are taken into the house. In a shop of eight looms, there are generally not more than two apprentices or learners; from twelve to sixteen years of age; the rest being journey-hands.

Position of Journey-hands as a class.

The adult journeyman in this branch of the trade, in which he can do no more than the women and children of families where the man has another and superior occupation, is certainly in a wretched position, from which, while he adheres to the single-hand trade, his only chance of emerging is by becoming an undertaker; from which, if he has no expectation but from his own hands, he is debarred by the poverty of his earnings, which are merely those of a woman. Were he going to succeed to his master's looms, or had he friends or money of his own to purchase some, the trade might promise him the subsistence of a mechanic, and a possibility of advancement; but without these prospects, the introduction of male hands into this branch of trade can obviously lead only to misery and degradation, for such must inevitably await the mere journey-hand who takes upon him the cares of a family (notwithstanding the employment it offers to the young and female members of it), with no better habits than a trade of this description must inevitably implant. In the parish of Bedworth, the jacquard engine-loom has taken all the young men from journey-work on the single-hand loom; there the journey-hands are now, it may be said, wholly women;† and the boys who are coming up to the ribbon trade, are employed in the jacquard-loom shops as fillers and pickers up, while girls chiefly are sent to the single-hand loom. The colliers' boys generally go into the pits; and some of the male children of other labourers will follow the father's occupation; but the families of undertakers are almost wholly brought up to the ribbon-trade; and there is a wretched class of male journeyhands, especially in the remoter parts of the rural weaving districts.

Inability to obtain a census of the single-hand weavers.

It was my earnest desire to extend the census of the City weavers to the single-hand trade of the rural parishes, so as to give the most accurate analysis of it; but its wide dispersion precluded the prosecution of such a labour, with any means at my disposal.

Partial interchange of the journeywork and undertaking systems between the single-hand and the jacquard-engine Trades.

A few single-hand looms are employed at "first-hand journeywork" by the little manufacturers of Bedworth, who are their own undertakers, only that their looms are dispersed in the cottages of the weavers, as also are many of those belonging to undertakers, who supply them with work in the same manner as those on their premises. On the other hand, a number of the engine looms in the Foleshill and Bedworth districts, worked under men who have been, or still are, single-hand undertakers, are partly under the system which they had been accustomed to pursue with their single-hand looms. Their owners having formerly been for the most part single-hand undertakers, and still possessing the machines for winding their own warps, it is common for them to receive from the manufacturer the whole of the silk in hank, as formerly; but the winding and the warping are the subject of an express agreement, and not included in the price paid for weaving, as in the single-hand trade. The greater proportion of the time of these men, like that of the undertakers having single-hand looms, is occupied in fetching and carrying, and the preparatory processes, their remuneration being commonly derived from one loom, which is kept constantly going by some member of their family, and from one-third of the earnings of the one or two others that may be worked by journey-hands.†

2.—The Journeywork System.

Journeywork system embracing the great body of the Engine Trade in the City and Suburbs.

This is the system of the whole engine trade of the city and neighbourhood of Coventry, with the exception of the factory looms, and the few in the Foleshill and Bedworth districts on the undertaking system. It presents a change from the undertaking system, by which the business of the undertaker (his intervention being no longer rendered necessary by either distance, economy of labour, or want of responsibility) is divided between the manufacturer and the journey-hand. The "first-hand journeyman" has his own looms, which, though more valuable, are fewer in number than those of the single-hand undertaker; and his house is generally so constructed, especially the modern ones, which

* Bunney. Bunney.

† Holmes and Others.

Business of a "first-hand journeyman."

are by far the best, as to have the household apartments on the ground floor, the sleeping apartments on the first floor, and the workshop at the top, capable of accommodating three or four looms. He obtains the work from the master, the warp prepared, and the shute in the hank; he finds loom-shop, looms, jacquard machinery (if he be in the figure-trade), and the wear and tear of all gearing; he gets the winding of the shute done, commonly in his own family, for which, when he takes in the work, he is paid usually at the rate of 1*d.* per ounce, though sometimes less. In his own family, also, the filling for his looms is commonly done, for which he receives payment in the price of the weaving; and besides working in one loom himself, he superintends the others, in which various members of his family, his journeymen, or his apprentices, are proceeding with work for which he is responsible. If he have not a family by which the winding and filling can be done, he has to pay one-fourth more to get the winding done than he receives for it, and the filling forms a considerable item of reduction from his gross earnings.* The "first-hand" is responsible to the manufacturer for all deficiency of weight beyond one ounce in twenty allowed for waste in the shute, and the same for thrums in the warp. The winding of the shute was, after its withdrawal from the undertaker, for some time done by the manufacturer, but this is now again given to the first-hand journeyman, on terms as cheap to the master, while some employment is afforded to the younger members of the weaver's family.

Constitution of the Trade in the City and Suburbs.

The looms on the journeywork system are chiefly in the city and its immediate vicinity; the engine looms more distant belonging either to undertakers or to the Bedworth and Nuneaton masters, whose employment of looms at journeywork is limited, compared to the number in their factories. The following tables will show at a glance the constitution of the trade in the city and suburbs of Coventry, where it is wholly, with the exception of the factories, on the journeywork system.

CENSUS TABLE IV.; showing the NUMBER and the several CLASSES of HAND-LOOM WEAVERS in each of the WARDS of the City of COVENTRY, and in the Suburban Villages of RADFORD and STOKE.

Wards.	Men who are "First-hand Journeymen" working their own looms.	Women of the "First-hand Journeymen's" Families: some themselves loom-owners.	Journeymen, or "Journeymen's Journeymen."	Journeywomen, or "Journeymen's Journeywomen."	Half-pay Apprentice Boys.	Half-pay Apprentice Girls.	Apprentice Boys.	Apprentice Girls.	Boys of "First-hand Journeymen's" Family.	Girls of "First-hand Journeymen's" Family.	Total.
Bayley Lane	7	11	5	..	1	..	1	1	..	1	27
Bishop's Street	225	102	224	77	49	11	45	20	14	22	789
Broad Gate	56	25	24	18	3	1	3	4	13	11	158
Cross Cheaping	42	20	68	5	2	4	6	3	1	2	153
Earl Street	53	32	38	12	4	3	8	2	14	12	178
Gosford Street	284	155	107	43	6	4	48	16	33	49	745
Jordan Well	277	176	119	57	32	8	67	14	19	36	805
Much-Park Street	194	112	128	38	37	6	54	8	17	31	625
Smithford Street	7	5	9	1	..	..	..	..	2	4	28
Spon Street	300	209	85	80	18	10	34	24	34	51	845
Total in City	1,445	847	807	331	152	47	266	92	147	219	4,353
Suburban Villages.											
Radford	16	10	7	5	..	..	3	..	..	6	47
Stoke	40	29	24	11	..	2	2	7	6	10	131
Total in Suburban Villages	56	39	31	16	..	2	5	7	6	16	178
Total in City and Suburbs	1,501	886	838	347	152	49	271	99	153	235	4,531

* Weavers' Committee.

CENSUS TABLE V.; showing the FABRICS upon which each CLASS of HANDS is employed in the City of COVENTRY, and in the Suburban Villages of RADFORD and STOKE.

Classes of Hands.	Plain Sarsnet.	Plain Satin.	Plain Gauze.	Figured Sarsnet.	Figured Satin.	Figured Gauze.	Loves.	Satin Gauze.	Plain Pad.	Figured Pad.	Satin Pad.	Ley Gauze.	Ley Satin.	China.	China Gauze.	Shawl Borders.	Total.
Men who are "First-hand Journeymen"	553	452	3	52	38	249	63	19	6	6	..	7	..	10	16	27	1,501
Women of the "First-hands" families	485	221	6	14	9	65	21	11	3	2	1	2	..	12	19	15	886
Journeymen	254	181	8	64	64	163	21	6	4	23	..	7	1	5	12	25	838
Journeywomen	160	89	..	8	9	48	9	3	3	1	..	2	..	1	10	4	347
Half-pay Apprentice Boys	11	6	..	8	11	95	5	6	..	1	..	1	..	..	3	5	152
,, ,, Girls	21	13	..	..	2	7	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	3	1	49
Apprentice Boys	77	65	1	10	14	76	2	9	..	2	..	1	..	..	3	11	271
,, Girls	47	31	1	3	1	10	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	2	99
Boys of the "First-hands" families	74	26	..	3	8	22	2	2	2	1	..	..	..	2	7	4	153
Girls	109	52	1	4	9	38	2	..	2	..	..	..	..	9	4	5	235
Total	1,797	1,138	20	211	165	773	127	57	20	36	1	20	1	40	79	99	4,531

CENSUS TABLE VI.; showing the Number of LOOM-OWNERS of the OPERATIVE CLASSES working commonly for Manufacturers, and the Number who have in employ the various Number of LOOMS below stated, in each of the Wards of the City of COVENTRY, and in the Suburban Villages of RADFORD and STOKE.

Wards.	Loom-Owners working for Manufacturers.			Number of Weavers owning the various Number of Looms below stated.											Number of Looms belonging to Weavers working for Manufacturers.
	Men.	Women.	Total.	1 loom.	2 looms.	3 looms.	4 looms.	5 looms.	6 looms.	7 looms.	8 looms.	9 looms.	10 looms.	11 looms.	
Bayley Lane	11	6	17	13	2	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	27
Bishop's Street	249	10	259	75	72	54	25	10	9	3	1	..	1	..	624
Broad Gate	66	2	68	29	12	9	12	1	3	1	..	..	..	..	158
Cross Cheaping	44	4	48	22	10	10	2	3	..	1	..	..	..	..	102
Earl Street	58	9	67	28	13	10	9	3	..	2	1	..	..	..	157
Gosford Street	302	37	339	137	94	46	25	16	3	3	1	..	..	1	701
Jordan Well	303	30	333	116	95	56	33	6	9	2	..	1	..	..	713
Much-Park Street	206	30	236	92	55	37	24	9	4	..	4	..	..	..	510
Smithford Street	8	2	10	5	1	1	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	23
Spon Street	309	73	382	147	98	69	30	9	4	1	1	1	..	1	774
Total in City.	1,556	203	1,759	664	452	292	163	58	33	13	8	2	1	2	3,789
Suburban Villages.															
Radford	16	2	18	6	3	4	3	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	47
Stoke	42	9	51	23	6	9	5	3	2	2	1	..	..	..	131
Total in Suburbs	58	11	69	29	9	13	8	4	3	2	1	..	..	..	178
Total in City and Suburbs	1,614	214	1,828	693	461	305	171	62	36	15	9	2	1	2	3,967

* Included in this Table are 34 looms, which, though at the time of the census, worked by their owners, on their own account, are, it is probable, more commonly in the employ of manufacturers,—deducting them, there would remain 3933 looms engaged on journey-work.

CENSUS TABLE VII.; being an Analysis of the Families of Loom-Owners of the Operative Classes, showing the Population immediately Dependent on the "First-hand Journeymen," and the Number of Looms worked by Members of their Families, in the City of Coventry, and the Suburban Villages of Radford and Stoke.

Wards.	Loom-Owners of the Operative Class, whose Looms are worked commonly for Manufacturers.			Number of Looms belonging to Loom Owners of the Operative Classes.	in the Loom-Owner's Families, exclusive of Journeyhands and Half-pay Apprentices.							Families of Loom-Owners of the Operative Classes.								
												Above 21 Years.		From 14 to 21.		From 7 to 14.		Under 7 Years.		Total Number in Families of Loom-Owners.
	Men.	Women.	Total.		Men.	Women.	Apprentice Boys.	Apprentice Girls.	Boys of the Family.	Girls of the Family.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female	
Bayley Lane	11	6	17	27	7	11	1	1	..	1	21	11	15	1	4	1	7	3	11	53
Bishop's Street	249	10	259	624	225	102	45	20	14	22	428	239	222	82	68	88	94	113	114	1,020
Broad Gate	66	2	68	158	56	25	3	4	13	11	112	66	58	16	20	24	21	20	22	247
Cross Cheaping	44	4	48	102	42	20	6	3	1	2	74	45	39	11	8	17	8	20	27	175
Earl Street	58	9	67	157	53	32	8	2	14	12	121	56	59	23	31	26	15	29	22	261
Gosford Street	302	37	339	701	284	155	48	16	33	49	585	301	297	92	109	108	101	123	140	1,271
Jordon Well	303	30	333	713	277	176	67	14	19	36	589	290	275	53	70	105	100	131	131	1,155
Much Park Street	206	30	236	510	194	112	54	8	17	31	416	209	211	73	74	63	69	100	88	887
Smithford Street	8	2	10	23	7	5	..	..	2	4	18	8	8	3	4	..	3	1	4	31
Spon Street	309	73	382	774	300	209	34	24	34	51	652	334	352	84	103	113	126	155	162	1,429
Total in City	1,556	203	1,759	3,789	1,445	847	266	92	147	219	3,016	1,559	1,536	438	491	545	544	695	721	6,529
Suburban Villages.																				
Radford	16	2	18	47	6	10	3	..	..	6	35	16	16	6	9	7	5	9	10	78
Stoke	42	9	51	131	0	29	2	7	6	10	94	41	50	12	26	19	10	12	19	189
Total in Suburban Villages	58	11	69	178	56	39	5	7	6	16	129	57	66	18	35	26	15	21	29	267
Total in City and Suburban Villages	1,614	214	1,828	3,967	1,501	886	271	99	153	235	3,145	1,616	1,602	456	526	571	559	716	750	6,796

CENSUS TABLE VIII.; being an ANALYSIS of the FAMILIES of "JOURNEYMEN'S JOURNEY-HANDS" working in the FACTORIES of MANUFACTURERS, or at the LOOMS of "FIRST-HAND JOURNEYMEN," showing the POPULATION dependent on the mere JOURNEY-HANDS, in the City of COVENTRY, and the suburban Villages of RADFORD and STOKE.

Ward.	Journey-hands.							Families of Journey-hands.								Total.
	Under "First-hand Journeymen."		In Factories of Manufacturers.		Total.		Total Male & Fem.	Above Twenty-one.		From Fourteen to Twenty-one.		From Seven to Fourteen.		Under Seven.		
	Male.	Fem.	Male.	Fem.	Male.	Fem.		Male.	Fem.	Male.	Fem.	Male.	Fem.	Male.	Fem.	
Bayley Lane	5	..	..	..	5	..	5	4	3	1	..	..	..	2	2	12
Bishop's Street	107	73	123	4	230	77	307	236	174	23	36	51	47	70	92	729
Broad Gate	20	18	4	..	24	18	42	25	26	1	11	3	3	6	5	80
Cross Cheaping	17	5	51	..	68	5	73	71	53	3	4	12	21	26	40	230
Earl Street	18	11	20	1	38	12	50	43	32	5	5	10	10	16	10	131
Gosford Street	92	33	24	10	116	43	159	96	78	5	18	22	15	39	47	320
Jordon Well	113	46	18	11	131	57	188	90	65	16	24	7	7	24	25	258
Much Park Street	75	19	59	19	134	38	172	125	87	15	13	29	23	48	51	391
Smithford Street	4	1	5	..	9	1	10	9	7	..	..	1	2	6	3	28
Spon Street	68	80	24	..	82	80	172	93	76	7	17	3	7	9	19	231
Total in City	519	286	328	45	847	331	1,178	792	601	76	128	138	135	246	294	2,410
Villages adjacent.																
Radford	7	5	..	..	7	5	12	7	5	..	1	..	..	..	..	13
Stoke	24	11	..	..	24	11	35	20	16	4	3	1	1	10	2	57
Total in Villages	31	16	..	..	31	16	47	27	21	4	4	1	1	10	2	70
Total in City and Villages	550	302	328*	45	878	347	1,225	819	622	80	132	139	136	256	296	2,480

* It will be seen, by a succeeding table, that the total number of factory-looms is 598; but 103 of these are worked by half-pay apprentices; 42 by the owners of the smaller shops or factories and their families; 55 are power-looms; and 25 are unemployed.

CENSUS TABLE IX.; being a CLASSIFICATION of the HALF-PAY APPRENTICES, of whom it is probable that some are included in the Enumeration in the last preceding Table of the Families of Journey-hands, in aid of which their Earnings are of course applied, where they belong to such families.

Wards.	Half-pay Apprentices working for First-hand Journey-hands.			Half-pay Apprentices working in Factories or Manufacturers' Shops.			Total.		Total Males and Females
	Male.	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.	Males.	Females.	
Bayley Lane	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	1
Bishop's Street	15	11	26	34	..	34	49	11	60
Broad Gate	1	1	2	2	..	2	3	1	4
Cross Cheaping	2	4	6	..	..	..	2	4	6
Earl Street	..	3	3	4	..	4	4	3	7
Gosford Street	1	4	5	5	..	5	6	4	10
Jordan Well	12	6	18	20	2	22	32	8	40
Much-Park Street	12	5	17	25	1	26	37	6	43
Smithford Street	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Spon Street	8	10	18	10	..	10	18	10	28
Total in the City	52	44	96	100	3	103	152	47	199
Suburban Villages.									
Radford	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Stoke	..	2	2	..	..	..	..	2	2
Total in Suburban Villages	..	2	2	..	..	..	..	2	2
Total in the City & Suburbs	52	46	98	100	3	103	152	49	201

Admission of Women into the engine loom.

Before the "big purl time," there were no females in the engine-loom, nor any apprentices but such as were duly domiciliated with their masters; but the great change which has since taken place is testified by the preceding tables. On the breaking up of the old system, the manufacturers, in lieu of employing the undertakers, frequently advanced a loom, or the price of one, to the several journey-hands of the best character, and were repaid by instalments out of their earnings. On every additional loom some member of the family might be profitably employed; there was great inducement on both sides to hasten the change; and the acquisition of this little capital was a great encouragement to industry and moral conduct. But this was, in great degree, a return from a shop system to that of a "domestic" manufacture, in which any possible combination of hands would be adopted; and the result has already been shown. It appears that while upwards of one-half of the hands are adult males, more than one-fourth are adult females, and the remainder children, of the weavers' families and apprentices; the male and female apprentices bearing to each other nearly the same proportion, of two of the former to one of the latter, that the men and women do among the adult hands, although there is a considerable predominance of girls among the children of the "first-hand journeymen's" families who are not apprenticed. The latter is easily accounted for by the utility of their services at home until they are of marriageable age, without the inducement to their indenture by the municipal and parliamentary franchises, to which the boys aspire.

Relative Proportions of the "First Hand Journeyhands;" of the "Journeymen's Journeyhands," and of the women-weavers in each of these classes. Table IV.

It will be seen that the adult women of the families of "first-hand" journeyhands working looms are equal to more than one-half the number of those journeyhands. Of "journeymen's journeymen" there is also rather more than one to every two of the "first-hand" journeymen; but the number of "journeymen's journeywomen" in the loom is considerably less than the proportion which the women bear to the men among the loom-workers in the "first-hand" journeymen's own families.

Proportion of each class of hands engaged upon the several fabrics; and of apprentices at weavers' homes, compared to factories. Table V.

The women are employed less upon the figured goods, which are heavier work, than upon the plain articles. The half-pay apprentice boys are chiefly occupied on figured goods, which fact results from their employment to so large an extent in factories; and the half-pay apprentice girls, on plain goods, which indicates their more domestic situation in daily service at the homes of the first-hand journeymen.

Loom-owners of the Operative Classes, holding eight-ninths of the looms. Table VI.

Table VI., it will be perceived, contains a few loom-owners of the operative classes who are not actually weavers, being commonly superannuated persons or women. Eight out of every nine looms in Coventry are on the journey-work system, worked at the houses of the "first-hand journeymen" by their own families, and by their journey-hands and apprentices. The number of weavers who possess the increasing numbers of looms rapidly declines from the greatest number, who possess only one, until the number who possess eight is only nine, and of those possessing a higher number there are only five. Although the first-hand journeyman is called the "owner" of the looms, he is sometimes only the "loom-holder," having one or more on hire from persons who make a business of letting them.

Number in which looms are held by each family. Table VI.

Loom Owners; their looms; their families; and the looms worked by them. Table VII.

The operative loom-owners, it is seen, hold 3967 looms, of which 3145 are worked by members of their own families, and the remaining 822 by journey-hands and half-pay apprentices. The number of souls in their families is little more than double the number of looms worked by the members of such families. The average of looms worked by the members of each loom-owner's family, therefore, approaches two; and the families averaging not quite four, there is, in this class, nearly one loom to the maintenance of every two of the family, *so long as they are in full work*; besides the advantage derived from the 822 looms of journey-hands and half-pay apprentices, and from the work done by women and children in winding, and in quill-filling, which latter is paid for, however, in the price of weaving. This result will tend to indicate the resources of this class of weavers generally; but as a picture of prevailing individual cases it would be quite fallacious, since it is obvious that the circumstances of scarcely any two families can be precisely alike.

Journey-hand Population, and half-pay Apprentices. Tables VIII. and IX.

From the two succeeding tables it will be seen that the number of females working in factories, whether as journey-hands or half-pay apprentices, is small, while the number of half-pay apprentice boys working in factories is double the number at the homes of "first-hand journeymen;" and the number of journey-hands employed in them approaches the proportion of three to four of those employed under "first-hands." The total number in the families of this lowest class of journey-

hands is nearly as great in proportion to the looms worked by them as among the class of "first-hand journey-hands;" but the loom-workers being only the heads of families, and not children, the proportion of the very young is much less; and it will appear from subsequent tables that, in fact, many of the journey-hands are unmarried. Indeed, although there is a permanent journey-hand population, this mode of employment is to many merely a transition stage from apprenticeship to "first-hand journey-work."

Proportion of in-door to half-pay Apprentices. Tables VII. and IX.

The proportion of in-door to half-pay apprentices is yet, it will be seen, nearly two to one; so firm is the adherence to the ancient system by the "first-hand" journeymen.

Regular Apprenticeships for seven years.

The apprentice boys are *regularly indentured for seven years*, by which indenture they acquire the old parliamentary franchise of the city; and *three-fourths of the adult male weavers are at the present time freemen.** There is no limit to the number of apprentices, *except that practically applied by the custom of the trade to take all apprentices into the master's family.* This in-door apprenticeship is not distinguishable from the ancient system of binding to any other trade. The half-pay apprentices, who are also indentured, in lieu of being kept with the master's family, receive half the manufacturer's price for the work done, and share equally with their master the cost of filling and of candles to work by. The girls' apprenticeships are sometimes for less than seven years, frequently for five, and sometimes only for three; but this is not common in the case of the boys, since a servitude of less than seven years does not give the franchise. Unless for this inducement, to which are also attached the lammas common right, and eligibility to certain loans, the term of apprenticeship would be shortened. The cost of binding, including the stamp, is about 1*l.* 5*s.* 6*d.*

Half-pay apprenticeships.

One-half of the half-pay apprentices are in the factories of manufacturers, where there can be no others; and in one of the largest by far the greater proportion of looms are worked by these apprentices; but from the domestic apprenticeship there is little deviation among the "first-hand journeymen," with the exception of a few who have the larger number of looms, and avail themselves of this mode of working them, partly with female hands, in lieu of employing subordinate journey-hands. This system of half-pay apprenticeship is regarded by the manufacturers, and by the first-hand journeymen generally, with dislike; by the former as an unfair advantage in the price of labour, and by the latter as removing the practical restriction on admission to the trade imposed by the limited convenience for lodging apprentices. By the towns-people generally it is not unjustly regarded as demoralizing in its tendency; and this is, of course, the ground most urged even by the parties more nearly interested. It is the usual mode of apprenticeship at Nuneaton, where the time is frequently even more than seven years. Sometimes the parents of the youths receive a certain sum per week for their maintenance in lieu of half-pay. It requires about six months for an apprentice to attain sufficient proficiency to produce any goods in the engine loom that a master will accept. The inferior articles on which he learns are made on his master's account, and, throughout the apprenticeship, the master, although in the later stages of it he gives the youth a pocket-money interest, has no inconsiderable trouble in superintending the work, encountering the responsibilities attaching to it, and disciplining his young hand, who ought ultimately to profit by this training.

Mode of employing the Journeymen's Journey-hands.

The journeymen's journey-hands, in the same relative position as the journey-hands under the undertaker in the single-hand trade, form, it will be seen, a considerable class. In lieu, however, of receiving only two-thirds of the price paid by the manufacturer to the "first-hand," the latter, having none of the preparatory processes to execute, pays to them the full price, excepting only 2*s.* per week (sometimes 2*s.* 3*d.*) as rent for the loom and for shop-room, and remuneration of his own services in "fetching and carrying," or in procuring the work (for which he is responsible), and obtaining due payment. Sometimes the filling is also done by the family of the "first-hand," to whom it forms a further item of payment; and it is asserted that in some instances, when this is the case, the first-hand has deducted, like the undertaker, one-third from the master's prices, in paying the money to the journey-hand; but this practice is regarded as an imposition, and is one that is most denounced in the hand factory system of some of the manufacturers. Those weavers who can get a loom and rent a place in which they can work it, take out work at "first hand," as the number of first-hand jour-

* Weavers' Committee.

neymen with only one loom, in the preceding table, will sufficiently testify; and the condition of the journey-hand who takes upon himself the responsibilities of a family, without previously accumulating the means of comfort, by the parsimonious exercise of his industry, so as to set up "first-hand," must, of necessity, be one of depression and discomfort, notwithstanding the aid that may be derived from the earnings of other members of his family, dispersed through factories and shops. For subsistence, he is dependent, not merely upon the hire of another's loom and loom-standing, but upon the success of the "first-hand" in procuring work from the manufacturer. On a slackness in trade, when the latter gives to the "first-hand," less work than will employ the whole of his looms, his journey-hands are, of course, thrown out before any member of his own family, in like manner as the manufacturer himself, who has a factory, narrows his employment of the first-hand journeymen before he will stop the looms, which are his own capital. In a trade like that of Coventry, the position of these hands is obviously very hazardous and very unfortunate; and they have always formed the great class who are thrown helpless on society by any slackness of demand.

Depression and insecurity of the Journeymen's Journey-hands.

A great advantage of the journeywork system to the manufacturer is, as in the undertaking, the fact of the fixed capital being upon the hands of the first-hand workman, who, in his turn, necessarily throws off the labour of the mere journey-hand at the first depression, the recurrence of which is inevitable; and a very unfortunate class of people are thus kept in the most demoralising uncertainty between the loom-shop and the workhouse, which, however, can never take in the whole on any extensive depression. These are, in fact, the legitimate successors of the journey-hands employed formerly by undertakers, with this exception, that their position is rendered still worse by the competition of hands brought up in the yet more depressed single-hand trade, and of female labour, which they formerly excluded with such jealousy, but which is now countenanced by the extensive employment of the females of their families by the "first hands," who possess in their little capital an element of prosperity which counteracts the depressing influence of the cheaper labour. The mere journey-hands, indeed, find it better to work for a factory master at two-thirds the common trade prices paid for work, than to be journeymen's journeymen, sometimes on no better terms; the filling being in both cases done by the employer. But they would all prefer to be "first hands" with their own looms.*

3.—The Factory System.

Rise of the hand-factory system.

In 1818, when the weavers of Coventry petitioned Parliament for an extension of the Spitalfields Act to them, they sought also for some law to check the new system of half-pay apprenticeship, as being equally demoralising to the parties and injurious to the trade; but they failed in all their efforts; and the prevalence of this system appears to have opened the way for a new combination of capital and labour in the commencement of hand factories, or shops of engine looms belonging to manufacturers, and worked to some extent by the cheap labour of a number of these apprentices. Even when the manufacturer's looms were worked by journey-hands of the same class as those under the "first-hand journeymen," and not by these apprentices, the control which this system gave him, were strong inducements to its extension. It has chiefly grown up within the last ten or twelve years, and is not expected by the men to experience further proportionate extension. The effect of this change, so far as it extends, is to extinguish in the engine-trade the last remaining portion of the middle-class undertaking system, which consists in the *ownership of the loom* by the journeyman weaver. The manufacturer, under this system, is fully his own undertaker, and there is no one beneath him but the journey-hand, as devoid of every property but that in his labour as the journey-hand formerly working for the undertaker, and now for the first-hand journeyman.

Present extent of the factory system.

The accompanying table will show the state of the factory system in the city and suburbs of Coventry, including its partial extension by the employment of steam-power:—

* Bunney, in Brown's factory.

CENSUS TABLE X.—Being a Statement of the Loom-Shops or Factories belonging to Manufacturers in the City and Suburbs of Coventry.

Names of Manufacturers.	Looms in Manufacturers' Shops or Factories.						Total Number of Looms employed by each Manufacturer.
	Plain Engine.	Jacquard Engine.	Single-Hand.	Alabar.	Power.	Total.	
Barnwell	..	3	..	..	..	3	50
Brown	3	37	..	..	..	40	133
Coleman	..	23	..	..	..	23	45
Cope	11	..	..	..	8	19	253
Cox	..	55	..	..	..	55	139
Crockford	8	2	..	..	..	10	11
Day	..	54	..	..	45	99	127
Dresser	..	38	..	..	..	38	202
Francis	..	5	..	..	..	5	11
Gardner	15	..	..	..	..	15	31
Gibbon	5	..	..	..	..	5	64
Hill	..	19	..	..	..	19	33
Jackson	..	22	..	..	..	22	33
Jephcott and Brunskill	13	6	1	..	..	20	64
Leeson	..	13	..	..	..	13	17
Merridew	52	..	..	..	..	52	125
Merry	..	11	..	..	..	11	78
Molesworth	2	13	..	..	..	15	128
Parker	..	11	..	..	..	11	12
Robinson	9	5	..	..	..	14	96
Sansome	..	27	..	..	..	27	28
Sawbridge	..	11	..	..	..	11	42
Sturdy and Turner	..	14	..	..	..	14	43
Walton	..	14	1	..	..	15	25
Ward	1	25	..	1	..	27	51
Wetton	..	6	..	..	..	6	9
Woodier	..	9	..	..	..	9	12
Total	119	423	2	1	53	598	1,862
Forty Master Weavers or "First Hands" working Looms, on their own account, at the time of the Census	64	51	6	..	..	121	121
Total of Looms exempt from the ordinary Journey-work system of Coventry	183	474	8	1	53	719	1,983

Position of the factory system in regard to the various classes of the trade.

The avenues of sale being thrown open by the warehouseman to all in the trade, whether of large or of small capital, it is obviously to the interest of the smaller capitalist to adopt this system, in which he can turn to the fullest account his own personal tact and vigilance. But the large capitalist, who has different habits and views from those which accord with the drudgery of a factory, looks with no favourable eye upon the growth of this new institution; and it is equally distasteful to the journeyman owner of his own looms, who sees himself unable to become the master, and feels naturally unwilling to be the servant, within the factory-walls. On the one hand, the warehouseman engrosses nearly the whole of that part of the manufacturer's former business which consisted in distribution, while on the other the latter is hedged closely by the little capitalist, than whose arrangements nothing can be more compact; and it is doubtful whether, with the aid of steam, the figured ribbons, on which he is chiefly employed, can be produced with more economy than by his loom shop. Indeed it is the full conviction of the owners of such shops that steam cannot compete with them; and there is evidently a strong tendency in the economy of this system to supersede the present arrangements, so efficient is the concentration of the hands under the immediate superintendence of one for whose sole account they are working, and not for that of an absent master, as under the systems of undertaking and journeywork. The old system unfortunately, however, serves the new one, for a purpose which encourages rather its depression than its extinction. The owner of the hand factory has fixed capital in the trade, which he must keep going even during a slack time, or sustain a severe loss, and he therefore so manages that his ordinary business shall employ, besides the looms in his factory, a considerable number of those which are owned by the first-hand

journeymen, from whom his factory looms, in a slack time, absorb the share of employment that would have been distributed among them. It will be seen from the accompanying table, that all the manufacturers possessing factories have this resort to the average extent of three journey-work to one shop-loom; and such is almost equally the case with the Bedworth and Nuneaton masters, who, like some of the preceding, are also frequently employers of "single-hand" looms. Another inducement to this course is, that in a slack time the competition for employment is so severe among the resourceless "journeymen's journeymen," that the prices of labour can be readily lowered in the factory, exempt from the opposition and the observation of the more independent class of "first-hand" workmen.

Dislike of the factory system by many large manufacturers and by first-hand Journeymen.

Advantages of it to the Journey-hands in the factory.

It is not, therefore, surprising that the factories should be regarded with dislike on various grounds by the first-hand journeymen, although on the other hand, they present to the under class of journey-hands engaged in them a greater constancy of employment, in precisely the same proportion that they detract from that which the first-hand journeyman can offer them. This is a change of the greatest benefit, so far as it extends, to the lower class, who obtain a constancy of employment which they could never have derived from the old system, under which want of employment falls upon them always the first, instead of the last, as now in the factories, where they intercept employment at its source. The factory owner has his eye upon his men; it is his looms that they work; it is doubly his interest to keep them in uninterrupted employment; and he therefore supplies them with warps and shute upon a plan of the greatest exactitude, and even with a superior quality of silk; while the out-door journey-hand on his own looms may be subjected to various delays and disadvantages. Thus the smaller masters, who will give their personal labour to factory superintendence, will inevitably avail themselves of this system; journey-hands can always be found to work under it, because of the advancement which it is from their previous condition as under-journeymen to undertakers and first-hand journeymen. The larger manufacturers are compelled into the same course, and the first-hand journeymen are threatened with a depression in regard to constancy of employment, though not with extinction, because of the unwillingness of the manufacturer to invest too large an amount of fixed capital in a trade exposed to such serious fluctuations. Unless by becoming small factory masters, or factory men, or by beginning to work their few looms on their own account, the first-hand journeymen cannot change their position; and the latter will undoubtedly be more largely attempted if the factory system be rapidly extended. But the first-hand journeymen, as well as the undertakers, feel the want of the capital which others possess; and if the extent of the Coventry trade increase with the increase of the factory system, or the competition among themselves be otherwise moderated, the "first-hand" journeymen's prices for labour will not, from this cause alone, be lowered, and the constancy of their employment will be about the same. But the master will find the *elasticity* of his trade lessened; and, in brisk times, as at the present moment, he will want more work doing than he can find hands to accomplish; a circumstance which is a considerable check on the progress of the new system.

Influence of the factories on the first-hand Journeymen.

Factory system of Bedworth.

It is the Bedworth jacquard engine trade, conducted by small capitals, which most fully exemplifies the strength of the loom-shop system, as opposed to the domestic manufacture; the hand factories of the City of Coventry and of Nuneaton being, for the most part, the property of larger capitalists, as is evidenced in the case of the City, by the table above given of the total number of looms to which their owners give employment in the town and suburbs, besides others beyond their limits. At Bedworth not one-half of the looms belong to first-hand journey-hands, or undertakers; the greater number being in the shops or hand factories of small manufacturers. The small firms forming the Bedworth trade are seven in number, including one manufacturer in Foleshill; and, for certain purposes, they form a trade association. Within the last ten years nearly the whole of their flourishing trade has been created. In the first confusion resulting from the assaults of the French competition in fancy articles, these parties, among the most sagacious and thriving in the rank of single-hand undertakers, favoured by a spirit of association which the institution of some co-operative societies had fostered, and practised, it is probable, in previous occasional dealings on their own account, seized the opportunity of pushing a cheap fancy trade in floret gauzes beneath the range of that competition. Such, in effect, was the course which they

* Weavers' Committee.

took, though, perhaps, without the widest views as to their trade position. They made themselves masters of engine looms with jacquard machinery attached, for the management of which their previous habits peculiarly fitted them; and from the surrounding engine trade, they obtained young men to work them at a price under the wages paid by Coventry masters, though much above what these hands could obtain among women and children on the single-hand loom. Most of the engine weavers out of the City have been obtained from the single-hand loom, and, after serving for two or three years on the half-pay system to their new occupation, become journey-hands.

And of Nuneaton.

The engine trade of Nuneaton is confined to four firms, mostly of older establishment and larger capital than the Bedworth masters. All these, with one exception, have hand-factories, and there are scarcely any engine looms in the place that are not their property, although some are worked on the premises of the weavers. They are engaged in the same kind of trade as the Bedworth masters; floret gauzes having heretofore been their staple article, though occasionally laid aside for figured satins and sarcenets, or lutstrings. Many of the little manufacturers of Coventry are engaged in the same branch of trade; and the great number of the first-hand journeyman class, who work their looms on their own account, somewhat exemplify the tendency to progress in the factory system. The advantage of the larger capitalist over the small one in the mechanical production of goods, is merely three per cent. in the purchase of the thrown silk, and even in this the credit is generally taken instead of the discount. It will be dyed, wound, warped, and woven, about as cheaply for one as the other; and the smaller manufacturer, it is asserted, often takes an unfair advantage in copying the designs of the larger master, who, though merely a copyist, has been at trouble and expense in getting his French patterns.* Several of the little Bedworth firms have always united together for the purpose of buying silk, of maintaining a warehouse in Coventry for the sale of their goods, and of fetching and carrying. The factors who purchase from them in Coventry often show them patterns which they think will succeed, and they endeavour to produce something in the same style. They do not themselves get patterns direct from France. Coventry manufacturers, who have their own warehouses, sometimes purchase from them as other warehousemen do; and they sometimes work to order, but more commonly, like the rest of the trade, for general demand.† The rising hands in the Bedworth factories are now the weavers' own children, who come to perform the minor duties in the winding and warping about ten or eleven years old, at wages of about 2*s.* a week, which are gradually raised to 5*s.*, until they be old enough to go into the jacquard loom. These are most commonly the boys, though sometimes girls. The winding is also given out to the families of the journey-hand weavers, and those of labourers, bricklayers, colliers, &c. The warping alone of the preparatory processes, is done on the master's premises, by young lads from ten to sixteen, under one older hand.

Facilities enjoyed by small capitals.

The objections urged against the factory system altogether, as against the half-pay apprenticeship, are those of its demoralizing tendency; but its industrial advantages appear to be a guarantee for its extension.

4.—The separate "Picking-up" System.

Separation of the weaving into the two processes of "picking up" and "shooting down."

Employment of cheaper labour for the picking up.

One economy of labour, the intermediate step between the ordinary hand weaving and the power weaving, which has received considerable encouragement from the hand factory system, is the employment of two hands on each loom; the process of "picking up" or tending and cleaning the threads of the warp being given to one pair of hands, while the other proceeds uninterruptedly with the "shooting down," or passing of the shuttles; an innovation in which the proprietor of the only large steam factory in Coventry appears to have been the leader. Manufacturing in a small way, he learned, about 1821, himself to work the shuttles; but not having proficiency in the "picking up" of the silk, he employed a second hand at weekly wages to pick; and finding this separation of the two processes very profitable, he soon put all his looms on the same system. The weavers generally, on learning what was going on, declared the new system to be ruinous and degrading; still the separation of the two processes, to which he superadded payment by weekly wages in lieu of by the piece, was strenuously adhered to. But the weavers generally believed not only that all the goods required would be made by fewer hands (an

* Hands. † Williams.

Opposition to and progress of this system.

end, observes one of the manufacturers, which it is the object of all improvement to attain*), but that a general introduction of the factory system of working on the master's premises at weekly wages, in lieu of being at home and paid by the piece, would be the result. In spite of the odium and the annoyances to which the manufacturer in question was exposed, he persevered in this system, though often interrupted by the disaffection even of his own hands, who were chiefly apprentices, from 1826, when he had only ten looms, to 1831, when his operations had been extended. The factory system, and the separate "picking up," have of late years rapidly increased, but *payment by the week has not extended.*

Saving effected by the separation, and its partial adoption.

The "shooting down," or perpetual passing of the shuttles, when separated from the "picking up," which gives a temporary respite to the muscles, is always the labour of a man or a stout youth, while the picking up is done by women or girls; and the advantage consists in the saving of the more valuable time of the man effected by the cheaper labour of the woman; their joint efforts turning off in a given time *more* work, as compared with the labour of a man only, than will pay for the services of the woman: but the proportion of this advantage is a subject of much dispute, and varies greatly with the fabric, the quality of the silk, and the capability of the hands. It is considered a principal element in the success of many small masters of hand factories; the "first hand journeymen" themselves resort to it in cases of urgency; and it is the opinion of some of the principal manufacturers that its adoption will be forced on the whole trade, notwithstanding the determination against it, by the success of the smaller factory masters who pursue it.† Even in the factories, however, the men do not yet much or willingly resort to it, though it is common in all; and some masters will not have a journeyman who does not employ a picker-up. It seems difficult, however, to get the men to commence this system, without pressure from want of employment, and under a system, then to be adopted, of payment by the week and not by the piece, when the active use of this plan would be an essential part of the contract.‡ Mr. Day is the only one who has carried these views, through the extremest obloquy, into effect; and such is the influence of public opinion that it cannot be supposed he obtained the best selection of hands for the trial. His whole system consisted in simply adopting the separate "picking up" system, and concealing the reduced price per piece by the payment of weekly wages, which were actually higher than those which the men on the old system could get.

Trade position of the hands working the loom on this system.

The opposition to the separate "picking-up" is exceedingly mistaken, since, if there be an advantage in it, it will inevitably progress out of the reach of the public opinion of the workshops of Coventry; but that it is distasteful to the weavers cannot be surprising, since it reduces the workman in the jacquard engine loom from the rank of a somewhat skilled artisan to that of little more than a mere automatic treader of one treadle, and passer of one set of shuttles, which, with the swinging of the baton, which strikes up the shute with its sleighs, forms the whole art of "shooting down," excepting attention to the gearing and general progress of the work. The shooter-down is responsible for the whole work; and if the loom be working at home, he must have the full proficiency of his trade to set his loom going, and to attend to the strings of the jacquard machine, casualties in the breaking of the needles, the baton being out of order with change of weather, the cards disarranged, &c. In a factory, it is the business of the overlooker, or master himself, to see to this; and the mere shooter-down is required for little more than to continue the three merely automatic motions to which steam-power is extensively applied in various fabrics.

Limitation to its adoption by first-hand journey-hands in the want of constancy of employment.

One of the largest manufacturers in the figure trade believes that one-third of the weavers employed by him at their own homes have pickers-up to help them, but that it is rather to obtain intervals of leisure than to produce a greater quantity of work that they do this. It is their opinion, in fact, that if they did more, the prices would be reduced, which the same manufacturer thinks might be the case, and the French competition thereby more successfully encountered§. But among the best classes of weavers the opposition is entirely broken down; and the reason why they do not employ pickers-up (except members of their own family) is, that they cannot ensure them, any more than themselves, constant employment; and that, therefore, they would have to employ, at 6*s.* a week, a picker-up, whose wages, even when in unceasing work, would so reduce any excess in their earnings as to make the adoption of the more laborious and the less popular course an object

* Hands.

† Cope, Ratcliff, and Caldicot.

‡ Hands.

§ Hands, Bray.

of doubtful advantage. Still, whenever there shall come a bad state of trade, and wages be exposed to further reduction, the present partial rejection of whatever advantage this arrangement presents, will be visited by the proportionately redoubled distress which will ensue from its general adoption at a time when employment, without this compression, will be already greatly deficient. In fact, however, during the present briskness of trade, its adoption has been much extended, the pickers-up being generally boys and girls, but chiefly the latter, from fourteen to sixteen years of age. Extension of it.

"Working the same hours as at my factory (Mr. Day's), weavers will make on the old system only one-half the work which they do on the separate picking-up system. Supposing the earnings or wages of the shooter-down to be the same on the new system as those of the weaver on the old, this gives in each week a second week's earnings for the payment of the picker-up; and supposing his hire to be half a weaver's wages, the advantages are one-fourth, or 25 per cent. in the total cost of weaving, besides the interest of the capital saved in the employment of only one instead of two looms to do this amount of work*." But Mr. Day is paying his shooters-down and pickers-up more than a weaver's and half a weaver's earnings respectively in weekly wages†; and in the heavier loom's-works, where the richer satins and sarsnets and pads are being made, a weaver of ordinary strength cannot continue unintermittingly shooting down.‡ Hence arises a necessity for higher wages to a shooter-down in such looms, or a continuance in the old system, by which he is enabled to obtain rest while picking-up his warps at the back of the loom. By the warps being more quickly worked up, the interruption of twisting in fresh ones is also of more frequent recurrence than with the separate picking-up; but, reckoning for this, it is the opinion of the factory journeymen of Coventry, from whom a fair opinion it was deemed might most readily be obtained, that a man of fair strength, with his wife picking-up for him, will, in all the lighter loom's-works, earn twice as much as a single weaver; turning off, in fact, double the work, or so nearly double that the loom-rent saved would cover the deficiency. One element of this success is the bond which the two are upon each other to a continuance at the work; the absence of one throwing idle the other. "If they cannot do eleven days' work a-week they will do ten, or two-thirds more than an ordinary week's work"§. In a heavier loom's-work, the picker-up would assist to the extent of only one-third. In weaving gauzes, one picker-up might even serve for two looms, placed back to back‖.

Various estimates of the advantages derived from the separate picking-up.

Variation with the character of the work, and its execution in factories or at the Weavers' homes.

Though in Mr. Day's factory the two hands employed on each loom, at weekly pay, are expected to produce double the ordinary amount of work, yet with a *good* picker-up, to whom he must pay 6*s*. per week, it is estimated in the Bedworth factories, on the piece-work plan, that the weaver will get through only half as much more work; which will do little more than pay the picker-up and meet the disadvantage of more frequent stoppages to put in new work; for, although some pickers-up may be employed at 3*s*., 4*s*., and 5*s*. a-week, they are younger and less efficient in proportion. The separate picking-up is here, therefore, little regarded, since an efficient picker-up must be of the class, and be paid the wages, of a journey-hand in the single-hand loom. And it is, in fact, the employment already afforded to women, and to the youth of both sexes, by the subordinate branches of the trade, which deprives this arrangement in the mere weaving of any overwhelming advantages.

Limited use in the Bedworth factories.

5.—The Steam Factory System.

The advantages to the manufacturer which induced him to invest capital in a hand-factory are those of personal superintendance of the most intricate portions of the trade, and command of the hands engaged in it; but to proceed to make the first trial of steam-power in the ribbon trade in working the looms of such a factory, merely because they are of that class which have been already grouped together under the eye of the master, is obviously a miscalculation, and one which the steam-factory proprietors of the North and of Derby did not commit. The rivalry of the latter became formidable to Coventry, not assuredly in the fancy branches of the trade, for which the hand-factories are chiefly formed, but in the ribbons, plain in both texture and colour, of the simplest make and the most steady demand. Black sarcenets have therefore been their staple article, and it is only recently that some have been extending their operations at all to livelier colours. The requisites to

Steam first applied at Coventry to the most intricate part of the trade.

* Day. † Ibid. ‡ Mason and others in Coxe's factory. § Mason, &c. ‖ Ibid.

insure success in these articles were the simplest; and in them the steam-power bore the greatest proportion to the total value of the ribbons. But the branch to which the only extensive steam-factory in Coventry has been applied, is that in which the proportion of the steam-power to the total cost of the article is the least. To unite with the steam-power at once all the concurrent elements of success in a fancy trade, and mould them to a good result, though perhaps not impossible, was a gigantic undertaking; and its recent failure for the present relieves me from any diffidence that I might feel in stating fully the grounds of that opinion as to the progress of steam-power in the ribbon manufacture, which it was necessary for me to form. Although, therefore, Mr. Day's speculation has not succeeded, the rivalry of steam-power with hand-labour is not terminated, but is increasing, and has been taught another lesson by experience. The success of the more cautiously conducted steam-factories of the North and of Derby decides this; but it is in the *plain* branch alone that, for a long time, the rivalry can be formidable, for it is that in which merely automatic labour bears the greatest proportion, and can proceed with the least interruption.

Advantages of the steam factory, compared with the separate picking-up and shooting down by hand.

Compared with weaving by two hands to each loom, which, as the last resort of hand-labour, and the first step to the application of steam-power, is that with which the comparison ought to be made, the steam-factory system presents a few very simple advantages, of which, however, the positive *acceleration* of the shuttles is *not* one, except in some of the narrowest breadths of strong plain sarcenets. The hand-weavers could already pass the shuttles faster, but that good work in so delicate a material cannot then be made; and with the jacquard machinery, which is requisite to produce figured goods, any acceleration is doubly impossible. The application of steam-power is therefore simply the employment of a mechanical shooter-down, in lieu of an able-bodied workman, while on the picker-up devolves *more* responsibility, and all the supplementary cares of the previous shooter-down. In the factories of the North, and of Derby, each loom is thus tended by one pair of hands, correcting the faults of the machinery, and picking up the work as it proceeds; the gain consisting partly in the shooting-down being seldom interrupted, in lieu of its being stopped, as in the hand-loom, during the picking up; and partly in an enlargement of the loom, and addition of one-fifth to one-third more shuttles than are worked by hand; for which the one pair of hands is quite sufficient to pick up, while superintending the progress of the whole work; the loom being of that construction which enables him to reach from the front over the baton to the warps coming down behind it. It is a person of the same capacity as the hand-weaver who is the tender of this enlarged steam-loom; and the payment for steam-power machinery and enlarged loom has therefore to be defrayed out of the wages which, in Coventry, would be paid to a picker-up ($33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. of the whole cost of *weaving*), added to the 20 or 30 per cent. increase of the goods produced by the additional shuttles. The extension of this plan of manufacture in the North, and at Derby, which I have elsewhere noticed, seems to prove its advantages; and so far as one pair of hands can manage a steam-loom, its extension is very probable, and will be accurately measured only by those whose commercial interests induce them to make the nicest calculations, or try the result of experiments.

Limitation of these advantages in the superior fabrics.

But when two pair of hands become requisite to the management of each loom, as is inevitably the case with the jacquard machinery in a fancy trade, one pair before and another behind the loom, there is a great detraction from the previously estimated advantage. The jacquard trade is, indeed, obviously the last stronghold of hand-weaving against the encroachments of steam-power; and of this the shrewd owners of the Bedworth hand-factories are fully aware The loom-tender, especially with goods of superior quality, ought always to have his work before him, and could not therefore attend to two looms at once, though placed face to face; and to each loom there must also be a picker-up, for to stop the loom while the tender went round to pick his warps would sacrifice the whole advantage of steam-power; and to pick up for one large loom is sufficient occupation for one pair of such hands as would be employed.* The business of the loom-tender, or power-loom weaver, in the jacquard trade, is not adapted for a woman, as she would have frequently to get up to the jacquard machinery, unless she had expensive assistance at hand; and with a male tender, the better the man the better the loom would be worked. "The only chance of saving, therefore, would be for the silk to be of the best quality, and prepared in the very best manner, that the less stoppages might occur (for the steam cannot 'humour' tender silk),† and as much work be turned off as

* Browne. † Odell.

possible."* The necessity of employing *always* such a superior quality of silk is an important circumstance in the calculation of success in the employment of steam, which involves also the charge of the perpetual maintenance of the steam-power, in lieu of simply dismissing hands for whom there should no longer be work.

The smaller steam-factory, that of Mr. Cope, is merely an experiment in the manufacture of plain goods, coloured sarsnets, and satins, and is still carried on. The failure of the combined attempt to introduce steam-machinery, and that of the parish authorities of Nuneaton, have already been noticed.

Pressure into the trade, chiefly through the great proportion of employment for children and for women, especially in the single hand-loom.

From this outline of the several classes constituting "the trade," their relative position, and the circumstances under which the members of each are admitted to its ranks, it is obvious that the employment offered by the "single-hand" branch to women and to children of both sexes, without any limitation of skill, or any regular apprenticeship, removes the determent which an immediately lowered condition commonly presents to improvident marriages, and must keep the numbers in it full to an excess, except in the times of great briskness which occasionally occur;—that the supply of hands to the class of "first-hand journeymen," in the engine trade, is moderated by a system of regular apprenticeship and by the providence and character requisite to obtain looms and work;—that the class of journey-hands working in factories and in the looms of "first-hand journeymen" must always be kept full to an excess, except under temporary excitements in the trade, not only by the regular apprenticeships, but by the half-pay apprenticeships, and by the excess of young men coming up from the initiatory child's employment of the single-hand loom;—and that a trade altogether affording so much employment for children must be a great encouragement through early marriage, to an excess of native hands seeking employment ultimately in the higher weaving occupations, in which mode the children's trade at the single-hand loom especially must always seriously influence not only their own branch, but the engine trade likewise. "The young men," states one of the weavers' Committee, "do not wait until they can purchase their loom before they marry; they could not do it."† The separate "picking-up" and the steam factory systems introduce no peculiar class of hands, but merely avail themselves of the labour which they find in the market. Women being already extensively employed in the loom, nearly the same female hands, it is probable, were these plans extended, would be employed to carry them out.

Immigration of hands generally prevented by internal excess.

Coventry occasionally interchanges hands with Macclesfield, Spitalfields, and other places; but in slack times there is already a considerable excess of the mere journey-hands, and the brisk times have seldom been of such long continuance as to bring hands of this class from a distance, knowing, as they do, that, though the price of their labour might not be reduced after their arrival, they would assuredly, in so fluctuating a trade, find themselves shortly without any employment whatever, and among strangers. When the ribbon trade of Dublin succumbed under English competition about twelve years ago, several hundred Irish came to Coventry and its vicinity, and have ever since been employed in the trade; some being very good hands and others indifferent.‡ They were not particularly liked by the masters, and were at first regarded with jealousy by the men; but this feeling is now forgotten, and there have been no other immigrations of late years.§ Such, however, is the internal supply of hands that the weavers' witnesses "do not think that the trade is increasing anything in the proportion that the power brought into it is. The manufacturers have at different periods said that the supply of labourers was much beyond the demand for labour, and assigned this as a reason for the price being reduced." A few ribbon weavers occasionally emigrate to America, or, still less frequently, seek employment in the broad silk trade at Macclesfield; but if hands leave the trade of Coventry at all, it is generally for some laborious occupation, more frequently sought by the country than by the town weaver.

Competition of steam-looms.

The competition of power-looms has been distinctly felt only in the extensive branch of plain black sarcenets; and its extension in plain ribbons seems to be very probable; but the proportion of labour required in tending the steam-looms is so great, that, though their introduction would considerably influence the constitution of the trade, it would have no great effect upon the amount of employment which it offers.

Dependent on fashion, and without any resource in an export trade, the manufac-

* Williams. † Weavers' Committee. ‡ Cope, Ratliff, Caldicot.
§ Baddeley &c.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

EFFECTS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION ON POPULATION AND THE SUPPLY OF HANDS.

Excessive fluctuations in the amount of employment.

ture of ribbons has always been exposed to intervals of deficient employment, followed by an excessive demand for hands, through which the number of weavers coming into the trade has gradually increased during the whole of the present century, as well as that of the masters. Formerly the "slack times" occurred annually, but now they are produced by some more permanent change in fashion than that produced by season; sometimes they proceed from general commercial derangements; and a slack time or a busy time will now last for a year or several years. "Coventry sometimes suffers," says one of the principal masters, "from the trade fevers produced by currency gambling,* which, merely in its influence on the price of silk, greatly affects both masters and men. Before 1800, nearly the whole trade was sometimes out of work, and the average of employment was certainly not more than ten months in the year; but when the London houses began to send goods to America it became much steadier, until that market was lost, when the manufacturers again refrained from accumulating stocks in a slack time. The undertakers, who had accumulated some property, would formerly at the slack times occasionally make goods on their own responsibility, and weigh them in to the manufacturer for the silk and the making, when a brisker time came; but the undertakers and their journeymen were almost equally improvident, and this practice was therefore limited.† More recently (though before the introduction of French goods), it was estimated by the agents of the large warehouses, that the number of hands then in the trade could have produced in nine months, if fully employed, the whole of the year's sales of Coventry manufactures; and this permanent excess of hands was aggravated to an "awful depression" by the first brunt of the French competition.‡ During a slack time, one-third or more of the single-hand looms and a very large proportion of the engine looms, especially those in the fancy trade, always have been out of work,;§ but in this case it is not the *same* looms that are unemployed during the whole slack time.

Operation of a "Slackness of Trade."

Perhaps all the looms of a manufacturer are delayed in turns, on one ground or another assigned to the journeymen and undertakers, as that the warps are not ready, that the shute is not come, that there will be work for them next week, or that they must make that given to them last double time; by which means he keeps together his men and their looms. The trade has constantly been ebbing and flowing; but for the last twenty years the slack times, at least in the single-hand trade, have preponderated over the brisk in the proportion of three to one, or at least five to two; and on these occasions besides the looms absolutely idle, as many more have often only half work. In all ordinary times the single-hand trade is greatly overhanded, and, whenever there is any briskness of employment, numbers come into the trade without any apprenticeship.‖ The proportion of engine-looms unemployed is sometimes little less, though it is those in the fancy trade which chiefly suffer. At present (November, 1838) the trade is in one of its most prosperous stages, as regards the constancy of employment, which has continued for twelve or eighteen months; but the remuneration for labour is assuredly deemed insufficient.

Effects of the "Slack Times" on the Weaving population.

When, in the single-hand trade of the rural districts, the period of deficient employment recurs, it has been customary for many to come upon the parish; and the number on the books of the rural parishes especially, has almost always been great, notwithstanding the endeavours to get off all the able-bodied in a time of brisk trade. Some, that have friends, are helped by them; and others seek a resource in the weaving of stockings in the neighbouring parishes of Leicestershire. The stocking-weaving and the single-hand ribbon-weaving, each pursued by a population in a very similar state of depression, here border on each other, and occasionally exchange hands, but neither increases in such a degree as to absorb the other. An attempt, indeed, was made by the parish authorities of Nuneaton to locate the stocking trade there; but, so soon as a brisker time came in the ribbon trade, it was wholly abandoned. Of late years, until the present briskness, the men depending on the loom have suffered so severely by the slackness of trade, that some have gone into the manganese pits newly opened in the neighbourhood of Nuneaton; others to the coal-mines of Bedworth; some to the quarries; and some to the railroads, or to any other occupation they could obtain. A few have returned to the loom as a last resource. The number of apprentices has proportionately decreased. The parishes seldom put apprentices to the ribbon-weaving, but send

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* Cope. † Herbert. ‡ Weigham.
§ Stevens of Nuneaton, Cantrill of Foleshill. ‖ Ibid.

them, from the Nuneaton Union, chiefly to the iron-trades at Walsall and in its vicinity; in which course many parents have followed the example of the parish authorities. The children now growing up to the loom are chiefly those of weavers' families, who commence handling the silk, in winding, at a very early age.* Some of the women get into service; but, so soon as trade improves, they too commonly disagree with their employers and return to the loom. Their education at home for service is indeed very bad; they have much idle time on their hands; many are fit for nothing in a house, because ignorant of sewing and every domestic business; and they all like the freedom from control which the ribbon-loom affords them. This inducement is, in fact, so strong, that in Coventry and its vicinity it is difficult to get good domestic servants. The profitless independence thus obtained, though not one of the most obvious, is among the most active causes of the general depression.

MEANS OF IMPROVING INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION.

Freedom from restraint afforded by the loom to women.

The Committee of the City Weavers state that "the City hands cannot get into any other employment on occasion of temporary or permanent depression, because their previous habits are such as to unfit them for the ordinary mechanical and agricultural labours. The talent by which they must live is their manufacturing skill, in which they entertain no fear of British competition. They remember no period of extraordinary wages to induce an excessive influx of hands. The fluctuations in trade have been principally in the extent and constancy of employment, and not in the price of weaving."†

No egress to other employments for the city weavers.

The great cause of change in the trade systems of Coventry is obviously the general progress in wealth and intelligence which facilitates the more economical organization of industrial forces, to the production of greater results than formerly at less cost of labour. Had there not been this economical advantage in the successive changes, they would never have been made, or never have been perpetuated: the fact, therefore, of their existence is proof of their propriety on economical grounds; since, supposing the same progress to have been made in other trades, the total produce of the country in proportion to its hands has been greatly increased; *and the Coventry men themselves have, in fact, shared in this increase.* The extent to which they have shared in it is a subject for much deeper investigation; but, whatever may be the present imperfect distribution of wealth, resulting, I believe, from moral causes, its mere augmentation is a subject for unmixed gratulation to all classes; and the men whose talents, whose frugality, and whose perseverance have accomplished this result, merit, from the labouring classes themselves, a consideration which they too seldom accord to them. That this want of good feeling will for ever be perpetuated, I do not, however, in the remotest degree, apprehend.

Industrial reorganization the result of general progress in wealth and intelligence.

Each successive system was, however, from the first, and is still, opposed by those against whose immediate interests it bears, unless they have the will, the means, and the energy to transfer their abilities to the side of the innovation. Thus the feeling of animosity in those producing only one breadth of ribbon at a time by the single-hand loom against those who make a number at once in the engine-loom, is at this moment very great, although the latter must have been established for more than half a century. The only suggestion made to me for a tax on machinery was by a Nuneaton undertaker, who advocates a tax on the *hand engine-loom*. But the engine-weaver, at his own home in the city, looks with as deep suspicion at the progress of *steam machinery*; forgetting that the single-hand weaver of the neighbouring parishes is still complaining of the machinery which he himself is actually using. The complaint against the engine-looms was strongly urged at Foleshill; and, though I did not find any trace of the old manufacturers of silk trimmings without looms, who undoubtedly once objected to the employment of such an instrument at all, the existing instance afforded in their own hand machinery, ought to convince at least the engine-weavers, that the general tendency of machinery is to increase the wealth of society—its necessaries, conveniencies, and luxuries,—and that every mechanical improvement will therefore be fostered with most sedulous care by those who have the guardianship of the general interests. In fact, however, the Coventry weavers made no proposal to put obstacles in the way of employing steam-power, which would, in fact, be a summons to society to remain henceforth stationary, since the like policy must be applied to all new mechanical forces whatever. And that steam machinery will not perhaps have even the temporary effect of deteriorating, on the whole, the condition of the Coventry weavers, may be concluded from the fact that each loom must

Animosity against the new mechanical agencies successively introduced.

* Weaver's Committee. † Ib.

still employ one hand, at the same time that it turns off more work. Increasing consumption will most probably absorb the excess of produce nearly at the rate at which the use of steam-power may be extended. The factory formerly belonging to Mr. Day, has, I am informed, been purchased by a principal house in the Coventry trade for the purpose of filling it with plain ribbon-looms; and this may be regarded as the first permanent establishment of steam-looms at Coventry, under the pressure of steam competition at other places.

Mechanical power will utterly displace scarcely any hands; but the accession of hands to the trade ought, according to the weavers, to be restricted.

The successful introduction of steam-power is tantamount to an introduction of cheaper labour into the branches of hand-loom weaving which it chiefly affects; but it is most probable that the factories will find employment for all the hands in those branches at improved wages as power-loom weavers. With regard to the accession of human power to the trade, it is strongly maintained by the weavers that the supply of hands ought to be again subjected to the degree of limitation enforced by the old apprenticeship laws and the Spitalfields Act. These, they consider, would help to repress that excessive internal competition of which they are in daily dread, a competition which we see has a permanent source in the families engaged in the trade itself, and to be unchecked by any difficulty of access to its ranks:—

Proposal of the Weavers' Committee that the old *apprenticeship laws* should be re-enacted.

"To limit the supply of hands a regular apprenticeship might be enforced, which would make more equable the number of hands; for women would not then come into the trade by irregular apprenticeships when there was a demand for them, and leave it (those who could) when it was slack; but when slack times come the greater number of these remain a burden on the trade. * * * * Weavers would be very glad to make it compulsory to serve a seven years' apprenticeship. From such an arrangement would expect better work and better workmen, *and would have a greater guarantee against a fall of wages.* The trade could be *adequately* supplied with hands by this means. And this would be no injustice to the apprentice; for, though he works two years longer perhaps for his master than he otherwise would, yet by the custom of the trade he begins to receive pocket-money on the work which he does, varying according to the will of his master. It is the interest of the master to grant this; for the apprentice's own interests are then enlisted in the work. Generally speaking the masters and apprentices do agree, even in the last two years of the term, notwithstanding the difficulties which are always found in managing grown-up youths. The apprentice is benefitted by the superiority of his moral character, compared to what it would be had he been in the world his own master, as he is also by his improved skill. Neither master nor apprentice profit if they be quarrelling, but this is no prevailing case. And it is the habit of the city, and in other trades the acknowledged custom, to take apprentices for seven years. The workhouse apprentices are bound for more than seven years, from ten or eleven to twenty-one years of age." *

A supposed restriction in the supply of hands has always been the purpose mainly sought in the endeavours to procure a re-enactment of the apprenticeship laws; and the arguments employed are of twofold character, those which maintain the industrial value of the apprenticeship system as a school for trade proficiency, and those which assert its moral importance to society. It is the former only that I have here to consider.

Seven years' apprenticeship not necessary merely to make a good workman.

It is maintained that the old apprenticeship system is the best for the industrial education of the hands, and for the implanting of industrious habits; but it must be confessed that one year, instead of seven, would generally suffice for instruction in plain ribbon weaving, in the case of those accustomed from infancy to the manipulation of the silk. It is assumed, however, in mentioning this shorter period, that the master is desirous of teaching the youth as rapidly as possible, and that the latter is equally desirous to learn; while it is in the very nature of apprenticeship to place the labour of the pupil in the character of slave-labour, used for his own convenience alone by the master, and negligently performed by the servant. These difficulties, which, in the later years of the engagement, seem constantly to threaten its dissolution, are, as above described, compromised in practice at this period, or the master would lose all advantage from his apprentice, while the latter would be excluded from the franchises which are the object of his service. As a trade education alone, therefore, the old apprenticeship system is by no means well calculated to make peculiarly good workmen or industrious artisans; still, it is maintained, the end to which this argument was really advanced is one worthy of attainment, viz., the restriction of access to the trade, which an apprenticeship system effects. But it is obviously to the general interest, no less than to that of the individuals seeking access, that all who are born into society should have the knowledge of some trade, which shall make them able members of it. And if they be not permitted access to one of the lowest, what is left them but to exist upon the public resources, a useless burthen, or to prey upon them by its crime?

* Weavers' Committee.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

APPRENTICESHIPS. EMIGRATION.

Still it may be argued that this would be a small evil compared with the amount of misery resulting from the general depression of large bodies of workpeople which might here be prevented. But this is assuming a ground which cannot be granted. No equitable apprentice laws can be framed to change the economy of the single-hand trade, or its relations with the engine-trade, to which it is so largely an introduction, in a mode which sets all apprenticeship laws at defiance. During the time that prices for weaving *never* varied, there was generally an excess of hands in the trade, under the old apprenticeship system: it is to other causes, therefore, that we must look for the modern instability of these prices. So inimical to the public weal, in fact, are all attempts to intercept the free flow of labour into a trade, by which individual efforts seek the most favourable application to the general good, that they can be regarded only as in the nature of a conspiracy, whether they be made in skilled or unskilled trades. Society has a right to demand free access to its service for every member of the community, in any branch of labour in which he can make himself proficient; and if there be not room for both him and another, it is not for either of them, but for the employer, to decide which shall be chosen. The moral effects of the several apprenticeship systems are a subject for other and serious consideration; but, economically, the service of the public, the interests of the master, and those of the youth of both sexes, and their parents, are quite sufficient guarantee for a more profitable direction and active exertion of their industrial abilities than could be devised by any legislative enactment. It was very properly suggested, however, that much benefit would accrue from a reduction of the stamp-duty on articles of apprenticeship, since many young persons are now apprenticed without legal indenture, because of the expenses; and a breach of engagement is frequently the consequence.

Freedom of industry a fundamental right of society at large, to be maintained against class-interests, instituting a principle of monopoly.

Emigration was referred to by one witness as a palliative of the evils resulting from the competition of numbers in the trade; and, so long as there is an opening for success in less thickly peopled lands, it is deserving of every moral encouragement. Far from being regarded as a miserable, if not a disgraceful, expatriation, as its vulgar association with our transportation system causes it to be, the resort to it ought rather to be considered as a creditable test of spirit and vigour in the young. But, except as a temporary expedient under extraordinary circumstances, emigration at the public charge can confer only illusory benefits. A moral population will resort to emigration out of their own resources; and a demoralized people will not be permanently relieved by it. "There have been a few instances yearly of weavers emigrating from Coventry to America, but not with the view of there practising their trade. These were in some instances family-men, but generally not; has heard that they have succeeded. But there is a general feeling against emigration to foreign countries."* It is obvious, in fact, that there must be whole classes of the ribbon-weavers, as of other weavers, who are physically unfitted by their habits for the life of an emigrant; and that the only portion of them physically well qualified are the young men of the rural parishes, who are for the most part too deeply besotted in their own *ignorance* and *improvidence* to form any enlarged plan for improving their condition, or to execute one when formed.

Emigration a palliative; but not to be resorted to at the public charge.

Men possessed of moral energies will generally resort to it in sufficient proportion themselves; and any other population could not be permanently relieved by it.

Unrelieved by emigration, and unchecked by artificial barriers, the full force of the native excess of numbers bears unbroken upon the contract for labour, in framing which both masters and men endeavour to check it by measures hereafter detailed. These measures, it will be found, assume as an approved principle that the multiplication of hands in the trade will not be checked by a *general decrease in the price of labour*, but only by the *impossibility of individuals procuring employment*. It is true that the masters and the men respectively regard only their immediate objects,—the latter mainly the direct maintenance of their wages, and the former their protection from mutual underpaying as a safeguard against mutual underselling. But if they did not assume the principle above stated, the men need have no apprehension that their wages would experience any reduction which a limitation of the rising hands would not presently cause to be fully compensated; nor the masters, that they could be much underpaid, if there were the compulsion to an equal price of labour arising from a narrowed supply of hands. But both parties, as already shown, are convinced that there is constantly rising in the trade a considerable number of hands beyond the ordinary means of employment, to whom a transfer of their labour into any other trade is exceedingly difficult, if not impossible. The example of the single-hand trade, as compared with the engine trade, induces them

Population in the trade, it is assumed by both masters and men, will not be checked by decrease in the *price* of labour, but by absolute want of *employment*.

* Weavers' Committee.

Necessity of examining the truth of this principle before their conduct in the assumption of it can be fairly judged.

to suppose that a general reduction of earnings, so far from limiting the population, tends rather to deaden feelings of self-respect, and to accelerate its increase. The instances afforded by other branches of industry in analogous circumstances, in different parts of the empire, increase in both parties the like apprehensions. And before their conduct, in endeavouring directly to check the effects of the competition for employment can fairly be judged, it is essential to know whether, with the existing elements of society, the competition itself really may be suppressed at its source.

Proposition that, by prudential habits, labourers may secure a fair proportion of the necessaries and conveniencies of life.

"As rapidly increasing resources," says Malthus, "are neither in the power of the poor to effect, nor can in the nature of things be permanent, the great resource of the labouring classes for their happiness must be in those prudential habits which, if properly exercised, are capable of securing to the labourer a fair proportion of the necessaries and conveniences of life, from the earliest stage of society to the latest."* And it is because of their supposed capability to exercise these "prudential habits" that the moral responsibility for their condition is left wholly upon themselves,—whether they limit their rate of increase so as to keep the labour market "under-stocked,"† and themselves in prosperity and contentment, or whether they decline into the depths of poverty, hopelessness, and disaffection.

Impossibility of mutual understanding or "combination" to limit the supply of labour to the market at birth.

The labourers whom we are regarding form large bodies of men, who, like all other men, act from motives of *individual* interest, varying with their intelligence and sympathies; and on a subject so actively appealing to their desires as marriage, must it not be most clearly demonstrated to *each*, that his postponement of that contract, by which he sacrifices years of supposed happiness, will be repaid by a greater amount of well-being to himself or to his nearest connexions, who are to him the whole world? Can he be told, that he *alone* pursuing such a course, his wages will ultimately be raised, or those of his children, or those of his relatives? Or can he be told that, if he pursue it, *all*, or *a great portion*, or even *any* other labourers will pursue it, so that their offspring will not make the labour-market, to all practical purposes, as much overstocked as though he had not denied himself the connubial enjoyments? Can any *combination of workmen* for limiting the supply of labourers at the birth be effected? And, without such a combination, how unavailing the self-sacrifice on the part of an individual, if he have no other inducements than the general effect to be produced on the labour-market!

Restricting influences can be only those of private and of class morality, acting on individuals.

It is not from general but from individual considerations alone that men act in matters so nearly affecting their individual happiness; and least of all can any others be entertained by the lowly-skilled labourers, who form the great mass of our population. It must, in fact, be the same considerations of private and of class morality which guide in these matters the conduct of the superior classes, that can alone influence the conduct of the humbler and the less-informed. It is the moral constitution of society which gives it the capacity and the will to impose limits on the physical powers of multiplication: although a subject of confessed difficulty, it is possible to trace the growth of this morality; and, in so doing, it will be well to observe also the peculiarity of the circumstances in which the labouring classes of Great Britain are placed.

Growth of the class morality as to condition, of which moral limits upon the powers of increase in the population are a *result*.

Poverty and misery are the necessary condition of barbarism, which has neither knowledge, nor industry, nor frugality, to subdue nature to its service. But as men, through hard experience, emerge from ignorance, their industry is awakened and profitably directed, and frugality soon steps forward to husband the fruits of its exertions, and to reapply them profitably. A part of this frugality, associated with the highest sentiments of our nature, is the abstaining of individuals from calling into existence fellow-beings for whom they cannot provide all those comforts which successive ages of increasing knowledge, industry, and frugality have made the decencies of their class, in their own estimation and in that of their neighbours. "As wealth increases, what were the luxuries of one generation become the decencies of their successors."‡ Without enlightened industry and frugality, no limitation of numbers can confer wealth on either families or nations; but as these virtues are developed, and men are raised, at least in physical circumstances, from nearly a level with the brutes to the enjoyments of civilized life, the education of families amid these enjoyments gives their rising members a taste for them which it is very difficult to eradicate; and they will not, in fact, be content with a lower rate of subsistence. Here is made the first step in restraining

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* Principles of Political Economy. † Malthus.

‡ Senior, 'Lectures on Population,' p. 35.

the increase of numbers from encountering the physical checks of insufficient sustenance which must be felt in savage life. Pride of class is awakened in the leaders of society; their tastes and feelings are imitated and shared by the inferior classes; and thus, in a well-constituted community, each class has its standard of comforts, beneath which *individuals* cannot descend without losing caste.

Moral Limits to Population the result of Civilization and Wealth, and not their cause.

Thus, it is civilization that creates a moral limit to population, in lieu of the limit imposed by physical misery; and not a moral limit to population, that creates civilization or wealth, though it is necessary to preserve them. The influences which develop the fundamental virtues of industry and frugality, by the exercise of which one race or nation is seen to surpass another, are a subject of investigation far too wide for my immediate purpose. The *power* of increase in the human race is itself, when under the dominion of morality, undoubtedly one of the most active. But it may be well to observe, that no section of a people can fully and securely enjoy their exercise and their reward, unless the great mass participate in them, and in all the peaceful feelings associated with them. On this fact depends the duty to themselves incumbent on those who have outstripped the mass of men in such virtues, to have a due regard to the moral constitution of the great masses of the community of which they form part.

Exercise of restraint as to entering upon Marriage only through an improved perception of moral duties *individually*.

It is only by an improvement in the class morality of men, founded on intelligence, and acting through industry and frugality, that their condition can really be improved, or even be preserved from decline, under extensive changes in the ranks of industry. It is only by a lively perception of their moral duties to themselves, and to those who are, or who may be, dependent upon them, that they can be restrained from breaking down or neglecting the fences of civilization. To pursue their own individual interests with prudence, is all that society at large can wish or expect of them; but to understand those interests, is, in a highly artificial state of society, by no means so easy as in countries of lower industrial development.

Difference between a Population living by the Land and one living by Manufactures, in their means of estimating the propriety of marriages.

A population of peasant proprietors, which is not demoralized, readily measures its numbers by the means of subsistence from the land at a certain acquired standard of comfort; but as civilization has gradually allowed great bodies of men to be employed off the soil which supplies their food, the limits to their profitable increase are no longer territorial and obvious, but commercial, dubious, and exposed to considerable fluctuation. These considerations would seem to enjoin upon the workmen in such occupations the exercise of foresight in accumulating some savings, before launching themselves with a family on waters so doubtful, under pain of exposure to great degradation and misery. But they have rather the contrary tendency with the present low rate of intelligence among the labourers, and engender recklessness. This is more especially the case when the labourer is without any *property* whatever, even in the machinery of his trade; and there is, in the Coventry trade itself, a marked distinction in character between the loom-owners and the factory journey-hands. It is by the possession of a certain amount of property, or other source of income, that the middle and higher classes in England, and the peasantry of most parts of the Continent, estimate the propriety of their entering into marriage. But those labourers in England who might make savings, cannot usually employ them in combination with their own abilities; and such a course is, in fact, least of all contemplated by the classes who employ them. This, of itself, makes a distinction between a propertied labouring class, and labourers in a state of higher industrial civilization, without the means of attaining to the employment of property individually, at least in the same occupations. It is obvious, therefore, that they look not to *profits* but to *wages* as their revenue for life; and, once in full receipt of these, they imagine they have attained their maximum station.

Want of *property* by the possession of which to measure the propriety of entering into Marriage, not complete among the labouring classes in Coventry.

Wages, and not *Profits*, the Labourer's Revenue.

Progress of the Weaving Population shown by an Analysis of the Families of each class of the Coventry Weavers.

Census Table XI. Families of First-hand Journeymen, who work on their own looms, and who, classing themselves in the first rank in their trade, exercise fully their free discretion about Marriage.

The following tables will throw some light on the progress of population among the weavers of the city and suburbs of Coventry, in which the engine-trade is chiefly carried on. Table XI. is an analysis of the families of first-hand journeymen working looms, usually their own property, at their own homes, and therefore in the highest rank of the operatives of their trade. The income of the whole of such a class would, in most lowly-skilled occupations, be nearly the same; but the Coventry trade remains an exception, in which there is a very various accumulation of some little property in looms, the possession or want of which becomes some test in local opinion, and in the calculations of individual welfare, as to the propriety of contracting marriage. The relation in which the adult females stand to the males of nearly the same ages, in the census of each household made for me by the weavers themselves, is, of course, commonly that of marriage, although all are enumerated

that are of the family, including "in-door" apprentices. Out of 19 of this class who are under 21 years of age, four have apparently made boys' marriages, three of them to women so much older than themselves, as to range in another column of ages; which is a curious fact, tending to confirm the accuracy of my data. Of those from 21 to 25 years of age, upwards of half are married; and of those from 25 to 30, nearly the whole. There is a decline in the proportion of adult females to males from 35 to 40, but an increase in the subsequent ages, obviously from second marriages. The number of first-hand journeymen of the several ages rapidly increases to the maximum between 30 and 35, and then gently declines by deaths. The method in which the population creeps on after the marriages is also exhibited by the same table. First appear some apprentices with a few young children of the men from 21 to 25; then an increase of apprentices and children during the two next periods of five years; and thenceforward an increased proportion of the apprentice ages, and those a little beyond them, as the families grow up, attended by a proportionate decline in the number of young children, until, among the 173 first-hand journeymen who are 60 and upwards, there are only 24 children from 7 to 14 years of age, and but 4 under 7. Apprentices, in the generality of families, thus take the lead in employment of the first children, and the older children of the younger; so that there are not in the Coventry trade those violent changes in the resources of a family which the ages of the children make among a factory population, where families do not intermingle by apprenticeships, but each depend on the exertions of its individual members. The number of souls in the first-hand journeymen families, compared to the number of "first-hand journeymen," is as three to one.

Table XII.—First-hand Journeywomen; merely a transition class, except the portion consisting of Widows.

Census Table XII. shows that the female loom-owners of the first-hand class are, for the most part, a transition class, proceeding into the married state. The number rapidly declines from those who are under 21 to those who are from 35 to 40; after which there is an increase, probably of widows, of whom there are undoubtedly some very few others of all ages. The scattered figures in the last line show the enfeebled ties and more lonely position of advancing years. The number of souls in the families of first-hand journeywomen does not, for obvious reasons, bear to those women half the proportion that the number dependent on the first-hand journeymen does to these men. The average is not one to each, but the proportion is manifestly much greater in the case of those who are widows.

Table XIII.—Journeymen's Journeymen; chiefly a transition class, largely refraining from Marriage, partly in the *hope* of becoming "First-hand" Journeymen, with their own looms.

Table XIII. shows the gratifying fact that the journeymen's journeymen are, to a great extent, not a permanent, but only a transition, class; the number of each age declining rapidly from the greatest, between the ages of 21 and 25. This decline undoubtedly takes place as they become able to emerge into the rank of first-hand journeymen, with their own looms; although the lower habits and position of this class must also somewhat hasten the decrease of numbers in the more advanced ages by mortality. And though this table confirms the partial truth of a witness's statement, that they "could not wait for marriage until they possessed their own looms," it is obvious that to a great extent the journeymen's journeymen, with the hope of a better provision before them, or at least in their existing inability to maintain families free from the danger of want, do largely exercise this branch of common morality. Of the forty under 21 years of age, only one-thirteenth, instead of one-fifth, as compared with the first-hand class, appear to have made boys' marriages. Of those from 21 to 25, only one-fifth, in lieu of more than one-half, are married. Of those from 25 to 30, little more than *one-half*, in lieu of nearly the whole; and of the higher ages, only the same proportion. The total number in the families of this class of hands averages only one instead of three to each, as compared with the first-hand journeymen.

Table XIV.—Journeymen's Journeywomen; merely a transition class.

Table XIV., of the journeywomen of the second class, shows that their working in a loom for a master is also merely a transition occupation until marriage, when they appear among the families of first-hand journeymen, and then are commonly occupied in other or the same processes of the manufacture. The dependents upon these women are only 24 among 302.

Table XV.—Factory Journeymen; partly a transition class, but partly a permanent class; exercising the same freedom of Marriage as the First-hand Journeymen.

Table XV. fully proves the truth of the statement, that the more independent position of the first-hand journeyman is that desired by the great body of the second-class journeyhands, whether in factories or loom shops*, at the same time that it shows the effect of greater *certainty* of employment, whatever may be the remuneration, in increasing the number of marriages, as compared with those of the journeymen's journeymen. The decline in the number of factory hands of each age, after those who are from 21 to 25, to a more fixed range of numbers, shows that the factory is to many merely a stepping-stone to the more desirable

position, while, to another class, it would appear to afford the occupation of their lives. Of all the men who are masters of families, this class bears the reputation of being the least provident as a whole. Of the younger men, including those who are merely passing through the factories, only 1 out of the 23 under 21 years of age, and rather more than one-third of those between 21 and 25, are apparently married; being a proportion between that of the first-hand journeymen and that of the journeymen's journeymen. But the number of married men among the factory journeymen of greater age, is three-fourths, and nearly approaches to that among the first-hand journeymen, who are owners of their looms. The average number in the families dependent on the factory journeymen, including the unencumbered transition hands, is two to each one, in lieu of one only, as in the case of the journeymen's journeymen, or three, as in the case of the first-hand journeymen, *including their apprentices.*

From Table XVI. it will be rendered obvious that women resort to factory employment only while very young, and until they can do something else. There are only four in their families, besides themselves, dependent on the whole 45.

Table XVI.—Factory Journeywomen; merely a transition class.

* Bunney, in Brown's factory; Mason, in Coxe's factory; and others.

CENSUS TABLE XI.—Being an Analysis of the Families of "First-hand Journeymen," working their own Looms at their own Houses, in the City and Suburbs of Coventry.

Ages.	Number of Male first-hand Journey-hands.	Number of each age undermentioned, in the Families of First-hand Journeymen Loom-owners, including the men themselves.																		Total of First-hand Journeymen's Families.		
		At and above 60.		From 50 to 60.		From 40 to 50.		From 35 to 40.		From 30 to 35.		From 25 to 30.		From 21 to 25.		From 14 to 21.		From 7 to 14.		Under 7.				
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M. & F.
Under 21	19	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	19	1	..	..	..	..	19	4	23
From 21 to 25	147	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	147	81	8	9	8	6	44	34	207	134	341
„ 25 „ 30	253	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	18	253	212	..	..	18	20	22	10	139	161	435	421	856
„ 30 „ 35	286	..	..	..	..	..	4	..	..	286	219	1	38	..	..	70	38	98	111	182	201	637	611	1248
„ 35 „ 40	264	..	..	..	1	2	16	264	170	..	10	1	12	..	..	45	54	145	151	141	154	598	568	1166
„ 40 „ 50	285	1	..	..	8	285	204	..	51	..	..	..	..	3	11	167	193	207	181	147	132	810	780	1590
„ 50 „ 60	197	..	3	197	112	1	40	..	15	..	..	..	..	6	16	91	116	53	62	37	35	385	399	784
Above 60	173	173	81	..	43	..	12	..	6	..	..	..	..	8	12	22	26	13	11	2	2	218	193	411
Total	1614	174	84	197	164	288	276	267	242	286	247	255	266	164	123	440	457	546	532	692	719	3309	3110	6419

*** Very few are above seventy. When individuals were entered of the exact ages above-mentioned, it has been presumed that they had recently passed that age, and they are entered accordingly in this and the subsequent Tables.

CENSUS TABLE XII.—Being an Analysis of the Families of "First-hand Journeywomen," working their own Looms at their own houses, in the City and Suburbs of Coventry.

Ages.	Number of Female first-hand Journey-hands.	Number of Each age undermentioned, in the Families of First-hand Journeywomen Loom-weavers, including the women themselves.																		Total of First-hand Journeywomen's Families.		
		At and above 60.		From 50 to 60.		From 40 to 50.		From 35 to 40.		From 30 to 35.		From 25 to 30.		From 21 to 25.		From 14 to 21.		From 7 to 14.		Under 7				
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M. & F.
Under 21	42	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	42	..	1	..	..	..	43	43
From 21 to 25	38	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	38	..	..	..	1	4	7	4	46	50
,, 25 ,, 30	32	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	32	..	..	..	1	1	3	3	5	4	41	45
,, 30 ,, 35	25	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	25	..	..	..	..	..	..	7	4	9	15	16	44	60
,, 35 ,, 40	15	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	15	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	8	7	6	4	2	13	31	44
,, 40 ,, 50	31	..	..	..	..	..	31	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9	13	8	11	4	2	21	57	78
,, 50 ,, 60	13	..	..	..	13	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	5	3	2	1	..	..	7	19	26
Above 60	18	..	18	..	1	..	1	..	3	..	..	..	..	2	4	..	2	..	..	..	..	2	29	31
Total.	214	..	18	..	14	..	32	..	18	..	25	..	32	2	44	16	69	25	27	24	31	67	310	377

CENSUS TABLE XIII.—Being an Analysis of the Families of the "Journeymen's Journeymen" working in the Loom Shops of the First-hand Journeymen, in the City and Suburbs of Coventry.

Age.	Number of Journeymen's Journeymen.	Number of each Age undermentioned in the Families of "Journeymen's Journeymen," including the Men themselves.																		Total of Journeymen's Journeymen's Families.		
		At and above 60.		From 50 to 60.		From 40 to 50.		From 35 to 40.		From 30 to 35.		From 25 to 30.		From 21 to 25.		From 14 to 21.		From 7 to 14.		Under 7.				
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M. & F.
Under 21	40	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	40	2	..	..	..	1	40	4	44
From 21 to 25	189	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	189	25	..	14	1	4	13	14	203	59	262
,, 25 to 30	126	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	126	54	..	7	..	5	5	6	42	49	173	123	296
,, 30 to 35	78	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	78	26	..	12	..	..	..	3	15	12	34	41	127	97	224
,, 35 to 40	41	..	..	..	..	..	..	41	13	..	11	..	..	..	..	8	2	26	21	23	21	98	68	166
,, 40 to 50	38	..	..	..	1	38	12	..	4	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	4	11	15	18	16	68	53	121
,, 50 to 60	20	..	..	20	6	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	2	4	5	5	4	30	19	49
Above 60	18	18	4	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	2	3	..	1	20	12	32
Total	550	18	4	20	10	38	15	41	19	78	41	126	67	189	34	50	32	64	66	135	147	759	435	1194

CENSUS TABLE XIV.—Being an Analysis of the Families of "Journeymen's Journeywomen," working in the Loom Shops of the First-hand Journeymen, in the City and Suburbs of Coventry.

Ages.	Number of Journeymen's Journeywomen.	Number of each Age undermentioned, in the Families of "Journeymen's Journeywomen," including the Women themselves.																		Total of Journeymen's Journeywomen's Families.		
		At and above 60.		From 50 to 60.		From 40 to 50.		From 35 to 40.		From 30 to 35.		From 25 to 30.		From 21 to 25.		From 14 to 21.		From 7 to 14.		Under 7.				
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M. & F.
Under 21	56	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	56	..	..	..	..	..	56	56
From 21 to 25	144	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	144	..	..	1	..	6	1	7	145	152
,, 25 to 30	55	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	55	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	1	5	56	61
,, 30 to 35	29	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	29	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	3	1	32	33
,, 35 to 40	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	7	7
,, 40 to 50	8	..	..	..	1	..	8	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	2	2	10	12
,, 50 to 60	1	..	..	..		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Above 60	3	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	4	4
Total	302	..	3	..	1	..	8	..	6	..	29	..	55	..	144	1	56	1	1	13	8	15	311	326

CENSUS TABLE XV.—Being an Analysis of the Families of the "Factory Journeymen," who are of the class of Journeymen's Journeymen, but work on the Looms and on the Premises of the Manufacturers, in the City and Suburbs of Coventry.

Ages.	Number of Factory Journeymen.	Number of each age undermentioned in the Families of Factory Journeymen, including the men themselves.																		Total of Factory Journeyman's Families.		
		At and above 60.		From 50 to 60.		From 40 to 50.		From 35 to 40.		From 30 to 35.		From 25 to 30.		From 21 to 25.		From 14 to 21.		From 7 to 14.		Under 7.				
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M. & F.
Under 21	23	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	23	1	..	..	..	..	23	1	24
From 21 to 25	109	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	3	109	30	..	5	2	1	18	23	129	64	193
,, 25 ,, 30	59	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	59	34	..	6	..	2	1	3	25	34	85	83	168
,, 30 ,, 35	45	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	45	21	..	10	..	..	2	4	24	16	33	40	104	91	195
,, 35 ,, 40	30	..	1	..	..	..	3	30	18	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	3	15	22	20	21	65	70	135
,, 40 ,, 50	38	..	..	..	2	38	16	..	5	..	2	..	..	..	..	1	4	29	20	10	17	78	66	144
,, 50 ,, 60	18	..	..	18	5	..	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	1	..	7	..	3	21	23	44
Above 60	6	6	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	9	4	13
Total	328	6	3	18	8	38	26	30	24	45	30	59	47	109	36	29	20	72	69	108	139	514	402	916

CENSUS TABLE XVI.—Being an Analysis of the Families of the "Factory Journeywomen," who are of the Class of Journeymen's Journeywomen, but work on the Looms and on the Premises of the Manufacturer, in the City and Suburbs of Coventry.

Ages.	Number of Factory Journeywomen.	Number of each Age undermentioned in the Families of Factory Journeywomen, including the Women themselves.																		Total of the Factory Journeywomen's Families.		
		At and above 60.		From 50 to 60.		From 40 to 50.		From 35 to 40.		From 30 to 35.		From 25 to 30.		From 21 to 25.		From 14 to 21.		From 7 to 14.		Under 7.				
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M. & F.
Under 21	24	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	24	..	..	..	..	..	24	24
From 21 to 25	10	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10	10
,, 25 to 30	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	7	7
,, 30 to 35	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
,, 35 to 40	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	2	3
,, 40 to 50	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	1	2	3
,, 50 to 60	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Above 60	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	45	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	2	..	1	..	6	..	10	..	24	2	..	..	2	2	47	49

CENSUS TABLE XVII.—Summary of the preceding Analysis of each Class of the Weaving Population.

Classes of Adult Weavers.	Number of each Class of Weavers.	Number of each age undermentioned in the Families of each Class of Weavers, including the Weavers themselves.																		Total of Weavers' Families.		
		At and above 60.		From 50 to 60.		From 40 to 50.		From 35 to 40.		From 30 to 35.		From 25 to 30.		From 21 to 25.		From 14 to 21.		From 7 to 14.		Under 7.				
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F	M.	F.	M.	F.	M. & F.
First-hand Journeymen	1614	174	84	197	164	288	276	267	242	286	247	255	266	164	123	440	457	546	532	692	719	3309	3110	6419
First-hand Journeywomen	214	..	18	..	14	..	32	..	18	..	25	..	32	2	44	16	69	25	27	24	31	67	310	377
Journeymen's Journeymen	550	18	4	20	10	38	15	41	19	78	41	126	67	189	34	50	32	64	66	135	147	759	435	1194
Journeymen's Journeywomen	302	..	3	..	1	..	8	..	6	..	29	..	55	..	144	1	56	1	1	13	8	15	311	326
Factory Journeymen	328	6	3	18	8	38	26	30	24	45	30	59	47	109	36	29	20	72	69	108	139	514	402	916
Factory Journeywomen	45	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	2	..	1	..	6	..	10	..	24	2	..	..	2	2	47	49
	3053	198	112	235	198	364	358	338	311	409	373	440	473	464	391	536	658	710	695	972	1046	4666	4615	9281

Midland District.
Report from
J. Fletcher, Esq.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

POPULATION.

The preceding tables sufficient for estimating the relative progress of population in each class of hands, but scarcely to exhibit its general progress.

Although these tables are of sufficient accuracy to give a general idea of the relative progress of population among the several classes of workpeople, they cannot be regarded as affording an accurate view of its collective progress; since I am unable to make allowances for the movements of the population into or out of the ribbon weavers' families and the ribbon trade, from and to other engagements and other localities. Thus there are children whose parents are in other trades, brought in as apprentices, and children of weavers put out to other occupations, or at other places;—but the former case is the more prevalent. There are also marriages into and out of the trade, and an immigration of hands from the rural parishes. The irregularities in the stated number of females of the respective ages indicate a considerable post-dating at critical periods of life, which is very pardonable in voluntary answers. The following is a comparison of the ribbon-weaving population of the city and suburbs, as returned to me, with the like amount of a stationary French population, as computed hypothetically from French statistics by Mr. Francis Corbaux. Were the population sustaining neither increase nor decrease, the ages of which it would be found to consist, he estimates, on an extensive average, to be as follows :—

NUMBER at and above each of the Undermentioned Ages in the Weaving Population of Coventry and in a Supposed Stationary Population in France.

Age attained.	Weaving Population at Coventry.			Stationary Population in France.		
	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.
Total of all Ages	4666	4615	9281	4666	4615	9281
At and above 5 years	..	..	..	4156	4141	8297
,, 7 ,, ...	3694	3569	7273	..	..	..
,, 10 ,, ...	..	..	..	3723	3734	7457
,, 14 ,, ...	2984	2874	5858	..	..	..
,, 15 ,, ...	..	..	..	3307	3340	6647
,, 20 ,, ...	..	..	..	2902	2955	5857
,, 21 ,, ...	2448	2216	4664	..	..	..
,, 25 ,, ...	1984	1825	3809	..	..	..
,, 30 ,, ...	1544	1352	2896	2005	2222	4227
,, 35 ,, ...	1135	979	2114	..	..	..
,, 40 ,, ...	797	668	1465	1575	1557	3132
,, 50 ,, ...	433	310	743	909	984	1893
,, 60 ,, ...	198	112	310	456	521	977

Without placing any implicit faith in the preceding figures (of which those relating to Coventry are deduced with the most laborious caution from the returns procured by the weavers themselves), it is obvious, from the excess in the younger ages, that the population living by the loom is either very rapidly multiplying, or its health and longevity are less than the average of the existing population of France. Both circumstances, it is probable, combine to produce the numerical result here exhibited. The causes of the less value of life at Coventry will come under more immediate notice in describing the physical condition of the weavers.

Operation of the principle of Population in the Coventry Trade, where advancement is yet open to small capitals, with a gradation of hands.

From the description already given of the constitution of the Coventry trade, it will appear that it is one in which the career is still open to surpassing intelligence, industry, and frugality, to advance the condition of those who can exercise them,—from that of the lowest journeyhand upwards, through *the opening for the individual employment of small capitals*. Marriage, amid the comforts which they desire, is thus held out to the poor class of journeymen's journeymen, as an inducement to exertion and to virtue: by the better among them, it will be attained; while, by another portion, of less energy and providence, it can never be acquired. These have no choice but celibacy, with whatever drowsy habits may attach to it in minds of little activity, or the subsistence of a family in a condition the most abject, if not amid debt, pauperism, and utter demoralization. Of the three checks to population which Malthus justly describes to be in active operation, the preceding tables prove that of "moral restraint;" and that those of vice and misery also lend their aid I have too abundant testimony. So far, however, from the power of increase in the human race being one of its afflictions, we see it here, as throughout society, to be a principle, by which Providence provides motives to the most active exertion of our powers, and selects the most energetic as inheritors of the earth.

The pressure of the numbers brought up in the families of those in various occupations, who did marry with "a fair prospect of being able to maintain a family," which, according to Malthus, is "the only plain and intelligible test with regard to marriage,"* will always be sufficient, in any ordinary state of an "old" country, to keep full any such supernumerary class, as that of the journeymen's journeyhands. When such a class as those journeymen's journeymen who are not in factories, "and therefore have not a fair prospect of being able to maintain a family," also contribute a supply of hands to the market, notwithstanding that the trade is, in its general state, confessedly overhanded, the limit of comfortable subsistence, where the hands are supplied through the old domestic apprenticeship, is evidently passed; the test of the propriety of forming a marriage being the existence of room in the trade for another little manufacturing household. A feeble morality cannot, however, resist the temptation of the impunity from immediate punishment found in the employment which the trade affords to children. It would be well if every trade, under the new organization to which society is tending, had any such well-defined ledge as this of under-journeywork upon which to rest its unmarried hands, in a position marked, by its inferior earnings and consideration, as that of a bachelor class. But the factory system does away with any property qualification for marriage, as enforced by the morality of society; substituting simply *wages*, and no part of rent or *profits*, as the sole revenue of the labourer; with the same employment for juvenile hands which has tended so powerfully to demoralize the old single-hand trade of ribbon weaving.

Where there is a gradation of classes, with some little property, as at Coventry, a sound morality might limit the excess of rising hands.

Full employment in his trade is generally deemed by the factory labourer the means of living, with which he must rest contented for life; and the effect on the marriages, which are then contracted as freely as by the workmen in full employment on their own looms, appears in the preceding tables. When the price of mere labour is the sole revenue of the labourer, employment at wages is the condition in which he deems himself at liberty to marry. Were it part of the local morality of Coventry that journeymen's journeymen should not marry until they attained the class of first-hand journeymen and undertakers, as there became room for them in it, and when they had acquired the property of their looms, it is probable that both the engine and the single-hand trade would be wholly relieved from the excessive competition for employment of which it is complained that the masters avail themselves; but this is a result which could only be brought about by habits and intelligence far different from those which have ever yet prevailed in the district. The progress of the factory system has, so far as it extends, removed the midway rest for the bachelor hands; and there is, under it, *no* employment, but at the *full wages of an adult class*.

But under a factory system, or any other where full wages only are earned, there is no medium position for the young hands.

It is upon the principle of making a public provision for a medium employment, to marry upon which would be disgraceful, that out-door relief to the able-bodied poor is sometimes defended; but it will be found much better to leave the rising offshoots to seek their own support in such services to others as they can find the opportunity of rendering, at home or abroad, and among their relations and friends; for at home they would not, *if they belonged to a well-conditioned people*, be in any danger of such positive misery as would make them undersell their neighbours with their labour. But a well-conditioned people is one in which wages are already good, and the class morality by no means low; and such a people, among lowly-skilled labourers, living solely by wages, it will be difficult to find.

Impossibility of providing such a medium from public funds.

An unenlightened people, of dull perceptions and little pride, as an English manufacturing population of low skill necessarily are, never have had, and can only by slow degrees acquire, a sensitiveness of class morality, which shall preserve them from aggravating the danger of their descending to the lowest state of subsistence, and keep them from dragging downward every neighbouring superior class, as we see is done by the journeyhands brought up in the single-hand loom, coming into the engine trade of Coventry. For the capitalist can always have the labour of the first-hand journeyman, at the same price as that of his under journeyman, by the rivalry created in employing the lower hand to come and work upon his (the master's) looms; which is, in fact, so extensively done as to measure precisely the limits within which the wages of the superior class can rise. They are, in fact, little higher than pays the interest of the first-hand journeyman's capital in his looms. A more perfect morality would dictate to the journeyman's journeyman the propriety of refraining from marriage, until he could place himself in the class of a first-hand journeyman in the engine trade, or of an undertaker in the

Want of intelligence to refrain from aggravating the danger of descending to the lowest stage of subsistence.

* Vol. iii. p. 362.

single-hand trade; there being in both an obvious measure of the "fair prospect of being able to maintain a family," which Malthus describes as "the only plain and intelligible test with regard to marriage." * Such, in fact, was the principle of all early trades in England; and the same is, for the most part, preserved among the silk-weavers of France, to the present day.† Nor does the supposed evil of delayed marriage on the part of women necessarily arise out of its adoption, as the relative ages in the two sexes at which marriages are commnly made must daily prove. That the journeymen's journeymen of Coventry are, in this respect, practically Malthusians, to the extent of one-half, is proved by the preceding tables, notwithstanding the horror which they express at the doctrines of the man who never propounded any other precept on this subject than that which they so extensively follow.

A highly moral population, following the precepts of Malthus, would, in an "old" country, always have the labour-market "over-stocked," and not "understocked," as he supposes.

Better training, it is probable, might have brought the under journeyhands of the engine and the single-hand trades to pursue the conduct here described, rather than incur the restriction to their number imposed by positive misery. But this would not necessarily prevent competition, when they have attained to the rank of first-hand journeymen, to such a degree as to depress the whole to a very low condition. Much less can competition among factory hands, or other classes of labourers who have no such stepping-stone, and no means of further advancement, be restrained from producing the like reductions, if it be supposed that the price of labour must decline like that of any other article in the market of which there is an excess, and which will not keep. For there is, I think, a step in this branch of political reasoning, the neglect of which has led to much false induction. It is demonstrable that, from the marriages of those who have "a fair prospect of being able to maintain a family," there must result such a supply of labour constantly thrown into the markets of an "old" country, as will make them be, in all ordinary times, "*overstocked*," in lieu of being, as Malthus urges upon the labouring classes to make them be, always "*understocked*." ‡ If they adopt his "only plain and intelligible test with regard to marriage," they therefore miss the object which he urges them to attain, *and which could only be attained by the preternatural combination for the purpose already supposed.* So far from advocating any attempt to limit the fruitfulness of marriages when made, he says, "If it were possible for each married couple to limit, by a wish, the number of their children, there is certainly reason to fear, that the indolence of the human race would be very greatly increased; and that neither the population of individual countries, nor of the whole earth, would ever reach its natural and proper extent. §" Thus, in lieu of any advantage being derivable from the labour-market being "understocked," as Mr. Malthus seems to desire, it must surely be through the fact of its being rather "overstocked" that the development of our best abilities is so largely attributable to the principle of population, as he supposes; and it certainly gives to the world a better choice of mutual servants,—while, in a really moral community, no serious dangers can result, for the excess will never be beyond the surplus hands of one generation. Neither in communities existing in a lower state, do vice and misery allow it to extend much farther.

When the income of a class is derived from property, or a highly-skilled profession, Malthus's *individual* responsibility of men for their own fate holds good.

It is unfortunate that the subtlety of sciences which treat of human actions and their results (and of those only in proportions), renders errors of judgment in them but too easy, and demonstration exceedingly difficult; but the laws of increase from marriages in a community in our own degree of civilization will, I believe, so far as they are already known, determine that a perpetual "overstocking" of the labour-market must ensue, if men marry, as they do and will, whenever they "have a fair prospect of being able to support a family," according to the habits of their class, as Mr. Malthus undoubtedly means; or in other words, whenever they are in the receipt of the ordinary *wages* prevailing in their several occupations at the time. Now it is certainly true—where property is distributed among a people, and where a man can apply the savings of his industry in conjunction with his individual abilities, as is yet extensively the case in the Coventry ribbon trade (though his property consists only in the tools of his manufacture, and not the land which grows his food)—that "it is in the power of each individual to avoid all the evil consequences to *himself and society* resulting from the principle of population, by the practice of a virtue clearly dictated to him by the light of nature, and expressly enjoined in revealed religion,"‖ in like manner as we see it practised by peasant proprietors. The propriety of marriages among propertied classes, of whatever rank, is determined by

* Vol. iii. p. 362. † Charles. ‡ Vol. iii. p, 115. § Vol. iii. p. 393.
‖ Malthus, vol. iii. p. .

the obvious test of the *possession of property;* among the trades and professions, by the *attainment of a favourable position* in each; but, among the unpropertied labouring classes, merely by the possibility of procuring *employment* at the remuneration ordinarily paying *at the time* to their class. Where property, or high skill and reputation, is an attribute of the class, Malthus's individual responsibility of each man for the condition in which he shall bring up a family, holds good; where it is not, no *individual* can prevent his wages, or those of his children, from being reduced, by the competition of hands brought up in the families of his neighbours, wholly beyond his control. In the case of peasant proprietors, an improvident marriage is accompanied by the individual's degradation among his neighbours; but no such influence can be found to act where men marry notwithstanding that the weekly income of their *whole class* has declined several shillings. Such a reduction might be a temporary determent; but, if it were permanent, it would soon become associated with a lower range of habits, and its effect on marriages be lost.

But when it consists of the mere wages of unskilled labour, this *individual* responsibility is not complete.

The unsuccessful candidates for station in the upper classes of society, which comprise all who possess property and high skill, cannot reduce the successful from their station by rivalry, for they have neither land, capital, nor skill to do so. They may, and frequently do, become attached to members of their several classes in various relations of service, and submit to their secondary position as inevitable. But this is far different from the circumstances in which lowly-skilled labourers are placed, whose only property consists in their personal abilities, and whose only income is the price of their exertion. The able-bodied man, unemployed, can offer services as good as those of the man already engaged, and is driven by his necessities to offer them for a lower remuneration, which the masters may accept if they choose; and hence the whole class is in danger of being reduced. This competition is the natural state of all lowly-skilled occupations in an "old" country; the prime object of all combinations of workmen is to resist its full operation; and the expedients to which they have successively resorted in the Coventry trade are hereafter detailed.

Difference of position between classes living by rents, profits, and monopoly prices of skill, and those dependent on the wages of lowly-skilled labour.

It is with diffidence that I have entered upon this most difficult and delicate of the topics familiar to political science. But to slight it for the discussion of others dependent almost wholly upon the principles which it involves, while the most contradictory opinions respecting it are in popular vogue, would have exposed me to much misapprehension. While avoiding this inconvenience, I cannot but feel myself obnoxious to a charge of presumption, in differing, on grounds so barely described, from some of the principles laid down by men to whose talents, learning, and integrity, few can be more ready to do homage than myself. But the duties of the charge which you entrusted to me, compel this expression of an opinion, resulting from the best exertions of an unbiassed, though perhaps imperfect, judgment.

Discussion of this subject demanded by the nature of the Inquiry.

If it were possible for the weaving population at once to rescue themselves from the evils to which they are so extensively subject, by the simple panacea of keeping the labour-market "understocked," the discovery of this fact would at once have terminated my investigations in regard to remedial measures. But, tracing the subject through the habits of the labourers themselves, it is obvious that, when moral restraint to the physical powers of multiplication is applied, it must be the result, and not the cause, of an improved moral condition, which coincidently develops a commensurate physical prosperity, and employs this agency to maintain it, though obviously never to the extent of keeping the labour-market of an "old" country "understocked." It appears to me that, when men are in the circumstances in which their class usually bring up a family, no inducement on earth will restrain the generality of them from doing so; nor can they be offered any sufficient reason for refusing to follow the course of nature under the sanction of morality and religion. The morality of private life, the principles and the imperfections of which it is here quite needless to discuss, will, as hitherto, determine the conduct of individuals in regard to the contract of marriage, under the varying circumstances in which they are respectively placed. But universally the physical condition and the degree of moral restraint (where the latter is at all requisite) are direct and collateral results from the moral development, whether of a whole community or of a class. This determination of the physical condition by the moral character limits the number that can subsist on a given tract of land, or in a given trade; which is greater, in proportion to the productiveness of their labour, when the people will subsist in a low physical condition than when they demand a higher. If the moral and physical condition be low, there will still be multiplication beyond

Moral restraint a result of improved moral condition producing *coincidently* physical prosperity.

the means of subsistence, terminating in individual or general disease and famine; but where they are high, the disgrace attaching to improvident marriages makes these so few, that society is always able, owing to their exceptional character, to prevent positive famine being their result in any class. In the former case the checks encountered by the population are chiefly physical; in the latter, chiefly moral; but it is vain to suppose that the checks in the latter case *created* the civilization upon which they are attendant, or can create it, whether in a nation or a class. In a large portion of the trade of Coventry, we see that the premium set upon marriage by the field of employment for women and children is a powerful inducement to the neglect of moral considerations and the incurring of physical evils. It is chiefly through the corruption of moral character that this excess of evils is incurred; and to the moral condition of the weaving population I therefore felt myself bound to procure all the evidence hastily accessible.

The want of better moral elements a chief source of physical evils.

III.—MORAL CONDITION OF THE RIBBON WEAVERS.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

MORAL PROGRESS.

Extension of the inquiry to moral influences, as affecting both the *amount* and the *application* of earnings.

Having briefly analyzed the industrial circumstances of the ribbon weavers, without discovering any means by which alone their condition can permanently be improved, it becomes necessary to examine into the influences arising from their moral habits, and the moral constitution of the local community. In a free country, where industry is unfettered, these are greatly modified by the industrial circumstances under which the population obtain their subsistence; and the influence of those which have already been detailed will be recognised in almost every fact adduced in this branch of my investigations. The influence of moral circumstances in the *amount* of earnings, will ultimately be manifest; and assuredly they have no less effect in their *application*. Yet I must lament that this investigation into the moral condition of one large section of a vast Christian community,—an investigation worthy of the highest talents and the amplest means,—should have been merely supplemental to hasty inquiries, in which my limited time, resources, and abilities have enabled me to note only the more prominent and peculiar among each class of influences. To make a "report" from such data is impossible. I can only hastily throw together the memoranda as hastily collected.

Change in moral as well as industrial condition.

I have traced the growth of the trade from a state of great industrial rudeness and simplicity to its present centralization and variety of classes; and an analogous moral progress has been made among the people engaged in it. The following picture of their former grossness may shock the imagination, and impress a belief that all the features portrayed are peculiar to Coventry. But it should be borne in mind that the notions and habits of every uncultivated people are gross, and, when they are brought together in masses, also vicious; for a lower state of intelligence will suffice for the self-government of men labouring almost in solitude about the fields, and pillowed nightly by fatigue, than is demanded to meet the mutual incitements, and the facilities for vicious indulgence, incident to every manufacturing community.

Former barbarism, and modern advancement.

The changes which have taken place in the manners and habits of the class of employers at Coventry, during the present century, were these the subject of immediate investigation, would present a series of very curious pictures, to which a good index is afforded by the historical succession of buildings in its ancient streets. Forty years ago, the mass of the labouring population of this city, and of the weaving district to the north of it, (composed chiefly of weavers, colliers, and farm servants,) undisturbed by schools or by sectarianism, remained in a state of barbarism, as gross as was consistent with the perpetuation of the race; the men without intelligence and without religion, working badly at irregular hours, and sotting in dirt and disorder nearly the rest of their time, including the whole of Sunday. But intelligence has penetrated even this mass of ignorance and vice; being aided in its diffusion beyond the middle classes by the Sunday-schools, which here came into operation towards the close of the last century, and were seconded, about 1810, by the establishment of rival Lancasterian and National day-schools. The first object of these spontaneous labours to improve the moral condition of the labouring poor, was naturally to implant in their minds the principles of Christianity. The doctrines instilled were not always in accordance with the canons of the Established Church; and hence the rivalry, here, as elsewhere in England, which has made the great purpose of instruction, to develop every faculty, and guide its application by a heart-stirring religion and a healthy morality, be too often overlooked for the inculcation of mere words, to the abasement rather than to the improvement of the character. Circumstances peculiar to our country have thus withheld it from the more enlightened course pursued in Protestant Christendom generally, where religion is inculcated rather as the guide of secular knowledge than as a substitute for it; and these influences are still in full action, thwarting every attempt to advance our moral cultivation in the same ratio as the development of our physical resources. Still considerable advance has been made, and the population engaged in the ribbon weaving now divides itself morally into two distinct portions;—that engaged in the engine-weaving in the city and suburbs, among which superior habits and intelligence prevail; and the dispersed and ignorant in-

Ribbon-weavers now divided morally into two portions—city and country weavers.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

habitants of the rural parishes, employed chiefly in the single-hand trade, and retaining most of their original barbarism with an accession of vice.

The present mayor of Coventry thus describes the manners and habits of the journeymen weavers of the city in his youth:—

Moral Progress.

Former rude and gross habits of the city weavers.

"The whole trade of journeymen subsisted on the community for two months in the year at least. They were the chief recipients of the numerous charities of the city, and the poor's rates were much resorted to; for when out of work, they had only these resources, and running into debt with the huckster. They were room-keepers: they rented one or two rooms. Some of the two months' relief which they borrowed, they afterwards worked out; but they were always in arrear.

"There were no schools but the charity (endowed) schools, and day-schools, at about 6*d.* per week, to which the undertakers sent their children; but the journeymen, themselves ignorant, knew not the advantages of instruction for their children, and never thought about getting it for them. Generally speaking, they had no personal pride, and were not in a condition to appear in public on Sunday. They would make themselves rather smarter at the club feast-day, once or twice a-year, but generally they were not cleaned on the Sunday, which is a very good test as to the rest of their habits.

"Nearly all were in some club. The club was for mutual maintenance during illness, and for funerals on the death of a member or of his wife. The subscriptions were generally one shilling fortnightly on Monday, and the payments out varied according to the state of the funds. On the club-nights, the rule was to spend 4*d.* in drink. There were no other savings made, except by some very few journeymen. It was most difficult to encounter the shop habits. There was no habit of saving when they had employment against the time when they had not. The man gave what he thought right to the wife on Saturday night, with which she must get through the week as she could. He spent the rest in drink. The houses had little furniture, and that of the coarsest sort. The breakfast was generally of milk. At dinner generally a bit of meat or bacon, and potatoes. Tea was commonly brought to the men at the shop by the wife or one of the children.

"The improvement which has since taken place has been stimulated by the example of those who have prospered by regulating their conduct. The Sunday-schools were the first institutions by which those who were easier in circumstances and better informed, first showed an interest in the intellectual improvement of the lower and more ignorant. This was followed up by the establishment of schools on the plans of Lancaster and Bell. Sunday-schools had existed previous to 1800, and the children could not be unfeeling to the solicitude shown for their improvement. The Lancasterian school was established about 1810; the national school came soon after. These opened the way for active minds, and the improvement of the general mass has ensued. Indeed vice, there can be no doubt, reigned jointly with ignorance, and their sway was co-extensive. There were formerly no means of adult improvement collectively whatever, and ninety-nine out of every hundred never thought of books.* The more provident hands were generally those working at home. The home work greatly conduces to moral conduct, for the good influence of the woman is lost in the shop."†

Modern influences of half-pay apprenticeship, as compared with the old domestic apprenticeship.

This will be recognised as a faithful picture of the labourer's life half a century ago, elsewhere than at Coventry. The description here given of the former habits of the men, certainly gives but a mean opinion of the vaunted morality resulting from the old apprenticeship system, as compared with the half-pay apprenticeship, except that there appears to have been a less early emancipation of the young people from bonds which restrained them from thoughtless marriages, at the same time that they sought the excitement of more active though ruder sports than they now do. The relations of the boy with the family of his master, or that of his parents, are not, by this half-pay system left in so healthy, although perhaps a less rude state. His connexion with that of his master is in fact no more than that of any journeyman, while his receipt of wages makes him feel himself little other than a lodger in the house of his parents. A boy would feel it a degradation to be denied the receipt of his own apprentice wages, which in some instances would now be paid to his parents, but that other apprentices receive theirs directly; and the parents of some of the apprentices are of character so bad, that it is right they should do so. The local magistrates have a strong feeling against the system

Half-pay apprenticeship emancipates youth from its proper subjection.

* Herbert. † Ib.

of half-pay apprenticeship, which, says one of the factory proprietors, compels him to take a boy before them when refractory, or his overlooker would be punished for castigating him, instead of which the boy is subjected to the contamination of a prison.*

Midland District.
Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Moral Progress. Factory working a reverting, to the old loom shop system, as regards its influence on the character of the men.

But of all the industrial circumstances affecting the moral habits of the men, none can have so much influence as those which result from their working dispersedly at their own homes, or in company at a shop or factory. It is the prevalence of the latter system, counteracting the domestic apprenticeship, to which we ought properly to attribute any excess of disorders that formerly prevailed, beyond those incident to a state of barbarous ignorance among every people. The picture above given of the former state of the trade certainly produces features obnoxious to the very same complaints now loudly urged against the increasing factory system, which is a reverting to the old shop system on a larger scale; "the feeling of good-fellowship leading to drinking, and absence from home, and its decencies." † "To escape being flouted, the man must take part in the habits of the mass among whom he is thrown, and in this mass the general level is low; while the weaver at home can pursue his own course, and has no restrictions on self-improvement. The factory system is the great propagator of '*socialism*.' The men have no centre for their habits in a home, and in the power of forming an individual character." ‡ One of the most respectable factory masters says, "Some of our men bring their wives to pick up for them; and the influence of the wife is good, binding the man to work, and binding him to decency; but the influence of the factory generally is decidedly bad, especially upon the young unmarried men and women." §

Character of the present city weavers under the journey-work system.

An officer of the directors of the poor "thinks that the dissolute portion of the Coventry city weavers, are not more than one-sixth, if so much, and these are chiefly of the journeyman's journeyman class. This dissolute portion never save a farthing in any shape, although they may be earning good wages, as at Mr. Day's factory. There are at present very few of any sort of weavers on the rates; but the moment there is a slackness of trade, these come on, and very few others do. The better class of weavers are decent, well-doing people, with habits generally good. They are not drinkers in the bad sense of the term, though to take a couple of glasses of ale and a pipe, costing altogether *5d.*, in the smoking-room of a public-house, is a common habit with them. Their modes of saving are in the purchase of looms, and in benefit clubs at public-houses. Their providence is generally limited to this, and they save in no other shape. The homes of the weavers of this class are generally cleanly, and many of them have wives who were born in the country, and are larger in person and cleanlier in habits than the town girls: they are better managers. Many weavers' wives are making good earnings at weaving, winding, and warping; and the women have their benefit clubs as well as the men, held like theirs at the public-houses, where they are exposed to the like temptations, against which their frailty is not proof. Their providence is thus limited, and in good times they are not frugal, as the poultry market bears testimony. But their expenditure on the whole is better directed, and they maintain themselves in a state of far higher decency than is seen in other weaving districts. * * * It is generally the wives of dissolute weavers who themselves are dissolute; the rest are, for the most part, tidy and well-conducted." ‖

Order and cleanliness among the better classes, and abandonment of the lowest.

This evidence as to the present habits of the city weavers was borne out by my own observation in making the circuit of different parts of the town. In several streets I went into the habitations of every weaver; and the houses of the first-hand journeymen presented a neatness and cleanliness which could not well be surpassed. No one who had seen the squalor of Spitalfields or Macclesfield, but must have felt the liveliest gratification at witnessing this superiority of habits. But I was equally struck with the excessive number of vagabonds to be found at evening in the tap-rooms of the low public-houses; in person, in dress, and in occupations appearing as though they belonged to the metropolitan fraternity of St. Giles's, as I cannot doubt that some did. These are chiefly the men above alluded to, who "enjoy only strolling and sotting, and, if they have families, leave the poor women to struggle through with them as they can." ¶ The general habits with regard to diligence will be detailed minutely in describing the hours of work. Industry is the rule, and idleness the exception.

* Dresser. † Weavers' Committee. ‖ Holt. ¶ Ib. ‡ Ib. § Odell.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

MORAL CONDITION. Larger crimes few; prevalence of minor and juvenile delinquencies.

Dram-drinking has increased, but ale is the old-accustomed beverage. The amount of crime in the city is not large.* The greater number of commitments are of young delinquents, for petty offences of various kinds,† chiefly larcenies committed by bad apprentices, or apprentices abandoned by their masters.‡ The young people from 14 to 18, both weavers and watchmakers, are many of them very disorderly, and resort to the beer-houses for card-playing, especially the half-pay apprentices.§ There are also gangs who make some part of their subsistence by depredations.‖

Little use of Savings Bank; providence exercised only in the purchase of looms, in subscription to clubs, and to the dispensary.

It is remarkable that while the benefit clubs are exceedingly numerous, and not fewer than twenty are in contract with the self-supporting dispensary for attendance on their members,¶ there are not more than 100 weavers depositors in the Savings' Bank.** This is but a modern institution, and the weavers have certainly to some extent distrusted it. Some were apprehensive that they should never get their money back again; while others were fearful that if the manufacturers, who were on the Committee, should be aware that they were able to make savings, their wages would be reduced. The clerk to the bank "is confident that this feeling has existed, but thinks it is gradually wearing away. Last Monday the deposits were greater than ever has before been known; upwards of 400*l.* being brought in on that day. The proportion of weavers is increasing, but it is yet only about one-fourth of the whole number, and of these at least half are unmarried females."†† Weavers, watchmakers, and dyers, are, however, the principal subscribers to the self-supporting dispensary, hereafter noticed.

Want of better domestic economy.

There is inevitably a considerable want of economy and management in the expenditure of their earnings, owing to occupation in the trade preventing the women from acquiring a proper domestic education. The women are more than usually fond of dress, and the well-conducted men have notions of appearance which sometimes show themselves very characteristically.‡‡ Of want of integrity there was no complaint.

Instructional influences upon the character of adults in the city.

The character of the city weavers as to "diligence, providence, frugality, honesty, and temperance," these few data will sufficiently indicate; and it may be well to notice the influences now acting upon this character in adults. There are in the city four churches and eleven other places of worship; four for Independents, two for Baptists, one for Wesleyan, and one for Primitive Methodists, one for Unitarians, one for the Society of Friends, and one for Roman Catholics. But the number is very great of those who go to no place of worship. Tract distributors, going round during the time of worship to give tracts to those who were staying at home, have found a large proportion of the houses in which none of the family were gone to worship. In some instances these were respectable people; but the great body were those who were too indolent and insensible to clean themselves to go. But the Sunday schools are diminishing the latter class, although many who are instructed in them abandon public worship; for, if all who were brought up in them continued their attendance, the existing places of worship would not be large enough as they now amply are.§§

Habits of attendance at public worship.

Absence of a large portion of the population.

Character and degree of intelligence among the working men.

Among the more active-minded young men the strange theoretical confusion of all the relations of civil life, commonly called "*socialism*," with its community of property and exchange of women, has great sway; but the older men have generally no intellectual excitements whatever. The occupation of the ribbon weaver, especially if he have good silk, leaves his mind at liberty to ruminate; and the loom is here frequently called "the weaver's study." One of the weavers told me that when he has to prepare himself for a speech, he never can do it half so well as in the loom. The intelligence and dexterity of the leaders of the men is, in fact, very remarkable; partly arising from their long practice politically at elections. And I believe the great body of them to be sensitively awake to the seizure of any means of bettering their condition, which could be pointed out to them, except that of self-cultivation, for which the grown up men have for the most part little means or opportunity and less taste. As a key to self-control, to self-respect, and to the respect of others, some of the younger leaders of the men are, however, awakening to its importance to themselves as individuals, and to the class in whose fate they share.

There is a book society connected with the chapels of Cow Lane and Vicar Lane; the library composed chiefly of religious, biographical, and historical works, and books of voyages, travels, and missions; and several booksellers'

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* Prosser. † Carter. ‡ Prosser. § Ib. ‖ Ib.
¶ Nankivell. ** Letter of Mr. Huxley, the accountant. †† Huxley.
‡‡ Whitten and Nankivell. §§ Sibree.

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shops let out, at 2*d.* per volume, novels and other works which are extensively read by the weavers. But the principal source of useful intelligence is a Mechanics' Institution, to which the entrance fee is 1*s.*, and the subscription 2*s.* 6*d.* per quarter; terms of which the men with families complain, as being too dear, at the same time that they feel little inclination to make the institution their evening resort. But there are a great many of the younger weavers in it, who benefit greatly by the books and lectures, and by the writing, arithmetic, geometry, grammar, and geography classes. Perhaps one-fourth of the members are weavers.* Somewhat analogous to this institution (for in Coventry nearly all institutions go in pairs, because of its civil and religious parties), there is a Religious and Useful Knowledge Society, having a library of books carefully selected by a Committee almost wholly Episcopalian, and the subscription to which is only 1*s.* per quarter, without any admission fee.

Moral Condition. Sources of secular intelligence for adults in a Mechanics' Institution and a Religious and Useful Knowledge Society.

Success of the Mechanics' Institution

The Mechanics' Institution was founded in 1828, and at first was of very limited extent and means, but it has now for several years possessed a commodious building in Hertford Street; comprising a library, museum, reading room, four class rooms, a laboratory, and a lecture room, or theatre, for 500 or 600 persons, heated by steam, and lighted with gas; the whole erected at an expense of 1700*l.* "The object of the institution is the instruction of the mechanic and artisan in the principles of those arts more immediately connected with their particular occupations, and the communication of such useful and appropriate knowledge as may assist them in obtaining an honest livelihood, and render them more intelligent and valuable members of society."† The library now contains about 2000 volumes, and the tenth annual report, made in October, 1838, thus describes the more recent proceedings:—

"In adverting to the subject of the classes, the Committee have much satisfaction in stating that they have engaged, as a paid teacher, in writing, arithmetic, geometry, and English grammar, a person who has long been accustomed to education, and whose acquirements, as well as mode of instruction, hold out the promise of great good. The music class is still under efficient superintendence, and will give occasional performances before the members. At the same time they are enabled to state that a plan for the better formation and regulation of the classes has long been in contemplation, and is now, they are happy to say, carried into effect. That more has not been done in this department during the past year is to be attributed not to any insensibility of the Committee to its value, but rather to the deep sense which they entertain of its importance, which has led them to prefer delay to the hurried and imperfect construction of the classes, and therefore to their probable failure.

Present advantages which it offers.

"The Committee beg to call attention to a new feature in the institution—the formation of a museum; and, in referring to the geological and entomological departments, they have to acknowledge, in the former, some valuable contributions from Messrs. Whittem, Troughton, Muddiman, and Davis; in the latter, a large and valuable collection of British insects, from Mr. W. H. Mercer. Miscellaneous contributions have also been received from Messrs. Nankivell, Stephens, Jenkins, and Bicknell.

"There is but one branch of the institution remaining which calls for particular attention, that is the reading room. The Committee feel great pleasure in stating that the arrangements adopted for its betterregulation have exceeded their most sanguine expectations, and that they are now enabled to offer to the mechanic the comforts of a commodious room, where, after the labours of the day, he may find, in the midst of a well-ordered and respectable society, the blessings either of instruction or relaxation."

Secession of Socialists.

It is worthy of notice, as showing the character of some of the rising intelligence, that some sixty or seventy "socialists" have seceded from the institution, and formed themselves into a separate establishment, because the members generally would not submit to the disturbance of the discussions of which they made the institution the theatre. A prospectus has been issued of an Education Society, to form the groundwork of a Statistical Society.

Moral debasement of the country weavers scarcely credible.

I did not at first credit the statements made to me of the moral debasement which prevails among the country weavers, but cautiously weighed the mental character of the witnesses, in the belief that their strong terms might be employed only according to some exaggerated standard in their own minds. But the overwhelming flood of evidence on every side at length compelled me to recognise a grossness and an immorality, which are the more painful to contemplate, since I cannot but apprehend that they prevail throughout the other large portions of our population similarly circumstanced. The more intelligent of the men themselves gave, in public, uncontradicted testimony to ignorance and vice, rendered appalling by their universality. Even in regard to their labour they are absurdly unsteady. They are, for the most part, idle from Saturday morning to Tuesday morning, and

* Bray. † Circular of the Committee. ‡ Holmes.

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MORAL CONDITION. At Foleshill.

to make up their week's work, apply themselves during the whole night of Friday.

The following evidence was given me in public, at Foleshill, by Richard Holmes, an intelligent undertaker, and one of the constables :—

Ignorance and vice.

"The mass of the people, with the exception of a few young men, are brutally ignorant, and the intelligence which is to be found in the exceptions has manifested itself only within the last half-dozen years. It is not the population which has gone down into ignorance; it has never emerged from it. This is not surprising, for there is not an efficient school in the parish (which contains upwards of *seven thousand inhabitants*). The people are as ignorant as ever, and, in proportion to their numbers, more immoral. There is more profanity, more Sabbath-breaking, and more immorality than formerly. Their language is awfully depraved. Independently of their irreligion, they are *practically* more immoral than formerly. Bastardy is greater than ever, even since the Poor Law Amendment Act (and information to the same effect was given me in regard to the City.) At any little holiday time, the public-houses will be thronged with girls ready for the lowest excesses. Both sexes are great drinkers, chiefly of ale. The place is also notorious for poaching and robberies; and the magistrates of Coventry well know that when a desperate case is brought before them it is generally from this neighbourhood.* * * * * Compared to what they now are, though rude and ignorant, they were formerly a harmless population. The foregoing observations apply to the mass; the better are only exceptions."*

Habits of depredation increased.

Robert Cantrill, an aged man, of the same class, thinks that, "though the journeyhand weavers' houses, forty years ago, were poor miserable places, which might be called 'hovels' almost, the journeyhands are less well-conducted now. There have been several highway robberies, with violence, during the twelvemonth last past; housebreaking is very frequent; pantries are robbed; and other depredations are committed. There are garden robberies in abundance, but the guilty parties are not generally found out.† Thinks there is more drinking now than there was then. One great cause of the decline was the war, which took the young men out great fools, and brought them home big rogues, to contaminate the rest. A *part*, certainly, of the general misconduct is brought on by distress. Thinks it makes a man hopeless; and, when hopeless, he becomes desperate, and preys upon society, and careless even of what little honest advantages are in his way; and then comes the last wretchedness. Times of bad trade, in the witness's youth, which were very frequent, then, as now, always led to thieving. Thinks, however, that there was then nothing of the aggravated kind that there now is. Now never a night passes without some depredation in this or the neighbouring parishes."‡ One of the most notorious class of depredations is robbing the barges on the canal, which passes through the weaving parishes, and is part of the Grand Junction line. They are robbed of every kind of goods, which here find plenty of receivers; the abstraction being made either by the bargemen themselves or with their connivance. A principal article is silk, on its passage from London to the North, for the disposal of which, when stolen, it is asserted that there is a very complete organisation. The thieves have their throwsters, their dyers, manufacturers of the class of undertakers, of whom there are many in Foleshill, their warehouse, and their travelling agent, to sell the goods.§

Benefit clubs merely annual associations.

"There are not fewer than twenty benefit clubs in the parish, for mutual assistance in case of affliction, but they are not enrolled. The members subscribe 6*d.* per week each, meet fortnightly at a public-house, each to spend not less than 3*d.*, and *divide their stock equally at the end of the year*, each member leaving a small subscription towards the next year's stock."‖

Mr. John Slingsby, one of the most respectable undertakers in the trade, and his son-in-law, Joseph Cuthbert, the parish clerk and constable, thus describes the habits of the people at Bulkington :—

At Bulkington.

"The working in the night injures the sight, injures the health, and injures the habits. It increases crime. A parcel of fellows meeting in the night, without any control, but at liberty to do as they please, encourage each other in small disorders and pilferings, gradually extending to large offences. This liberty in the middle of the night first leads them to 'sprees' and 'larks,' in robbing gardens and orchards, and in poaching. These fellows will go, out of spite, to pull up the pet vegetables of respectable inhabitants, to whom they know their proceedings to

Advance in crime from the disorders of the Friday night.

* Holmes. † Cantrill. ‡ Ib. § Holmes; Ralphs. ‖ Holmes.

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be obnoxious. Orchard and garden robbing are generally on the Friday night; sometimes on Saturday night. The next step is to knock over a duck, goose, fowl, or turkey, and perhaps, after leaving it a short time, to fetch it to some one of their houses or haunts. Besides six regular public-houses in the village of Bulkington, and three in the hamlets of that parish, there are two beer-houses in the village, one of which is much resorted to by the lowest workmen. *Only beer being obtainable at a beer-shop, the more respectable classes of customers will not go to them, and they therefore become the exclusive and favoured resort of the ill-conducted, who become still worse by thus escaping from general observation.* There are many sheep stolen. No house has been broken for these twelve or fourteen years in Bulkington, but three years ago the church was robbed, and the example of punishment then inflicted checked the previous disposition to carry off all articles, as buckets, tubs, &c., which might be lying about. The last step of infamy is foot-pad robbery; and last assizes four youths from this village were transported for robbing a travelling tinker, who had come to Bulkington to buy a horse, and whom they left for dead in the road.* * * * The habits of the men altogether are 'shackling' and profligate. The journeymen have commonly not a farthing's worth of anything on or off their persons which they could pawn, or they would not long possess it. The great body of them have nothing left by Sunday night. On Monday they will borrow, or get on at the public-house, as they can, till the end of the week; and to make up their piece, they work the extravagant hours already stated. Some of the wives are as bad as the men, but others are decent bodies, who are 'clamming.' Many of the houses have no furniture but a stool and a table, with perhaps an old chair; a loom, on which the man works; and often neither bed nor bedstead. The girls, before marriage, are sometimes forced to find money for the debauches of their sweethearts. Certainly seventeen out of every twenty are 'far gone' in the family-way at marriage. They don't care to be married until they are that way. They generally marry very young, approaching, or just at full age. Sometimes the men marry without any home to go to, and they and their wives will lodge in separate habitations. They are altogether excessively rude and uncultivated. * * * The undertakers are many of them very dishonest to their employers. Some of them will put in more than a due share of shute, which enables them to subtract some of the warp, which is the more valuable; or will sell the first cuts of a pattern on their own account, and then buy silk to make for the master, who gave them it out. They will also make up not only the stolen silk immediately subtracted, but other silk which they purchase, knowing it to be stolen. There are instances, also, of undertakers who avail themselves of the pressure of a bad time of trade to pay their hands less than their fair proportion of the master's price. * * * * * There are four men's clubs in the village, and one at the hamlet of Barnacle, besides women's clubs. Recently one of these clubs has been robbed of 60*l.*, deposited in a dissenting chapel, and another was robbed of 14*l.* by the clerk and steward. Their objects are relief in sickness, and a gratuity for funerals. All the clubs meet at public-houses, when each member is expected to spend 2*d.* at the least. * * * * More go to no place of worship whatever, than go to any, unless it be the children to the Sunday school. They lounge about; stop at home; many don't clean themselves, and some will not even put on a clean shirt until Monday morning."† The approach to identity between this picture and that of the City weavers forty years ago, when they also were on the undertaking system, and worked chiefly at the single-hand trade, is very remarkable.

Beer-shops a means of hiding disorderly characters from general observation, and thereby rendering them more secure and more dangerous.

Dissolute character of journeyhands, and improvidence of their marriages.

Dishonesty of some undertakers.

Imperfect benefit clubs.

Sunday habits.

Mr. Stephens, one of the oldest undertakers at Nuneaton, where it is generally allowed that the manners of the people are somewhat better, showed that a similar state of things was there by no means of recent origin; the habits of the weavers in his own youth being rude, idle, dissolute, and barbarous, in every respect. He drew an amusing picture of the old dress and manners—the poor cottage; the deadness to religious influence; the ignorance and drunkenness; the early working of the children—*much earlier than at the present day, and more severely*—and the barbarous amusements. He is confident that their conduct has, on the whole, improved, and their condition proportionately.‡

At Nuneaton habits formerly worse than at present.

The description of Foleshill and Bulkington still applies very largely to Nuneaton, and still more to the dispersed weaving populations in the vicinity of that town. The Rev. Mr. King, the curate, justly laments that the imperfect provi-

Description of other parishes applicable to this place.

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* Slingsby and Cuthbert. † Ib. ‡ Stephens.

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Evils from expiring benefit clubs.

dence which the weavers, and especially the undertakers, exercise in subscribing to a public-house benefit club, should so often and so painfully fail of its object by the expiration of such clubs for want of young members; the young men uniting in their own voluntary associations, while the old men, forming the last of their club, are thus left destitute. The nearest savings bank is at Atherstone, and there are assuredly no depositors there from among the weavers. He is convinced that the poverty of the people prevents their attending public worship; and moral and religious instruction can therefore reach them only through the visits of clergymen; an influence which is necessarily limited. That this want of clothing is not wholly the pretext of indifference is proved by the fact that, since the establishment of a badly-lighted evening service, many come to that service who will not come by day; and since the improvement in the trade during the last year, the church congregation has augmented one-third. The low state of moral feeling is not characteristic of the very lowest of the population alone; and although applications to the authorities in cases of bastardy have decreased since the introduction of the new Poor Law, the improvident marriages are not decreased, and about 20 is the common age at which young men make this contract; sometimes earlier. It was, in fact, asserted by various witnesses that there is a degree of precocity produced by working together in the warm shops, and by various irregularities, especially the night working, precisely such as is well-known to accrue in the factory districts. When trade has been unusually good, these people would spend their extra earnings in lamb out of season, fowls, and dress; and such is now the feebleness of their morality, that any sudden increase to their resources would assuredly produce only the same effects. And with all its usual distress and degradation, the trade of single-hand weaving offers half the *liberty* of savage life, for which the uninstructed man is almost tempted to sacrifice half the enjoyments of the civilised, though it is impossible he can be contented while others enjoy them around him. Thus, there is a well-known feeling among the farm-labourers, the bricklayers, and the other ordinary artizans, in this district, that it is very hard upon them to be turned out at early hours every day instead of being able to take what hours they please like the ribbon weaver, and, like him, take *saint* Monday, and *saint* Tuesday, too, if they choose. But they console themselves that they are better employed than the weavers frequently are, in running about idle, or making mutual complaints at the public-houses.

Poverty one cause of absence from religious instruction.

Improvident marriages.

Low moral character of the men makes them delight in the freedom afforded by the loom, even at the expense of the decencies of civilization.

Charm of *liberty* which the loom holds out to women.

Precisely the counterpart of these feelings is also to be found in the other sex. Notwithstanding the wretched state in which, until recently, the trade had long been, it was impossible for the respectable families to procure domestic servants. There is the greatest difficulty in prevailing on parents to let their children come to service. The young women look down with scorn upon it, and prefer the liberty of the Monday and Saturday, the exemption from confinement, and the little finery, with the liberty to wear it, which the loom procures them. As housewives there are none worse. They can neither make nor mend their own clothes; they cannot sew; they know nothing of domestic management; they cannot make a house comfortable, and the men, not much expecting it, seek the beer-shops. But they are neighbourly among each other, generally well-disposed, and send their children to Sunday school.

Want of domestic comforts and virtues resulting from their occupation in the trade.

"The weavers, generally," says Mr. Ralphs, the relieving officer of the Nuneaton Union, "were always, with such a trade in their hands, much the same sort of people they now are. Formerly, however, before the peace, and some years since, there was in the trade a very comfortable class of people, according to their notions, with better furniture. But with many it was always the case that the more they had the more they spent, and very few saved anything whatever, although some might have done so: those who can now save are very few indeed, if any. The undertakers are for the most part very poor, and they are made poorer by the more frequent change of patterns, which is now customary. Nuneaton and Coton, as long as he can remember, have always had an excess of parish business in the way of bastardy; the magistrates at Atherstone, knowing always, when they saw their officers, upon what business they were come. This arises from the habits of the weaving population, especially those of the Friday night. In many cases the young woman is *enceinte* before marriage, and there is little disgrace attached to it. Neither is there any disgrace attaching to the man, if he do not marry her; nor is there any attaching to the bastardy. The people do not like the New Poor Law, even in this matter, for the cases are not now taken to the Sessions, but sent to the workhouse; and under this system the applications to the parish authorities

Weavers always nearly the same in condition and character.

Bastardy.

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Moral Condition. At Exhall.

are decreasing very fast. Bastardy has not, however, decreased in the same proportion." *

The parish clerk of Exhall gave me information as to the condition of that parish precisely to the same effect; and I have to lament my reliance so much for information upon this class of informants, and so little upon the clergy, upon whom I invariably made it one of my first duties to call. But they were, in fact, the people of longest acquaintance with the district, and possessing the best information. In every one of these four chief parishes of the dispersed single-hand trade, viz., Foleshill, Bulkington, Nuneaton, and Exhall, the livings, which are of good value, except that of Exhall, are held by non-resident clergymen, officiating only by curates, frequently removing, who cannot have that permanent acquaintance with, or exercise that permanent influence upon, the mass of the population that would be possessed and exercised by the person provided by our ecclesiastical constitution with the means of leading men in the way of civilisation, as well as to a knowledge of divine truth. With one exception, I had the misfortune to find these gentlemen from home; and that one, whose name I have already mentioned, must feel the gratitude of his parishioners, at his own ministry, too sensibly to misconstrue this expression of regret, that a district so much demanding the services of moral and religious teachers, should be largely deprived of those advantages which our institutions had intended for the happiness of the people, and the security of the State. That a stipendiary curate is not generally the person, in the absence of any superior class taking an interest in the welfare of the lower, to master the evils which here surround him, is strongly evinced by the experience of the parish of Bulkington, which has had five different curates in nine years. The spontaneous efforts of the people themselves, partial and ill-directed though they be, to attain to a Christian civilisation, in spite of this neglect, have led to the erection of many Dissenting places of worship, chiefly for Baptists, Independents, and Wesleyan Methodists. These are pretty well attended; but sauntering the fields is a very favourite Sunday occupation with great numbers.

Want of religious instruction and of resident pastors with sufficient means in the rural weaving districts.

One of the principal country weaving parishes, that of Bedworth, has, however, happily had of late years a resident rector, who found it the worst spot amid all the barbarism and demoralisation by which it was surrounded. Fights among the men were incessant; even the women stripped in the streets to fight; bull-baiting, cock-fighting, drinking, and disorder of every description had full sway; it was impossible for any one to pass free from insult through the mixed gangs of colliers, weavers, and others of the neighbourhood; and the surpassing grossness and degradation of the place obtained for it the proverbial designation of "Black Bedworth." But the minister made successful war upon the public-houses by informations before the magistrates; made himself respected, even among the roughest mobs, by the energy with which he attacked the prevailing disorders; and compelled the parish authorities to the rigorous performance of their duties, at the same time that he wrought unceasingly at his own. The parish was brought, for the purpose of better Poor-Law administration, under Gilbert's Act; the parish school was reformed; the church filled gradually, and was enlarged to double its former size; and there being a good feeling between Churchmen and Dissenters, the manners and habits of the place have been brought to a state of great improvement. The minister mastered the unruly in the vestry; was kind and serviceable to all; the charity estate itself was an important instrument in his hands; and its funds were carefully husbanded for the purpose of their moral influence. He became the adviser of all that wanted an adviser; the giver of services to all who wanted a kind service, which only an educated person could render; and he thus came to possess a degree of authority, the liberal, discreet, and beneficent exercise of which is sufficiently evinced by the improved tone of feeling, and the progress in better manners and habits. It may be added, too, that a religious sect of long standing at this place have had to preside over them, for more than twenty years, one who has constantly used the influence of which he is possessed, to the furtherance of intelligence, peace, and order, and that between him and the rector a spirit of Christian good will has ever existed.

Partial redemption of Bedworth from the general abasement.

Another moral influence in operation at Bedworth, is, the transference of the labour of the men from the single-hand loom in the shops of undertakers to the engine loom in the factories of small masters. This gives them better earnings, and brings them into habits of somewhat more regularity; but it has the disad-

Present improved habits of the Bedworth people.

* Ralphs.

vantage of exposing them to mutual incitement to drinking under the deception of good-fellowship · and there is a great harshness of feeling between them and their masters, owing in part, possibly, to the *newness* of the relations in which they stand to each other. "Robberies or depredations, on gardens or orchards," says a principal undertaker, Mr. George Bunney, "are almost unknown. Besides the church, there are Baptist, Independent, and Wesleyan chapels, each of which has a Sunday school, and the church has four. The places of worship are much crowded, even the Sabbath evening services at the church. Formerly there was coarse and dissolute Sabbath-breaking. Going to a place of worship was a matter of scorn. It is now as disreputable to avoid it. There is awakened a taste for information; and attached to the Independent chapel is a library of general information and religious knowledge, from which more than one hundred draw books. Is certain that the young men are greatly improved, but it is only by giving them superior moral training that they can be guarded from being carried into excesses to which the factories afford opportunity of mutual incitement. Idleness is scarcely known among the young men.* * * * * * Every public-house has its benefit club, for mutual assistance during sickness, and for defraying the funeral expenses of members or their wives. There is also one held at the church, and one at the Independent chapel; and these are the only provident institutions of the place. There are also three women's clubs, and one in which part of the members are women. Getting into drinking parties is the worst habit of the place, and the beer-houses offer great facilities for out-of-the-way debauchery.† The wits of the men have lately been much called forth in trade committees to meet their masters." * * * *

Means of information.

Incitement to intelligence by trade movements.

Mischiefs resulting from the home being sacrificed to the trade.

"A weaver would scorn to marry a servant girl, although she is perhaps the only one qualified to make him a comfortable home, but chooses a weaver, who earns as much or half as much as himself."‡ And upon this fact, simple as it appears, I doubt not hinge many of the disadvantages of the ribbon weaver's condition as compared with that of other artizans. It is an *effect* of the character of the occupation by which they live. And as a *cause* it obviously opens the door to thoughtless multiplication and a low domestic and moral condition, rapidly reacting upon each other, and debasing the whole body, which loses its self-respect and the respect of its superiors, the maintenance and enforcement of which are the sole protection of lowly skilled labourers from sinking to the minimum of animal subsistence. The early emancipation of the young by the half-pay apprentice and the journeywork systems from the domestic control, imperfect as that control is, allows them under these circumstances to make greedy seizure of a mere subsistence by the loom, though at the sacrifice of moral advantages which they are unable to appreciate; and improvident marriages are as frequent as ever, even at Bedworth.§

Consequent improvident marriages, and excess of hands.

Such are the inducements presented by the employment which the trade offers for women and children to improvident marriage, which is much more common than in years past, that an usual age of marriage with the young men is about 20 years, and sometimes earlier. Throughout the weaving population improvident marriages are prevalent, but more especially in the single-hand branch. The saving enough beforehand to buy a single loom is too commonly neglected among all classes of journey-hands; and the effect upon the engine trade of the almost Irish condition of the contiguous population in the single-hand branch, is immediately felt through the hand-factories of the Bedworth and other masters, and even through the shops of the "first-hand journeymen themselves," where hands from the more depressed branch get employment if possible.

Partial emerging from this, through the increase of the engine trade.

The engine trade, by rendering the woman's earnings more subordinate to the man's, and by thus throwing her exertions more towards the domestic duties and his towards providing solely the means of subsistence, affords an important step towards emerging from this state of things; and, combined with the general moral improvement, permits a witness at Bedworth, the parish constable, to draw a comparison between the colliers and the weavers, decidedly flattering to the latter. "The colliers," says he, "are an exceedingly rude set, not one in ten can write their names, and they associate exclusively together, for they can talk about nothing but their underground work, and their eating and drinking, in which nobody else can take any part with them. One of the 'butties,' or undertakers of a pit, will generally keep a public-house, where the men are supplied. They have a score at

* Bunney. † Ib. ‡ Ib. § Billairs.

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this house, which is generally cleared off at their fortnightly pay-day, when they get thoroughly drunk. The weavers are a much superior and a steadier body. They keep themselves neatly dressed, and do not waste all their money in drink, as any one may see on the Sunday. They are generally a smarter witted set of men, and almost all go to places of worship. The colliers very few of them go to any place of worship; but lie about all day, except the very few who come to church or chapel. Compared with workmen generally, the weavers are decidedly a provident set of men, and diligent."* By providence, the witness does not here mean that they make savings, but that they spend their earnings generally to purposes of rational comfort, rather than debauchery; the like terms being applied to the city weavers, whom those of Bedworth greatly resemble in character, but appear to surpass in health and strength.

Religious instruction in the rural parishes.

Feeble attempts at extension of intelligence among adults.

I have already alluded to the state of religious instruction in this district, and the sources whence that instruction is derived, will be best estimated by the subsequent enumeration of the Sunday school children of each sect. Amid a population so scattered, the endeavours at any other adult education than this by means of a religious ministry, are, it may be supposed, very limited. There is at Foleshill a reading society attached to the Independent chapel, similar to that at Bedworth; and attached to the church, is a Religious and Useful Knowledge Society, a branch of the Coventry institution under the same title, upon which the inhabitants generally, being Dissenters, look with disfavour.

Co-operative institutions.

In this part of the district there are also seven of the joint-stock provision shops, called co-operative institutions, conducted on a capital formed by the subscription of a few pence weekly by men of the class of undertakers. A committee regulate the prices; they have each an agent, upon whose fidelity they feel their hold insufficient, as experience has proved to them; and they divide the profits at a general meeting. These societies are also made a means of acquiring information; some of them take a newspaper, which may be read at their common room; and one has a small library of works "on *Socialism*, on Political Science, and on Political Economy; but the desire for information is very limited."†

Nuneaton Mechanics' Institute.

A school for adults, instituted at Coton, has grown into a Mechanics' Institution, and been removed into the contiguous town of Nuneaton. Writing, arithmetic, drawing, and music, are here taught in classes; lectures are delivered; and a small circulating library has been formed; but the institution is yet in its infancy. As regards, however, that intelligence, which is sufficient to make a man aware of any other means of employment that may actually be open, and to induce him to resort to it, the weavers are not very deficient. But in the moral development which might enable them to subsist in decency in any branch of lowly skilled employment, whether extensive or limited, which is already full, they are, it is obvious, grossly defective. The mode in which that development acts immediately on the contract for labour is hereafter shown.

Intelligence as to means of improving their condition.

Evidence to moral condition.

It is almost exclusively in the words of witnesses that I have thus given the few data which I could hastily collect for estimating the moral condition of the ribbon weavers. My own limited intercourse with them was wholly insufficient to enable me to state from observation, what are their habits and prevailing conduct; but I met with nothing that did not confirm the testimony of the witnesses, whose words I have quoted. And the following answers to queries on the subject of the children's education, containing many which involve the moral character of the parents, will show the general conviction to be perfectly in accordance with its tenor.

Analogy between the moral condition of the single-hand weavers and that of a factory population.

It is difficult to imagine a darker picture; and it may surprise the denouncers of the factory system, to find all the vices and miseries which they attributed to it, flourishing so rankly in the midst of a population, not only without the walls of a factory, but also beyond the contamination of a large town. Still more that these vices and miseries decline as the population emerges from the condition which might have been fondly anticipated to be one of rural innocence and happiness, to be a town and factory population. For the single-hand trade of the country not only exhibits the greatest demoralization at home, but helps to fill the criminal calendars of neighbouring counties.

Moral constitution of the trades nearly the same, and producing the same sacrifice of the home and the school.

But the truth of this apparently stubborn and paradoxical fact, will readily be acknowledged, when they revert to the moral constitution of a trade, in lieu of limiting their attention to the vast material of a factory, or the person of its

* Smith. † Holmes.

master. If, by employing the labour of women and children in such proportion as to sacrifice the home of the workman and the school of his offspring, industry is allowed to walk upon its hands and knees, what wonder that it should become a mis-shapen and rancorous cripple, ready at any moment to rebel against its master. It matters not whether it be in the factory or out of it, except that in the former case the master is somewhat within its reach, while in the dispersed hand-loom weaving, such as that of the single-hand ribbon trade, he is almost entirely removed from the clamour. It is true that this is a state not worse than one of utter barbarism, in which the women and children are equally the slaves; but we have a co-existent civilization, and barbarism and civilization cannot in the long run co-exist *profitably* to the latter, if even *safely*. If by any means the labour of the man can be made a sufficient source of income to the family, and that of the wife and children rendered quite subordinate to it, (the former left chiefly to the due performance of the domestic duties, which are her proper office in civilized life, and the latter trained in order, religion, and intelligence, which, without some leisure and without a home, they cannot be), the philanthropist will have good reason to congratulate humanity, whether this be or be not effected by bringing the *men* into closer connexion within the walls of a factory. This is on the whole perhaps not unfavourable, as in the instance of the hand-factories of Bedworth, *where they are brought into closer connexion with the master*, and augmented intelligence gradually promises to gain the mastery over increased incitements to dissipation.

Moral imperfections in which depression may originate sought only for their removal.

I have been the more induced to draw this parallel by the apprehension that I might be supposed to rest satisfied with tracing to moral imperfections so much of the depression which exists in the ribbon trade; while on the contrary, I consider these but the ground of a further investigation as to the cause of this insufficiency of moral development, and of the consequent dislocation in the moral constitution of society as a whole. It is obvious that there is in the present instance, a want of intimate relations between the employer and the employed, to induce the former to take any interest in the latter beyond the mere execution of his work; while the operatives, with a trade in which the labour of women and children is so largely available, unsupported by any precept or example, or kind neighbourhood which might beneficially influence their conduct, do not possess moral development enough to resist the current of their own unreclaimed passions, heedless of the future of poverty before them. It is obvious that moral circumstances remaining the same, at once to double the demand for hands in the single-hand trade, though it might for a brief time increase wages, would ultimately merely double the amount of a demoralized and depressed population. That the present generation of weavers have neither moral habits, religious feelings, nor secular intelligence to retrieve them from the condition in which they exist, the few details here adduced too plainly evince; and it is therefore of the last importance to form an accurate estimate of the influences bearing upon the rising generation, besides those of the wretched industrial and moral atmosphere in which they have their being;—in fact, of the state of

Importance of estimating the influences bearing upon the moral character of the rising generation.

Popular Instruction.

Means adopted to ascertain the state of popular instruction.

For this purpose I adopted a set of queries for public schools, to be answered by the schoolmasters themselves, whose replies, however imperfect they might be severally, would, in their very imperfection, give me collectively an insight into the extent and the character of the instruction now given, to which the narrowness of my time and means utterly precluded my personally attaining. I visited only a few of the principal schools of each class of those devoted to popular instruction, or, in other words, to the instruction of the children of all in and beneath the class of little shopkeepers. But I have to acknowledge the polite alacrity with which my queries were answered by nearly all the teachers, or by their superintending committees, excepting the masters of some of the national schools, who expressed personally their willingness to give me every information, but for the express injunction to refuse it, which had been given them by their employers. Of this conduct I can afford no other explanation than is given by the following letter from the Rev. Thomas Coker Adams, upon whom I had felt it my duty to call, to explain the views with which I was pursuing this branch of the investigation, and to entreat his kind assistance in regard to the schools under his own immediate patronage, which he very obligingly promised.

Queries to public schools answered by the masters.

"Dear Sir, "*Ansty, November* 20, 1838.

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Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

"I have received your inquiries relating to the schools of this place, and I will candidly admit, that when I saw you, and consented to give you information upon the subject, I was not aware of their extent, nor of their inquisitorial nature.

Popular Instruction.

"Our schools are *entirely* supported by *private charity*, and can have nothing to do with the hand-loom inquiry. This is also the case with the national school at Coventry, the master of which has transmitted your inquiries to me; and it is right that I should inform you, that he and the master of the schools here, have general instructions not to answer any questions without due authority from their employers.

Refusal of answers from some of the national schools.

"I beg to assure you, that in making this return, no mark of disrespect is intended to yourself, and I have the honour to be, dear Sir,

"Your obedient Servant,

"*Joseph Fletcher, Esq.* "T. Coker Adams."

After a recognition of the necessity of such information to the completeness of my labours, this refusal to furnish it, to the *extent* required by the queries hereafter inserted, admitted of no further observation; and I have only to regret the consequent incompleteness of the series of answers, which I have endeavoured to remove, by the insertion of a few data on the best authority which I could obtain.

Queries addressed to keepers of day and dame schools, and answered *viva voce*.

Being still, however, unprovided with any view of the *private* instruction obtained by the labouring classes, I availed myself of the services of the intelligent and assiduous Secretary of the Local Sunday-school Union, Mr. John Kinder, master of the Well-street Infant School, to collect the *viva voce* answers of the day and dame school teachers, on sets of queries prepared for the purpose. He has certified to me, that these returns "are full and correct to the best of his knowledge, and as complete as it is possible they can be," although even the classification of the children according to age and sex could not commonly be made, since the teachers scarcely any of them keep books, and stated that they positively could not give a correct account; which is the less surprising when the prevailing character of the schools is considered, the careless manner in which they are conducted, the low qualifications of the teachers, and the wretchedness of the places in which they are held. Whatever may be the inaccuracies which the following abstracts may contain, and it is probable they are many, I have not the least doubt of their sufficiency as data for general reasoning; and I give them intact, that the extent of their accuracy or their errors may be known.

Limited amount of instruction or education.

A brief examination of these abstracts will lead to the painful conviction that there is little *instruction* worthy of the name; that of *education*, such as to form good habits, there is still less; and that little favourable light is thrown from this side upon the moral character of the parents, especially among the single-hand weavers of the country, who are too often grossly indifferent to the moral welfare of their children, and generally expect nothing from a school but the hasty instruction of mere infants in the art of reading, that they may then have their unintermitted services in throwing, filling, engine-turning, nursing, &c. &c. Two remarkable evidences, however, of a growing desire for really good instruction were given to me; one, the distance which children are sent from Foleshill to a pay-school at Sowe, merely because of the reputation of the master; and the other the great accession to the number of Church Sunday school children at Nuneaton, so soon as a system had been adopted of giving to the Sunday scholars evening instruction in writing twice in the course of the week. The city weavers, too, show part of their fondness for their children in sending them to school, especially when they can conveniently send them to an Infant school. Some few even send children to the superior day schools; paying 10*s*. or 12*s*. per quarter.*

Classification of schools.

It will be satisfactory to cast a rapid glance over the whole of these schools, beginning with the pay-schools, and rising to those endowed schools which have resources for giving a very superior instruction. The several classes into which they divide themselves, according to their means of support, are—

1. Private Day and Dame Schools.
2. Public Voluntary Sunday Schools.
3. Public Unendowed Day Schools.
4. Public Endowed Day Schools.

Those are classed as public which are supported in any other mode than by the payments of the children's parents.

* Nankivell.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

I.—Day and Dame Schools.

Popular Instruction.

Number of schools and scholars; ages, &c.

There are, it will be seen, 159 private "Day and Dame Schools," in which the poorer classes obtain for their children all the instruction which they do not derive from public schools. In these there are 3,166 children, or nearly *one-third* of the total number of children receiving instruction, of whom more than two-thirds therefore are receiving *public instruction only*. There are in the private schools nearly 20 pupils to each on the average; and the weekly payments of the scholars, varying generally from 2*d*. to 8*d*. for each child, are their sole support. The few returns which distinguish the age and sex of the children show a preponderance of girls to the extent of 30 per cent., and about the same of the children under as compared with those above 7 years of age. In fact, the children generally are sent in their infancy to some one of these cheap day schools; and the return from Smith's school, at Nuneaton, states that often both nurse and child are sent to them together; their combined ages not amounting perhaps to 7 years. The answers to the question as to the extent of instruction have a very promising appearance; but from those to the question, whether the children leave the schools before they can read fluently or write, it will appear that in few of these schools are the little pupils well versed even in the first of these arts; and those who are not, therefore acquire it in the public schools, hereafter noticed (chiefly in the Sunday schools), or remain uninstructed. In some of the dame schools, the teacher, instructing the children one by one, frequently enables them to read pretty well, though with very uncouth pronunciation. This reading and spelling, is, in fact, nearly all that the children acquire, even in the better of the dame schools: needlework is not taught in more than one-fourth of the schools; many of the old dames not being able to see sufficiently well. Writing on slates and some little ciphering is attempted in about one-eighth of them. The few inferior books in use are generally worn and torn to tatters; and the number of teachers among the whole, who would be found competent to the management of an infant school on any good system, would indeed be limited.

Limited amount of instruction.

Joint religious instruction, and prevalent indifference of parents.

It is obvious that the parents of the children in these schools, though differing in some points of religious belief, have no refined fears of contamination from their learning the first principles of religion together, at the same time that they learn their alphabet; at least of none which the weekly attendance at their respective Sunday schools as they rise in years, is not sufficient, in their estimation, to correct. But in few of the dame schools is there any attempt to awaken ideas of religion or goodness beyond impressing the words of a catechism, and occasionally of a few hymns. The greater number of the scholars are children of weavers; and unsatisfactory as the column of answers, as to the anxiety of parents to have their children properly instructed, may be, I fear a more extended investigation would show that this indifference is by no means peculiar to the labouring classes of this vicinity alone. From the answers as to the ability of parents to pay for schooling, it is obvious, that although a time of bad trade makes those who have been sending their children to the day and dame schools partly desist from doing so, yet even at the present moment many are kept away from any instruction more through carelessness and indifference than through the actual pressure of want. The answers all tend to show that both poverty and improvidence prevail most in the country parishes. The answers to the question as to the existing means of education show the same state of things. Those as to the number who are not sent to any school obviously have reference only to the children not at work; the number at work, or variously employed at home, under fourteen, is very great, in engine-turning, filling, winding, nursing, going errands, &c.; and these could only avail themselves of evening instruction. This prevails equally in the city and in the country; but in the latter there are not day free-schools enough for those who would be sent were they more numerous. The mere journey-hands in the single-hand trade earn wages so low that those of the child are indispensable to the family.

General character of Dame schools.

With the exception of ten or twelve day schools of a better character, the whole of these *pay* schools, supported by the poorer classes, are *Dame Schools*, which are properly *subscription nurseries* of the very poorest description, and are frequently called "out-of-the-way schools," because the children are sent to them out of the way of their parents or of harm. The keeping of such schools is the last resort of the unfortunate, or those unfit for other occupation, to assist them in "making

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a get-on," as they describe a subsistence on the lowest scale. They are commonly kept in low, confined kitchens, up narrow courts and dirty alleys, often with very little light, and by no means free from dirt. Frequently the little room in the teacher's house, perhaps not more than nine or twelve feet square, and seldom exceeding fourteen feet, serves also as a shop for the sale of pins, needles, tapes, apples, and other little huckstery, and sometimes is the weaving shop of the mistress of the school. "At Foleshill, in one of these school-rooms, the poor woman has to work in a single-hand loom, to wash, to look after her own family of seven children, and to teach those who are sent to her to school."* The mistress is often engaged in sewing for hire. One school is kept by a man who did not succeed as a coal higgler, but who has now sometimes 50 children in his kitchen. Premises or play-places, except the streets and passages, they have none. The children are taken to these schools at various ages, from one year up to about six. One dame had 6*d.* per week for nursing each of two, and said that when they came before they could walk, she always had 6*d.* It is the shop and factory workers who chiefly send their children so very early; and perhaps one-tenth of the number in Dame Schools are only about a year and a half old. The greater number are from two to seven years of age, and some stay in the better schools until about nine years old. At least one-eighth are above seven. The children, of course, are of both sexes. The supply of Dame Schools and even their quality gradually become worse in the remote weaving districts, where such hamlets as Ryton and Barnacle are without any daily teaching whatever; and the larger places have, with few exceptions, only the most ignorant people as teachers, who, in some instances, stated that they knew no more of reading themselves than enabled them to teach the alphabet.

Small number of better Day Schools.

Ten or twelve of the *pay* schools of the poorer classes are of superior character, and contain a larger number of pupils than most of those included in the accompanying abstracts, under the general head of "day and dame schools." They give the same range of instruction that is usually conveyed in the country Lancasterian schools, but have not the aid of the monitorial system, or sufficient closeness of inspection. The Jordan Well School, kept by Mr. Holland, is one of the best of these; yet no more than 4*d.* per week is the usual payment. With the exception of these schools, and of a few of the dame schools, properly so called, it will be seen that the 3166 children, who are enumerated as attending "day and dame schools," are not receiving any *instruction* worthy of the name, and assuredly are far removed from any such healthy and rational training as the term *education* implies. This disposes of nearly *one-third* of the "education" in this district, as numerically exhibited.

II.—Sunday-Schools.

The public day schools of the Church are Sunday-schools also for the religious instruction of the children, and in some, instruction in reading is extended on the Sabbath to children not in daily attendance at them. But the children of the daily schools of Dissenters are dispersed on Sunday among the schools attached to the respective congregations. There are, it will be seen, 48 schools expressly for Sunday instruction in reading, and in the first principles of religion. These 48 schools contain 5494 scholars, of whom 352 are included also in the returns of public day-schools, and 847 in those of private day-schools, leaving 4295 who receive no other instruction than that which these 48 Sunday-schools afford; the average number of children in each being no less than about 80.

Number of schools and scholars, and congregations to which attached.

Nearly *two-thirds*, therefore, of the children attending public schools in this district, (in which public schools, more than two-thirds of all the children under instruction receive their sole education,) attend only these Sunday-schools, which are essentially congregational or sectarian in character, since they are attached to their respective places of worship; and their prime object being to inculcate the principles of the Christian faith, to which end the art of reading is regarded only as a means, those principles are necessarily combined with the doctrinal peculiarities of each sect. It has, therefore, been carefully noted to what congregation each school belongs; and of the whole 48, it will be seen that there are attached to the Church only six, containing 982 children, of whom only 735

Instruction wholly religious and congregational, and chiefly in the hands of Dissenters.

* Kinder.

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Light thrown on the prevailing rate of intelligence by the Sunday School returns.

depend on the Sunday-school alone for instruction; while the remaining 42 schools belong to various dissenting congregations, and contain 4367 children, of whom, 3401 receive no other instruction.

As in the case of the dame schools, I have grouped the abstracted returns of the Sunday-schools, not with regard to religious persuasion, but simply according to their locality, by which the quality of the instruction is greatly influenced, as an inspection of them will immediately show. The teachers being voluntary associations for the purpose of instruction, and their services gratuitous, these schools are an aggregation of the rising intelligence, such as it may be, of each vicinity and congregation; the leaders in each school answering my queries, and expressing pretty accurately the general voice. The illiterateness of some of the returns it is impossible to represent by this printed version, through which, however, that of some from Foleshill and Nuneaton most conspicuously appears, with an effect which would be irresistibly ludicrous, but for the seriousness of the subject, and the kind sympathy with which these first efforts of a long benighted people to work out their own moral elevation must be regarded by every charitable mind. The returns from the Alderman's Green Wesleyan Sunday School, the Longford (Union Place) General Baptist Sunday School, in the parish of Foleshill, those from the Zion Chapel Independent Sunday School, the General Baptist Sunday School, and the Stockingford Independent Methodist Sunday School, in the parish of Nuneaton, together with the Bedworth Wesleyan Methodist and Primitive Methodist returns, and the Coventry Grove Street and White Friars Lane Sunday School returns, are the most obnoxious to this remark. A letter accompanying the return from the Independent Methodist Sunday-school at Stockingford, speaks volumes on this subject. I give it *verbatim et literatim*:—

"HOND SIR,

"Whe beg Leaf to bring before your worthy notice the situation of the said Chapple. It is situated on the south east sid off Nuneaton Common In the Hamlet of Stockingford County of Warwick.

"It where erected between two Collieris Where gross Darkness much Abounded there being no place of Worship Within A mile and Quarter of the place nor no day School nor no Sabbath School neither did the parents of the Children concern themselves Verry little about the Instruction of their Children but since that time A great improvemen thas opperated upon the minds of the people But the people in general being poor Weavers have but little opertunity of getting Children Instructed only by means of Sabbath Schools Teaching and the Dirictors of this Chapple Being poor Working people Chiefly Weavers Circumstances hinder them from furnishing the School with those Impliments wich would render still more greater benefit to the School But it may be truly said much good has been Done by the Instrumentality of that Sabbath School. Written by order of the Committee.

"I remain Hond Sir your humble Servant

(Signed) "JOSEPH HALLAM.

"*November* 23*rd*, 1838."

May the spirit here displayed continue to increase, and even by its own unaided efforts it will ultimately attain to the light of mere letters, should such a voice from the wilderness still be neglected.

Sunday School system one of voluntary association for the religious instruction of the children.

The affairs of these schools are commonly managed by a congregational committee, who administer the very small funds, voluntarily contributed, usually at an annual sermon. In the schools of the Church alone does the head master or superintendent appear to receive any salary, however trifling. It is some of the young people of each vicinity, who, after their week of labour, voluntarily devote the Sabbath to training the children, at least to habits of order, decency, and reverence, however limited may often be their ability and their means of imparting letters and knowledge. Whatever may be the secondary inducements to this course in the pleasures of association, or the gratification of some amount of vanity, with a possibility of progressing to the ministry, they can be regarded merely as tributary elements to the one great purpose of moral improvement, which is seen to be sanctified by an improving public opinion, though of only modern birth, and of very imperfect intelligence.

Local Sunday School Union.

Many of these Sunday schools are attached to the Sunday School Union, which has a branch union at Coventry, whose report of 1837 states that they have "laboured incessantly to accomplish the following viz., 1. to form a village itinerant religious tract society, in connection with this union, to assist and render more efficient the labours of the visitors to country schools, &c.; 2. to establish an extra class for the elder scholars throughout the Union, so that they might receive spiritual instruction of experienced Christians, &c.; 3. to institute classes for

junior teachers, so as to have them properly trained for the duties of their office; 4. to have no child dismissed from any of the Sabbath schools, and to procure ministers to deliver lectures on moral training, religious education, *and the evils arising from the dismissal of scholars, &c.*" Mr. John Kinder, master of the Well Street Infant School, was then appointed to the office of Sunday school missionary of the Coventry Sunday School Union, to devote during the week what time he could in giving instruction to teachers, and submitting improvements for their consideration; also to labour, on three Sundays out of four, in Sunday schools, at distances not exceeding twelve miles from Coventry; the remuneration for his services being only 6*l.* per annum. The report of 1838 mentions that their agent had delivered more than forty public addresses to adults, besides those to children amounting to more than double that number; made 80 visits to 27 schools, and travelled, for this specific object, more than 500 miles; but they then reduced their demand upon his exertions to six Sabbaths every quarter, at schools within eight miles. But this report notices also that four schools in the parish of Foleshill had withdrawn from connexion with the union, and formed one among themselves, which had been joined by two other schools. The frequent reference in the accompanying returns to the class-books published by the Sunday School Union bears some testimony that the exertions of the local union have not been fruitless.

Popular Instruction. Its efforts to call forth co-operation, and to improve the system and management of the schools, chiefly by means of a missionary agency.

Depending so much as the ribbon trade does upon the daily labour of children, the Sunday schools afford all the instruction to which the greater portion attending them can attain, in addition to the letters, which many had acquired as infants from the dames. About half the girls, and one-fourth of the boys in them, are at work during the week; others go to some of the day schools; while about one-fourth of the boys, in Sunday schools, and one-sixth of the girls, are, during the week, neither at work nor at school. Brief as is the time devoted to the teaching weekly—from three to four hours, narrowed by the loss of time in marshalling such great numbers of children—yet, as the Sunday school forms part of the permanent discipline of the young, the Sunday's lessons, constantly repeated, frequently for *ten* years, cannot be without some effect, however much counteracted by the long weekly interval amidst the prevalent vice and ignorance of the district. But, where so many of the teachers exhibit such profound illiterateness, what must the scholars be! A great body of the children, from five to fifteen, are enrolled in these schools, which are also the means of collecting them for attendance at their places of worship; and many remain in them until they are sixteen years of age, and some continue as teachers after they cease to be pupils; but from one-eighth to one-fifth of the numbers returned as being upon the books of these schools may be deducted for non-attendance.* In the schools whose returns distinguish the age and sex of the children, the preponderance of the girls is about thirty per cent., as it is in the dame schools; while the proportion above seven years of age shows the progression which the children make into these from the dame schools, in which it is so much less.

Progress of the children through the Sunday schools from the day and dame schools.

An institution of discipline rather than instruction.

The whole of these schools, it will be seen, undertake to teach reading, almost exclusively in the Scriptures. The teachers in most congregations feel a religious scruple as to instruction in writing on Sunday, but the partial absence of this scruple has induced many, who retain it, to open evening schools for writing on week-days, as a portion of the Sunday-school instruction, rather than that the advantage of learning to write should be any inducement to the removal of their scholars. Reading, however, and that very imperfectly in the country schools, is almost the full extent of the Sunday-school instruction; while the answer as to libraries shows its exclusively religious application, and the want of books, even of the most serious character. The answers as to the discipline of the schools show also a considerable preponderance of rewards over punishments; at the same time that they exhibit curiously the spirit of management, in like manner as those concerning improvements display the working theory of the conductors. The absence of children from Sunday-school for want of decent clothing marks the point at which poverty commences a demoralization, by dissociating the sufferers from reputable union in the pursuit of a highly commendable common purpose. The gifts for good conduct are of course capable of being used somewhat as an inducement to resort to a particular school, as much as the superior amount of instruction, and with even more effect.

Reading in the Scriptures and instruction in religious principles almost the sole aim of Sunday school tuition.

The general representation of the deficiency of the means of education contained in the Sunday-school returns, is the more worthy of notice, as it shows the

Spontaneous representation of the want of means of instruction.

* Kinder.

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Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

POPULAR INSTRUCTION.

Feebleness of the Sunday schools as a means of secular instruction.

opinion of the people themselves better than any other data to which I can refer. Nor do they rest merely at pointing out the deficiency, but various of them express hopes that some national system of education will be adopted.

As a means of intellectual instruction, whatever may be their influence in implanting moral and religious habits, the Sunday-schools can scarcely be underrated. Perhaps not more than one in ten of the voluntary teachers comes with a mind devoted to the instruction of the children, but rather for that mutual society which is so agreeable to the young; while of those who devote themselves to self-cultivation with earnestness, as Sunday-school teachers, it is rather controversial divinity which they seek to master; their aim being chiefly to qualify themselves as religious teachers, especially for the country districts. Out of such materials, collected for such short periods, at intervals so long, it is almost impossible to organise an efficient system of instruction; and the old desultory mode of teaching is pursued with little effect upon the intellect of the children, while the service in their respective places of worship is far less adapted to influence their youthful minds than the more familiar expositions of the teacher.

Rewards to children for bringing their companions to Sunday-school.

One singular mode adopted to fill the Sunday-schools is that of giving reward-books to the little children who bring their playmates to the school.

Public school children marshalled at places of worship on Sunday.

The number of children marshalled in school array on Sunday, whether Sunday-school children or children of day-schools, arranged according to the congregations to which they belong, is nearly as follows:—

SCHOOL CHILDREN at PUBLIC WORSHIP.

Religious Profession of the Congregations to which attached.	School Children.		
	City and Suburbs.	Rural Parishes.	Total.
Church Schools	730	1327	2057
Independent Schools	906	859	1765
Wesleyan Methodist Schools	240	908	1148
Independents and Wesleyan Methodists jointly	..	44	44
Baptist Schools	150	542	692
Primitive Methodist Schools	128	61	189
Unitarian Schools	233	..	233
Roman Catholic Schools	60	25	85
Sunday-school for all denominations	140	..	140
Totals	2587	3766	6353

III.—PUBLIC UNENDOWED SCHOOLS.

Lancasterian, National, Roman Catholic, and Infant Schools.

These are chiefly the *Lancasterian* and *National* Schools, (with which may be classed, so far as the quality of instruction is concerned, those of the endowed schools which pursue analogous systems,) and the *Infant Schools*. Those schools having only very small endowments, and which are supported chiefly by current subscription, are classed among the "unendowed" public schools. They contain jointly 1510 children, or nearly *one-fourth* of the total number receiving public instruction; and, pursuing the distinction made in the case of Sunday-schools, 877 of these are in schools under the superintendence of Churchmen, and 633 in those under Dissenters and Roman Catholics.

The endowed public schools—which may be classed with these as to quality of instruction—are the Bedworth and Coton Schools, and Smith's School at Nuneaton.

The *Infant Schools*, of which there are four in the city and one at Sowe may be considered as the best schools in the district, when their purposes and the extent to which they are attained are duly considered. It will be seen that the city infant schools are only *half* public; the gratuitous provision of a school-room and school-house, and the general superintendence by patrons, being their only claim to be so classed. In all other respects they are self-supported; the school-keepers deriving their income wholly from the weekly payments of the children, in like manner as the keepers of the dame schools. They are consequently much subject to the guidance of the parents; who are often capricious, constantly urge the merely intellectual excitement of their children, and estimate the value of the school

The infant schools the most complete in purpose, in organization, and in efficiency.

merely by the rapidity with which the little pupils, whose services they are so early wanting, can be taught to read, and show other little arts of scholarship, disregardful of the healthy habits of body and mind, which it is far more important that they should acquire from well regulated amusements and an airy school-room. The school at Sowe is wholly free, the whole establishment being supported by the bounty of an individual. Excepting in this school, the payments are 1½*d.*, 2*d.*, and 3*d.* per week, and for children under a year and a half old, 4*d.* The parents, through poverty or improvidence, are sometimes unable to pay. The infant schools are not behind those of other places in the improvements which have given to this branch of instruction so interesting a character. They largely escape the unhappy differences which prevent combined efforts at improvement in higher public schools. An infant school, established on the principle of the national schools, of giving instruction on the express understanding that the religious portion must be according to the doctrines of the Established Church, had been closed for some little time previous to my visit. No catechisms, I believe, are taught in any of the existing infant schools, except the Church catechism in that of Sowe; nor is the subject of peculiar doctrine weighed by either parents or teachers in sending or receiving the children. In its method and in its efficiency, the instruction conveyed in the infant schools will bear comparison with that of the National or Lancasterian, and other schools for children much older; their discipline seems to be healthy and rational; and one of them has even a juvenile library. Their play-yards too, though limited, are a provision highly gratifying; nor is the testimony that many leave without having learned to read well, at all disheartening, but the contrary. In fact, the enlightened philanthropy, which, by means of these schools, gives to the children, at so little pecuniary sacrifice, a great accession of present happiness and of future intelligence, is beyond all commendation; and it is to be regretted that, in our manufacturing districts, the efforts of individuals have not been more largely directed to the improvement of infant education, by the system of providing only *half* the means, but in that half implanting a system which determines the incomparable superiority of the whole establishment over the mere dame schools. A nursery for his children, superior in its character to that of any other class, is at once supplied to the artizan by a rationally managed infant school, the conductors of which would, in rural situations, occasionally discharge their duties better in the fields than on the school premises.

Advantage in being in a great degree exempt from the difficulties arising from sectarian differences.

Neither the Lancasterian nor the National school in Coventry is in a flourishing condition; the latter not being well filled or apparently conducted with spirit, although its superior funds have enabled it to take the children at 1*d.* in lieu of 2*d.* per week, to which the terms of the boys' Lancasterian school were, until recently, raised. The Lancasterian school is said to have been mismanaged by a late master. At both schools it is exceedingly difficult to get the attendance of committees and visitors, to give the masters and mistresses some encouragement in their labours, and to keep them to their duties; and when it can be obtained, it is said to be here, as in many other places, an inspection too often so unsystematic and injudicious, as to be perhaps hurtful rather than beneficial. The laymen on the committee of the National school chiefly leave its superintendence to the clergy; and, although all the scholars are required to attend Church on Sunday, some children of dissenters are found in it.

National and Lancasterian city schools not flourishing.

Badness of superintending committees.

The income of the teachers is, in this class of schools, partly made up from the weekly pence of the children, who pay 1*d.* per week at some of the city schools, at others 2*d.*, and, at some, the highest class of scholars pay as much as 6*d.* and 8*d.* per week. The contributions of subscribers afford besides various small annual or weekly salaries, which are the largest in the Church schools; and several of the endowed schools are managed on the national system. That of Bedworth is one of the best, and capable of extension even beyond the branches which the rector has laboured with his family to establish in two of the most populous and least civilized out-lying portions of the parish. Except an extra number of boys in the principal school, none of the children in the three national schools of this parish pay anything whatever for their instruction.

Means of support, and capability of extension.

The attendance of children stated in the returns can only be an approximation to accuracy, since few of the schools have themselves very carefully kept books. The system pursued is that of Bell, or that of greater subdivision under monitors, called Lancaster's, or the British system, according as the schools are in connexion with the National, or with the British and Foreign Society. Reading, writing, arithmetic, and needlework to the girls, are the ordinary range of instruc-

School systems; and instruction.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Popular Instruction.

tion, which is extended to some supplementary information in the City Lancasterian Boys' School. The books are those published or recommended by the central societies respectively; the Church catechism being taught in the Church schools, and no catechism whatever in the Lancasterian schools. With the exception of these, the only school implements, unless a few maps in the Lancasterian school, are, as the Collycroft return facetiously describes them, "the needle and the knitting-pins."

General experience as to the working of these schools.

Nearly all the schools give to the children rewards of books—religious and moral; and some, such as the Bedworth School, extend these rewards to money, or other presents, to the children who have been teachers or otherwise deserving. The punishments are by the usual tasks, overhours, or whipping. The recent or the prospective improvements seem to be very limited; and the return from the Bedworth Heath School stating the want of "better means for regulating the conduct of parents, in checking drunkenness and blasphemy," affords painful confirmation, from the very best source, of the general testimony as to the moral condition of the district. The only attempt at forming a school library of general information appears to be that by the Trustees of Smith's School at Nuneaton, by the sale of waste copy books to raise funds for the purchase of the Penny and Saturday Magazines. Grounds for exercise, except in connexion with the infant schools, have not yet entered into the public school system of this district, any more than in that of other places. The early withdrawal of children from all instruction to be put into the silk trade, or into the collieries, the girls often so early as 7 years of age, and the boys about 10, is generally remarked. Numbers leave the day schools very imperfectly versed even in reading or writing, which, subsequently, it is probable they would lose, but for the Sunday school exercise of the little ability they may have acquired. The children attending the national schools are expected to attend the school and the church service on Sunday; but the children in the Lancasterian and the Roman Catholic schools, attend various Sunday schools, according to the religion of their parents, or attend on the Sunday no school whatever. The Foleshill National School appears to have been made an exception from the national system in this respect; but it is rigidly applied in the case of the *endowed* schools conducted on the national system. This regulation does not entirely *prevent* all Dissenters from availing themselves of the means of instruction offered, although it is obvious that it deters in the Foleshill and Exhall cases.

Indifference of parents, and confusion of their ideas as to the value of instruction through charitable gifts at the schools.

The answers, as to the desire of the weavers to have their children instructed, are many of them exceedingly unsatisfactory, and afford further evidence of their very low moral condition. The experience of the City Lancasterian School seems to show that one additional penny per week will cause a great falling off in the attendance; but it is found at some schools to be better in time of bad trade than at brisk seasons, when, as at present, it is very difficult to get the parents to permit the attendance of children. Gifts of clothing are made to the children in various of the schools; and the accompanying returns will show that it is the Church schools which, through their better funds, are most enabled to exercise this charity. The effect of this in distracting the attention of the parents from the importance of instruction itself, and in impressing them with the idea that they are doing a favour to the patrons of schools in sending their children to them, was made a matter of complaint.

Gross ignorance and bad example of parents

It is obvious, however, from the answers to the succeeding queries, that there is an extensively prevailing indifference as to the instruction of their children throughout the weaving district, and that, too often, the only schooling which the parents earnestly seek for them is that of their earliest infancy, to get them out of the way. Besides those who are kept from school by their work, others are neglected by their parents; and "very frequently," states the Collycroft return, written by the rector of Bedworth, "the good instruction given to the children at school is rendered nugatory by the blasphemous and filthy discourse, together with drunkenness, exhibited by the parents at home."

Rising Roman Catholic Schools.

The institution of two public day-schools, under the management of Roman Catholics, one at Coventry, and the other at Coton, are evidence of a praiseworthy activity of this body, in their endeavours to awaken some intelligence among their poor. A letter of the resident priest, accompanying the return from the Nuneaton school, describes n few words what has there been done in the establishment of schools, and what is yet desired for their advancement; and is therefore subjoined—

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Popular Instruction.

Difficulties experienced in instituting schools in a poor district.

"Sir,—In making these remarks I wish it to be understood, that this school was not opened from any hostile motive; neither is it continued as a means of proselytism. The leading motives for its establishment were to screen the Catholic children of this neighbourhood from the obloquy and unpleasant treatment they frequently experience in attending other schools differing from them in religious sentiments: and at the same time to provide for their education, but in such manner as to extend that benefit to as many others as might think fit to avail themselves of our labours. Owing to the neglected state of education in this district, and the scanty means we command, our instructions have not hitherto been extended so far as we could wish. The want of a proper and distinct building obliges us to keep school in a confined room of the master's dwelling-house: this obstacle, however, a moderate fund for building would speedily obviate, as we have already an excellent free site both for school and play-ground. The want of an endowment to enable a free education to be given to some, and the expense to be lessened for others is very sensibly felt. Sufficient has, however, been done to demonstrate that an impetus once distinctly given soon leads to an institution of a self-supporting character. In fact, there can be but little doubt that assistance at this reasonable period would enable us to diffuse the blessing of education more widely, and to extend our present system by the introduction of History, Geography, &c., the Latin and French languages, as the scholars advanced, and other circumstances might allow or require.

Success of an attempt at instruction of adults.

"For greater satisfaction I have sent herewith a prospectus of the Day School. The Adult School there mentioned has since grown into a Mechanics' Institute, and removed into the town of Nuneaton, where, besides writing and arithmetic, drawing and music are taught in classes, and a small circulating library is formed for the members. I mention this as a proof of beneficial results from well-timed exertion and have only to add, that I trust the knowledge of facts thus and by similar means supplied, will lead to the speedy extension of national aid in support of this and the like useful institutions."

"I remain,

"Your most obedient humble servant,

"*Joseph Fletcher, Esq.*" "W. T. Nickolds.

IV.—Public Endowed Day Schools.

Endowed schools frequented by children of the labouring classes, chiefly managed by Churchmen.

The Coventry Free Grammar School has been excepted, together with the superior private schools, from the present inquiries, as being devoted to the education of a class, to whose circumstances my investigations did not extend; but that of Nuneaton has been retained, because frequented by children of the weavers. There are only 752 children in the schools under investigation in this class, most of which are under the management of churchmen.

Of the endowed schools, contained in the returns, the Bablake School, Fairfax's Charity, and Baker, Billing, and Crow's Charity, in Coventry, and the Free Grammar School at Nuneaton, give the most extended range of instruction; and the trustees are exerting themselves to their improvement. The Bablake school has resources which may enable the trustees to make it a school of the first efficiency, and already it is well organized. Besides reading, writing, and arithmetic, the course of instruction in these schools embraces the other branches of knowledge which are usually sought in the schools for the middle classes; to which drawing and music are added in Baker's Charity. In these schools, and in little free school at Exhall, the master teaches each class on the old system; and these, it was well observed by one of the Bablake masters, are the schools which are most noted for the penmanship of their pupils. In these schools, as their returns betoken, the discipline is decidedly more severe than in any others. In some of these schools, it will be seen, the masters have made themselves keepers of circulating libraries used by the boys.

In several the range of instruction beyond the merely verbal teaching of the National and Lancasterian schools.

In others, the system and quality of instruction the same.

With the exception of the few schools already enumerated, the endowed schools, except by the circumstance of some of them apprenticing a portion of the children, are scarcely to be distinguished from the ordinary public schools supported without endowment, by voluntary subscriptions.

School abstracts and tabular summary of the number of schools and of scholars,

Subjoined is an abstract of the answers to the school queries, which details the state of popular education in the Coventry district at the close of 1838. It is preceded by a *Tabular Summary*, exhibiting, with all attainable accuracy, the great feature of the religious distinctions to which public instruction, on the voluntary principle, in its spontaneous growth, has here moulded itself.—

From this it will be seen,—

Results deducible from this summary.

1. That the population of the city and weaving district of Coventry, in 1831, was somewhat more than 55,000, and must now, therefore, reckoning on an increase of 15 per cent., which that of the previous decennial period more than justifies, be not less than 63,000.

2 That the number of healthy children *from two to fourteen years of age*, which the modern prevalence of dame and infant schools in our own manufacturing districts marks as the limits of the school ages, is, therefore, about 15,000, or nearly one-fourth of the population; the proportion of those from 5 to 15 in the city and county of the city, in 1821, being between one-fifth and one-fourth, according to the census.

3. That besides the children of the richer classes at the City Free Grammar School, and about twenty-five private schools, there are 9,787 children receiving instruction of some kind; so that the total number of children receiving instruction will be about *two-thirds* of those from two to fourteen years of age, while the other third are under no school discipline whatever, even on the Sabbath.

4. That of the total number receiving instruction, only 3,166, or scarcely *one-third*, receive any whatever, in *private* schools, at the cost of their parents; and of this number, excepting the children who attend the very few pay schools which give an instruction similar to that of the ordinary Lancasterian schools, *nearly the whole* are in *dame schools*, or subscription nurseries, of the most wretched description, in which little attempt at religious instruction is made, though sometimes the catechisms of different creeds are found in the same school, and which are best described by their usual name of "out-of-the-way schools," from the children being sent to them chiefly to be out of the way of their parents or of harm.

5. That 6,567, or more than *two-thirds* of the children receiving any instruction, RECEIVE ONLY PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, which is already, therefore, a permanent institution, though on the voluntary system.

6. That of this public instruction nearly *two-thirds* is, at this moment, *in the hands of Dissenters*, with some few Roman Catholics, under whose management 4168 of these children are receiving all the schooling which they obtain; leaving only 2389 under the management of the *Church*.

7. That of the children receiving *public* instruction 4295, or nearly *two-thirds* are under only *Sunday school* teaching, which is chiefly religious, and, as a means of secular instruction, almost beneath notice; and of the total number of children receiving *only* this Sunday schooling, 3460, or nearly *five-sixths*, are in the schools of Dissenters; the predominance being yet greater in the Coventry district than in the city.

8. That 1510 children, or nearly *one-fourth* of those receiving public instruction, attend *unendowed* day schools, of the character of the National Schools generally, with some few Infant Schools; the number of children attending those under the management of Dissenters, in the city of Coventry, *approaching two to one* of those attending the church schools; while in the rural districts, the poverty and dispersion of the dissenting population, leave the *daily* instruction almost wholly to the church schools; and the *total* of children receiving instruction in public day schools supported by voluntary subscriptions in the city and rural parishes jointly, is therefore divided between the church schools and the dissenting schools, in nearly the reverse proportion that is observed in the city alone.

9. That the *whole* of the remaining 752 children receiving public daily instruction are in schools more or less well *endowed*, of a character in few instances superior to National Schools, and nearly all under the management of churchmen; and it is by the addition of these alone that the church acquires a decided preponderance of 846, even in regard to the number of *day* scholars, to meet the overwhelming balance of nearly 3000 in the exclusively Sunday teaching.

10. That some little has been done by these several classes of schools towards redeeming the labouring population of this district from a state of nearly absolute barbarism; a partial progress, which has been made chiefly in a spirit of rivalry, where much more might have been accomplished by united effort.

11. That secular instruction at all worthy of the name being attempted only in the public day schools, and the few common day schools of superior character, the proportion of children under instruction to the population is 1 in 24 rather than 1 in 6, as the mere enumeration of the scholars of every class would indicate; an enumeration assuredly in excess, through the prevalent desire of teachers to represent their schools in the best light.

A rapid glance at the following abstracts will show the justness of the preceding deductions. The deficiency of any extensive body of correct information on the subject of popular instruction in England, will be sufficient apology for their introduction at full length; by which means the extent of their inaccuracies may also be ultimately ascertained. And as any improvement in the ribbon trade could be of only temporary benefit to the weavers, without the development among them of a moral character far superior to any which existing influences promise to educe, I may finally, perhaps, be permitted to offer a few hasty suggestions upon the mode in which it may be possible to direct the powers of society locally to its cultivation.

SUMMARY of the STATE of POPULAR INSTRUCTION in the CI

*** The Number of Children here given is that stated to be attending the Schools, and not the Number merely upon their Bo exertions in the best light, must be expected. The only Schools in the District which are omitted from this enumeration are the F Thirty Private Schools for the same Classes. The Figures underlined with Blue indicate the Schools and Scholars under *Church* Mana those not underlined, the Schools and Scholars of Churchmen and Dissenters combined.

	PUBLIC ENDOWED DAY SCHOOLS. (The Children commonly attend also on Sunday, when there are, in several Schools, as specified in another column, some who do not attend during the Week.)									PUBLIC UNENDOWED DAY SCHOOLS, including INFANT SCHOOLS. (The Children of the Church Schools attend also on Sundays, when there are, in several Schools, as specified in another column, some who do not attend during the Week.)									Total of Children in Public Day-
	Number of Schools.	Boys.			Girls.			Children whose Age and Sex are not distinguished.	Total of Children.	Number of Schools.	Boys.			Girls.			Children whose Age and Sex are not distinguished.	Total of Children.	
		Above 7.	Under 7.	Total.	Above 7.	Under 7.	Total.				Above 7.	Under 7.	Total.	Above 7.	Under 7.	Total.			
Coventry City, with Radford	4	117	..	117	40	..	40	..	157	2	67	70	137	92	75	167	..	304	4
	2	49	..	49	26	..	26	..	75	7	76	144	220	48	120	168	195	583	6
Stoke, Suburban Parish	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	50	50	
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
TOTAL OF CITY AND SUBURBS	4	117	..	117	40	..	40	..	157	3	67	70	137	92	75	167	50	354	5
	2	49	..	49	26	..	26	..	75	7	76	144	220	48	120	168	195	583	6
Rest of the Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly in the County of the City:—																			
Foleshill	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	103	103	1
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Exhall	1	10	..	10	..	..	..	..	10	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Anstey / Shilton	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	35	35	
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Sowe	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	10	15	25	50	75	
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City:—																			
Bedworth	1	74	36	110	25	45	70	..	180	2	22	14	36	12	8	20	79	135	3
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Bulkington	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	175	175	1
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Chilvers Coton	1	58	25	83	44	23	67	..	150	..	..	..	..	..	.	..	..	..	1
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Nuneaton	2	180	..	..	..	..	..	..	180	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	50	50	
Hartshill (Hamlet)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
TOTAL OF RURAL PARISHES	5	322	61	203	69	68	137	..	520	7	22	14	36	22	23	45	442	523	10
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	50	50	
TOTAL OF CITY AND RURAL PARISHES	9	430	61	320	109	68	177	..	677	8	89	84	173	114	98	212	492	877	15
	2	49	..	49	26	..	26	..	75	8	76	144	220	48	120	168	245	633	7
UNITED TOTAL	11	488	61	549	135	68	203	..	752	16	165	228	393	162	218	380	737	1510	22

* These are Sunday Scholars attending at

† Private Scholar

)VENTRY, and the contiguous Weaving Districts of the RIBBON MANUFACTURE.

at this Number is, in the Sunday Schools more especially, somewhat in excess, through the desire of the Teachers to represent their mar School in the City of Coventry, which is appropriated to the Education of the Middle and Upper Classes, and from Twenty to those underlined with Red, the Schools and Scholars under Management of *Dissenters*, with some few Roman Catholics; and

PUBLIC UNENDOWED SUNDAY SCHOOLS.								Children in Public Day Schools included in the returned attendance at separate Public Sunday Schools.	Nett total of Children receiving Public Instruction, after deducting for the double attendance.	Children in Private Day Schools included in attendance at Sunday Schools.	Nett total of Children attending *only* Public Sunday Schools.	Nett total of Children receiving *only* Public Instruction.	PRIVATE DAY AND DAME SCHOOLS.									Total of Children receiving Instruction (Public or Private) December 1838.	Population, 1831.
Boys.			Girls.			Children whose Age and Sex are not distinguished.	Total of Children in Public Sunday Schools.						Number of Schools.	Boys.			Girls.			Children whose Age and Sex are not distinguished.	Total of Children at Private Schools.		
Above 7.	Under 7.	Total.	Above 7.	Under 7.	Total.									Above 7.	Under 7.	Total.	Above 7.	Under 7.	Total.				
..	..	..	100	54	154	354	508	13	956	196	299	760	78	89	166	255	144	187	331	1043	1629	4094	27,298
298	108	406	347	135	482	860	1748	339	2067	362	1047	1705											
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	50	..	..	50	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	30	30	142	848
..	..	..	..	..	..	70	70	..	70	8	62	62											
..	..	..	100	54	154	354	508	13	1006	196	199	810	80	89	166	255	144	187	331	1073	1659	4236	28,146
298	108	406	347	135	482	930	1818	339	2137	370	1109	1767											
..	..	..	..	..	..	50*	50*	..	153	..	50	153	18	..	..	..	10	34	44	252	296	1456	6,969
77	38	115	106	69	175	797	1087	..	1087	80	1007	1007											
..	..	..	..	..	..	20*	20*	..	30	5	15	25	..	13†	..	13†	..	7†	7†	..	20†	45	840
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..											
..	..	..	..	..	..	70*	70*	..	105	..	70	105	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	105	268
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..											460
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	75	..	..	75	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	180	180	341	1,414
..	..	..	..	..	..	90	90	..	90	4	86	86											
..	..	..	..	..	..	About 134*	About 134*	..	449	13	121	436	16	..	..	..	8	17	25	235	260	913	3,980
37	10	47	63	8	71	155	273	..	273	56	217	217											
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	175	..	..	175	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	70	70	544	1,792
27	19	46	25	11	36	229	311	..	311	12	299	299											
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	150	..	..	150	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	114	114	435	2,494
69	11	80	74	23	97	..	177	..	177	6	171	171											
..	..	..	..	..	..	300	300	..	480	20	280	460	24	18	6	24	23	8	31	387	442	1328	7,799
93	34	127	109	37	146	150	423	..	473	47	376	426											
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	125	125	320	909
37	..	37	36	..	36	160	233	..	233	38	195	195											
..	..	..	..	..	..	574	574	..	1617	38	536	1579	79	31	6	37	41	66	107	1363	1507	5487	26,925
340	112	452	413	148	561	1581	2594	..	2644	243	2351	2401											
..	..	..	100	54	154	928	1082	13	2623	234	835	2389	159	120	172	292	185	253	438	2436	3166	9723	55,071
638	220	858	750	283	1043	2511	4412	339	4781	613	3460	4168											
638	220	858	850	337	1197	3439	5494	352	7404	847	4295	6567	159	120	172	292	185	253	438	2436	3166	9787	55,071

chools in addition to the Day Scholars.
ee School.

1. Name and Locality of the Schools?	2. Name of the Master or Mistress?	3. Names of the most efficient supporters of the School, or of the Committee superintending its affairs?	4. Funds by which the Schoo is supported; the amount; a whether by Endowment o Voluntary Subscription?
City and Suburbs.			
1. Fairfax's Charity, Spon St., under Trustees who are Churchmen.	John Bassett.	Trustees: Rev. T. Sheepshanks, Charles Harris, Esq., Joseph Jordan, Esq., John Howe, Esq., Joseph Howe, Esq., R. H. Rotherham, Esq., Thomas Harris, Esq.	The income arising from endow ments is 112*l.* 15*s.* 10*d.*; from a sermon preached annually for the school 115*l.* has been obtained on an average of seven years.
2. Bablake School and Hospital, Hill St., under Trustees who are Churchmen.	Henry Mander, and two Assistants.	There are nineteen Trustees: they visit the school alternately.	An endowed school. [938*l.* 17*s.* 4*d.* per annum.—*Charity Reports.*]
3. Bridget Southern's Charity for Girls, Vicar Lane, under the Society of Friends.	Elizabeth Adams.	Trustees: Joseph Cash, Josiah Carter, Arthur Atkins, John Gulson, jun.	Endowment of Bridget Southern Annual income about 80*l.*
4. Mrs. Catherine Bailey's Charity, Little Park Street, under Trustees who are Churchmen.	Francis Marson.	Superintended by ten Trustees.	Cannot say what the amount of the funds is. Partly by endowments, and partly by contributions from an annual sermon [Endowments, 153*l.* 10*s.*: sermon, 100*l.*—*Charity Reports.*]
5. Baker, Billing, and Crowe's Charity, Cow Lane, under Trustees who are chiefly Unitarians.	Thomas Clack.	The Managing Committee consists of seven Trustees, residing in the neighbourhood.	Supported by endowments, the amount of which I do not know.
6. Blue-Coat Charity for Girls, Trinity Church-yard, under Trustees who are Churchmen. [No return made, and the information therefore sought from the Charity Commissioners' Report.]	. .	Five of the vestry, elected by the vestry act, with the Minister, as Trustees.	Permanent income of 134*l.* 5*s* 8*d.* aided by an annual sermon at which contributions to the amount of about 100*l.* are made and by the profits of needlework amounting to from 20*l.* to 30*l* per annum.
Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly within the County of the City.			
7. Exhall. — Free-school (endowed for ten, and conducted jointly with a private day-school and a Church Sunday School.)—*Viva voce testimony of the Schoolmaster.*	Mr. and Mrs. Cox.	None but the churchwardens.	An endowment of 200*l.* producing about 7*l.*, for which 10 boys are to be taught gratis for four years, but they attend scarcely for two. The rest is a pay school for boys and girls, and a Sunday school.
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.			
8. Bedworth.—National day and Sunday School.—*Viva voce testimony of the Schoolmaster.*	John Rayner and Mrs. Rayner.	Rev. Henry Bellairs, who is the rector, Rev. T. C. Adams, and others, Trustees of the Bedworth Charity.	There is an endowment to the value of 1074*l.* 10*s.* per annum, besides collieries producing several hundred pounds more, of which a part is appropriated to an hospital and part to a school. The children pay 1*d.* per week, which goes to a fund made up by the Governors to form a fund for shoes.
9. Chilvers Coton.—Free-school.	Thomas Clifford—Ann Morris.	Charles Newdigate Newdigate, Esq., Arbury Hall; Robert Evans, agent.	By canal shares, producing about 250*l.* per annum, which, with large additional sums contributed by the Trustee, is expended in the support of a school for all children of parishioners of Chilvers Coton, and of another at Astley, as well as in various charitable distributions.
10. Nuneaton.—Free Grammar School. [*No return.—Charity Report, and various Evidence.*]	Rev. T. R. Docker, head-master; Mr. Benjamin Rayner, under-master.	Mr. Samuel Ballard, Mr. Wm. Ball, Mr. John Bond, Mr. Wm. Bucknill, Mr. William Burton, Mr. William Jeffrey, Mr. John Robinson, Mr. Thomas Robinson, and Mr. Joseph Taverner, Governors.	Rent of real property and interest of other property, producing together about 300*l.* a-year.
11. Nuneaton.—Smith's Charity School.—*Return by a Trustee.*	Charles Parnell, master; Mary Geary, mistress.	John Robinson, James William Buchanan, Thomas Robinson, and Edward Nason, the resident Trustees: the Vicar of Nuneaton being a Trustee also when resident.	Real estate and money out at interest on real security, producing about 200*l.* a-year.

SCHOOLS.

lary and Emoluments of Master, Mistress, and Teachers?	6. How many Children are there on the School Books?	7. How many generally attend?						8. What are the leading features of the System of Education adopted? Are the Plans of Bell and Lancaster, or others, followed in the School?
		Boys.		Girls.		Age and Sex undistinguished by the Teachers making the return.	Total of Children.	
		Above 7.	Under 7.	Above 7.	Under 7.			
per annum, with dwelling- and school, free from rent axes.	40 boys.	40	..	..	..	..	40	As regards reading and spelling, Bell's system is adopted.
master's salary is 60*l.* per n. [He resides in a part of uilding; and there is also a nt matron, with 30*l.* per n for herself and servant.— *y Reports.*]	42 charity boys; besides whom there are 54 master's day pupils =96.	42	..	..	..	..	42	The master is not confined to any particular system of education; he adopts those plans which he considers best calculated to accelerate the improvement of his pupils. They are not taught upon Bell's or Lancaster's system.
ual salary of mistress 25*l.*, coals and house.	30 girls.	..	..	26	..	..	26	No particular system; except, in reading, the Lancasterian is generally adopted.
salary, and 3 guineas for ink, and firing, per annum. e rent free.	35 boys.	35	..	..	..	..	35	The system of writing on slates and sand, &c., is not approved.
guineas, house, fire, and free.	49 boys.	49	..	..	..	..	49	They are taught reading, writing, arithmetic; the elder boys history, geography, grammar; and those who show a talent for it, geometry, drawing, and music.
ress receives 30*l.* per annum, rent and tax free, 5*l.* per n for coals, and 8*s.* per for each of six girls that are ed, amounting to 124*l.* 16*s.*; per cent. profit on the done.	40 girls.	..	..	40	..	..	40	. .
ives the produce of the ments in payment for 10 rs; for the pay scholars, 6*d.* ek for those who write and counts, and 3*d.* for the rest. ead farmers send their boys ous boarding-schools; these ttagers' and weavers' chil-	Boys 24 (10 free); girls 7 (all pay), besides Sunday scholars.	10	..	..	..	..	10	Each class is instructed by the master or mistress.
ter and mistress have 70*l.* num, and are house-rent and ee, with coals; they have trifling allowance per head ch boy above the number of *Charity Reports.*	110 boys, 85 girls; Sunday school, extra, boys 56, girls 40. As many are taken into the school as the rector thinks fit.	74	36	25	45	..	180	Bell's or the National School system, little altered.
per annum to the master istress.	150.	58	25	44	23	..	150	Dr. Bell's system.
l-master 50*l.* a-year, with and garden, and has also d gratuities from the trus- under-master 45*l.* or 50*l.*	60. The assigned number whom he must receive and instruct in the classics is 45: they must be 10 years of age, and know how to read on admission. The head-master may also have 20 private scholars, so that he teach the foundation boys Latin.	60	..	..	..	..	60	The school is divided into two portions, under the head-master and under-master respectively; the former deciding the arrangement.
er's salary 45*l.*, mistress's 0*l.*	114; also 6 in the school, by sufferance, making 120.	120	..	..	..	..	120	Useful knowledge, with religious education, on the principles of the Established Church; neither Bell or Lancaster's plans are strictly adhered to.
		488	61	135	68	..	752	

Name and Locality of the Schools.	9. Enumerate what is taught?	10. Enumerate the Books and Lessons used in the Schools?	11. What Maps, Globes, or other implements of Instruction?
City and Suburbs.			
1. Fairfax's Charity, Spon St., under Trustees, who are Churchmen.	Reading, writing, arithmetic, and geography.	Bible, Horne's Lives, Blair's Class-Book, Instinct Displayed, Natural History, Fourth Book of Lessons, Butler's Spelling, Trimmer's Abridgement, Second Book of Lessons, and various Arithmetics.	Maps of the world, England, Europe, Palestine, &c.
2. Bablake School and Hospital, Hill Street, under Trustees, who are Churchmen.	They are taught reading, spelling, writing, English grammar, geography, use of maps, and globes, book-keeping, and mensuration.	Guy's Spelling, Duncan's Expositor, Johnson's Dictionary, and Lennie's Grammar, as lesson-books; and the English Reader, and Introduction to it; Blair's Class-Book, Mavor's Natural History, History of England, Aitkin's Seasons, Goldsmith's Geography, Economy of Human Life; daily readings from the Psalms; and Trimmer's Selections from the Old and New Testament for class reading.	Goldsmith's maps, Adams's globes.
3. Bridget Southern's Charity for Girls, Vicar Lane, under the Society of Friends.	Reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, sewing, and knitting.	Bible, and Mrs. Trimmer's Abridgement of the Bible, Scripture Lessons, Spelling Lessons.	None.
4. Mrs. Catherine Bailey's Charity, Little Park Street, under Trustees, who are Churchmen.	Reading, writing, and arithmetic.	Spelling Books, Expositor ditto, Testaments, Abridgement of the Scriptures, Bible and Gospel History, History of England by questions and answers, &c. &c.	None.
5. Baker, Billing, and Crow's Charity, Cow Lane, under Trustees, who are chiefly Unitarians.	Reading, writing, arithmetic, history, geography, grammar, geometry, drawing, and music.	Various.	Large maps, published for the use of the national schools in Ireland, and globes.
6. Blue-Coat Charity for Girls, Trinity Church-yard, under Trustees, who are Churchmen. [No return made, and the information, therefore, sought from the Charity Commissioners' Report.]	Reading, knitting, and sewing, and the six oldest girls are taken into the mistress's house for the last year, to fit them for household servants.	. .	. .
Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly within the County of the City.			
7. Exhall.—Free-school (endowed for ten, and conducted jointly with a private day-school and a Church Sunday-school).	Reading, writing, arithmetic, and Church catechism twice a-week, when the children of Dissenters are often ordered by their parents to be sent home.	Bible, Testament, Guy's Spelling Books and Vyse's. Boys bring what spelling books parents think well; Enfield's Grammar.	None.
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.			
8. Bedworth.—National day and Sunday School.—*Viva voce testimony of the Schoolmaster.*	Reading, writing, arithmetic, and Church catechism, with religious instruction; girls also needle work.	Same as in national schools generally.	None.
9. Chilvers Coton.—Free-school.	Reading, writing, accounts, spelling, knitting, and sewing.	Testaments, Abridgment of the Bible, Chief Truths of the Christian Religion, Prayer-Book, and small Tracts, according to Dr. Bell's system.	None.
10. Nuneaton.—Free Grammar School. [*No return.—Charity Report, and various Evidence.*]	The boys in the head-master's school nearly all learn Latin, together with English history, geography, mathematics, writing, and accounts. Those in the under-master's school learn reading, writing, and accounts only.	Various, each scholar finding his own.	. .
11. Nuneaton.—Smith's Charity School.—*Return by a Trustee.*	The principles of the Christian religion as they are laid down in the Church of England catechism. To spell, read, pronounce, and cast accounts; the girls also to sew and knit.	The Bible and Prayer-Book, and the usual spelling, reading, writing, and arithmetic instruction, for their lessons in those branches of education.	None.

SCHOOLS.

12. How many Hours are devoted to each subject, Daily or Weekly?	13. What Rewards are given? Is Emulation encouraged?	14. What Punishments? Is Corporeal Punishment employed, or Punishment by Tasks, &c., &c.? Is Punishment inflicted for non-performance of Tasks, &c.?	15. What Improvements have been recently introduced?
...ading 10 hours, writing 5 ...rs, arithmetic 10 hours, spelling 4 hours, geography 2 hours, ...kly, exclusive of Sunday; this ...e refers to the summer season.	Books and money are given by the Master. Proficiency is inculcated upon the boys as a duty they owe to themselves.	Not punishment by tasks, but corporeal punishment, or confinement in the school. It is.	None o any importance.
...he school hours are from 9 till ... in the morning, and, in the ...ernoon, from ½ past 1 till 4, in ... winter, and from 2 till 5, in ... summer; the morning de...ted to spelling, grammar, and ...hmetic; the afternoon to read... and writing. Geography and ...ps on Saturday mornings.	The tickets to the libraries.	Corporal punishment is not entirely abolished. Boys are always reproved for the first offence, and, on a repetition of the offence, they are generally punished by extra lessons, to be learned in a stated period, and confined to the school-room, during the hours assigned for play, till the extra tasks are performed.	In the year 1832 the present school-room, which is a very commodious one, was erected; also a house for the master to reside in, adjoining the school-room.
...bout an hour each.	No rewards given, but endeavours are made to promote emulation of character.	Extra tasks.	No very recent ones.
...eading, writing, and arithme..., alternately, from 9 in the ...rning till 5 in the evening, ...m Lady-Day till Michaelmas, ...l from 9 till 4 from Michaelmas ... Lady-Day, dinner-time ex...pted.	Small sums of money are sometimes given for proficiency and good conduct.	Generally by tasks, but sometimes the cane is absolutely necessary; that depends upon inability, or wilful inattention.	None.
...ccording to circumstances.	According to the decisions of the Trustees, on examination.	According to circumstances.	There is a constant desire to improve.
. .	Small sums out of the earnings are allowed for merit-money.	. .	. .
. .	Take places.	Hazel-rod and tasks.	Scarcely any.
Write at first coming into school ...ery day; 1 hour a-day to reli...ous instruction; ½ an hour spell...g; ½ an hour ciphering; every ...ass undergoing some examina...on by the teacher; writing ½ an ...ur morning, and ½ an hour after...rnoon in summer.	Teachers have so much at Christmas for every week not absent; deserving children also books or money; and a whole class take places.	Economise punishment corporeally as much as possible.	Nothing worth mentioning.
5 school-hours daily.	None.	By tasks—Yes.	
School-hours from 9 to 12, and ...om 2 to 5.	Apprenticed to a trade and a premium paid with them, as a reward for good behaviour in school.	Tasks; dismissed the school unless improvement in conduct.	. .
From 9 to 12 in the morning, ...om 2 to 5 in the afternoon, from ...0th March to 10th September. ...rom 2 to 4 in the afternoon, from ...0th September to 10th March, ...lividing the time according to ...e ability of the children in their ...ursuits.)	A Bible, Testament, or Prayer-Book on leaving the school, and small useful pamphlets for present reward.	Little and slight corporeal punishment; tasks and detention beyond school hours, and compelling them, during such detention, to brush and clean their clothes and shoes, for which brushes, blacking, and oil are provided, has, for the present, been found to be a severe and degrading punishment, and nearly superseding corporeal.	An increase in the number of children from 45 to 114; enlarged space, accommodation, and comforts in the schools; order and neatness among the children, and a more comprehensive system of education than formerly.

Name and Locality of the Schools.	16. What Improvements are considered as highly desirable?	17. Is there a School Library? What Books are most used by the Children?	18. Is there a play-ground attached to the school? If so, state the Size of it?
City and Suburbs.			
1. Fairfax's Charity, Spon St., under Trustees who are Churchmen.	The Trustees frequently visit the school, and express themselves satisfied therewith.	One belonging to the master, of which the children may have the benefit by paying a halfpenny per week. The juvenile publications of the Religious Tract Society.	A small one containing about 390 square feet, but the school being near the outskirts of the city the boys prefer playing in the fields.
2. Bablake School and Hospital, Hill St.," under Trustees who are Churchmen.	The Trustees have always expressed their entire satisfaction with the present arrangements.	There is a library belonging to the charity, consisting of upwards of 200 volumes on religious, moral, and miscellaneous subjects. The greater part of the works are published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. There is also a library consisting of upwards of 500 volumes on similar subjects, belonging to the master, to which his pupils have access, and to which those of the charity boys, who signalize themselves by their good conduct and attention to school duties, have a free admission ticket, and those of the master's day pupils, who signalize themselves in a similar manner, have a free admission ticket to the library belonging to the charity.	The play-ground is about 30 yards square.
3. Bridget Southern's Charity for Girls, Vicar Lane, under the Society of Friends.	We have none to suggest.	No Library.	None.
4. Mrs. Catherine Bailey's Charity, Little Park St., under Trustees who are Churchmen.	A larger and more airy room would be a very great acquisition, as respects the health of the children and myself.	No.	No: one would be very desirable.
5. Baker, Billing, and Crow's Charity, Cow Lane, under Trustees who are chiefly Unitarians.	Any real improvement within the means is considered desirable.	A library just commenced.	No.
6. Blue Coat Charity for Girls, Trinity Church-yard, under Trustees who are Churchmen. [No return made, and the information therefore sought from the Charity Commissioners' Report.]	. .	. .	.
Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly within the County of the City.			
7. Exhall. — Free-school (endowed for ten, and conducted jointly with a private day-school and a Church Sunday School.)—*Viva voce testimony of the Schoolmaster.*	Cannot suggest; except a "general civilization," and a "union of principles."	No.	No.
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.			
8. Bedworth.—National day and Sunday School. — *Viva voce testimony of the Schoolmaster.*	Schoolmaster cannot say.	Bible and Testament.	No; except the hospital yard.
9. Chilvers Coton.—Free-school.	. .	No.	No.
10. Nuneaton. — Free Grammar School. [*No return.— Charity Report, and various Evidence.*]	. .	. .	There is not.
11. Nuneaton.—Smith's Charity School.—*Return by a Trustee.*	The trustees will endeavour to enlarge the boys' school-room next year; the system and extent of education is quite sufficient; the foundation being for the poorer classes.	The books already enumerated, to which the trustees are adding the Penny Magazine and the Saturday Magazine; there is no further library; but see a previous answer; the permission to read from the library is made a reward.	There is not; nor would it be desirable in so central a situation as the school occupies.

SCHOOLS.

Upon the average, how ng does a Child remain at the School?	20. Do any of the Children leave the School before they can Read fluently, or Write? If so, what Number?	21. Is any Religious Instruction given? If so, of what kind? Name if Catechisms are taught?	22. Do the Children attend at any Sunday School? what? and in what number?
aree years.	None.	Sunday is devoted to religious instruction; viz., attending the parish church, reading portions of the Holy Scriptures, and repeating the Catechism of the Church of England and Collect for the day.	The whole attend on Sunday.
ne charity boys are admitted wo years: the first year they educated and clothed, and the year they are boarded also, then put out to suitable trades ne expense of the charity.	No.	They are educated in the principles of the Established Church. The Church Catechism is taught.	They attend St. Michael's Church on Sundays.
bout 18 months.	About a fourth of those admitted.	The religious instruction imparted is from the reading of the Holy Scriptures. No Catechisms are used.	The children generally attend Sunday-schools, of the Church and Dissenters, in about equal proportions.
hree years, after being ad- ed at 11 years of age.	Only one solitary instance has occurred, where a boy could not write his own name, out of nearly 400 boys.	The Church Catechism and Exposition thereof by Bishop Mann.	The boys attend twice every Sunday, and are conducted to church by the master.
ch boy remains three years, ss dismissed for misbehaviour; r being admitted between 10 11 years of age.	None are admitted who cannot read and write.	General religious impressions are inculcated, but of no particular sectarian class.	All the children attend on a Sunday, and go to a place of worship, [which is commonly the Presbyterian or Unitarian meeting-house.—*Charity Report.*]
dmitted at 10 years of age, stay from three to five years.	No writing taught, apparently.	• •	• •
me children stop 2 or 3 years; ers only for 1, or for a few nths. There is much differ- e in parents. But girls espe- ly can get 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* per ek, when only 7 years of age, filling or winding; and the ents will keep them at home. e boys are also early taken ay and do not average more n 1½ year.	Can seldom turn them out well; they get merely the rudiments of reading and writing, which many neglect in after life.	Church Catechism and Bible.	Also a Sunday-school, supported chiefly by a sermon once in two years, producing 7*l.* or 10*l.* The same children attend, those who are not Dissenters, which is frequently the majority; and the rest are 14 or 15 fresh children. This is the only Church Sunday-school in the parish.
f they remain from 7 to 10 the oolmaster thinks himself well cumstanced with them; at the age almost all go, many before.	Yes; would like to keep them until 12; but now expects to lose them at 10 or 11.	Yes; Catechism, and questioning and explanation on Testament and Catechism.	All attend Sunday-school; none allowed who do not attend the Sunday-school; which has also a number beyond the week-day pupils.
s long as the parents wish m to continue.	Several before 2 years have expired on account of learning to weave, or work in the colliery.	Broker's Catechism.	The children that attend daily, attend also on Sunday.
years, unless dismissed for mis- nduct.	No; not admitted till 10 years of age.	Church Catechism only.	No.
years; a proportionate number ng admitted and discharged ch quarter; when trade was od there was difficulty in re- ning them, until we introduced regulation mentioned in another swer.	Few leave under these circumstances, and when they do, it is for want of capacity.	The instruction is on the principles of the Christian Religion as laid down in the Church of England Catechism.	The school itself is open on a Sunday for the purpose of congregating the children for two church services, but not for tuition.

Name and Locality of the Schools.	23. Do the Masters of the Boys apprenticed from the School generally perform their duty to the Boys, in superintending their Conduct, and teaching them their Trade? or otherwise?	24. Are any Inquiries made respecting the Moral Character, or Success in after-life of children who have left the School? With what result?	25. Do the Parents belong to the Church of England? or any of them Dissenters? or any Roman Catholics?
City and Suburbs.			
1. Fairfax's Charity, Spon St., under Trustees, who are Churchmen.	They do.	The boys are apprenticed, under the sanction of the Trustees, for seven years, and are found, generally, to become useful members of society.	The tenets of the parents are never inquired into.
2. Bablake School and Hospital, Hill Street, under Trustees, who are Churchmen.	They generally become good workmen, and useful members of society.	The trustees are guardians to the boys during their apprenticeship. They in general make good apprentices, and do well in after-life.	The children are of parents of dissenting principles as well of the Church of England. Their religious opinions do not exclude them the benefits of the institution.
3. Bridget Southern's Charity, for Girls, Vicar Lane, under the Society of Friends.	No boys.	In several instances, where inquiry has been made, the children have been found, in after-life, filling respectable stations, frequently as servants.	No distinction is made with regard to religious creed.
4. Mrs. Catharine Bailey's Charity, Little Park Street, under Trustees, who are Churchmen.	I do not recollect many instances of masters not performing their engagements. A few cases certainly have occurred during the time (31 years) that I have held my present situation.	But seldom.	Generally to the Church of England; but, on account of the children of Dissenters having been baptised at church, they have sometimes been admitted. The school is considered a Church establishment, consequently Dissenters' children are not knowingly admitted.
5. Baker, Billing, and Crow's Charity, Cow Lane, under Trustees, who are chiefly Unitarians.	Cannot say.	Yes. The results, as might be expected, various.	Some of the Church of England, some Dissenters of all denominations, but no Roman Catholics.
6. Blue-Coat Charity, for Girls, Trinity Church-yard, under Trustees, who are Churchmen. [No return made, and the information, therefore, sought from the Charity Commissioners Report.	. .	. .	. .
Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly within the County of the City.			
7. Exhall. — Free-school (endowed for ten, and conducted jointly with a private day-school and a Church Sunday School.)—*Viva voce testimony of the Schoolmaster.*	. .	The young people about are of various character; but the country weavers spend all they get, without, when they can, attempting to save anything.	Parents of children on endowment must be, for they learn the Catechism and go to Church.
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.			
8. Bedworth.—National day and Sunday School. — *Viva voce testimony of the Schoolmaster.*	Apprenticing from the Charity Funds has been discontinued.	The improvement of the place is proof that much is done for the growing youthful population of the village, but the great evil is taking the children away so *early*. In bad time of trade, the attendance is much better with bigger boys.	Yes.
9. Chilvers Coton.—Free-school.	Cannot say.	No.	Both. No.
10. Nuneaton.— Free Grammar School. [No return. — *Charity Report, and various Evidence.*]	. .	. .	Church of England only.
11. Nuneaton.—Smith's Charity School.—*Return by a Trustee.*	The boys perform their duties, and are well superintended in their conduct and in the teaching of their trade by their masters. This school does not apprentice, having no funds.	No particular inquiry is made; but observation shows that their education is followed by good results, as the boys, after leaving this school, generally seek to be admitted into that founded by King Edward the Sixth (the Grammar School.)	There are no Roman Catholics in the school; children are not rejected because their parents are Dissenters; but they are required to go to church on Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Y SCHOOLS.

. Do Parents, in any cases, ep their Children from the School through religious scruples?	27. Of what Trades, Occupations, or Professions, are the Parents generally? What is the proportion of Weavers' Children?	28. Do they manifest much anxiety to have their Children properly Educated?	29. Do the Parents who send their Children to the School pay anything whatever for Instruction? What Sums? Weekly, or Quarterly?
Never.	The trades of the parents of the boys now in the school are as follows: — Weavers $\frac{9}{40}$, plush weavers $\frac{3}{40}$, dyers $\frac{7}{40}$, watchmakers $\frac{7}{40}$, carpenters $\frac{2}{40}$, various $\frac{12}{40}$.	Parents are very anxious to have their children admitted into this school.	No.
The master never knew an instance.	Generally weavers and watchmakers.	They are anxious.	Those on the foundation do not pay.
The Trustees know of no instance of the kind.	Principally weavers and watchmakers, about two-thirds weavers.	Some anxiety is manifest, but not so much as could be desired.	Nothing is paid.
No. The school is considered a *church establishment*, consequently Dissenters' children are not knowingly admitted.	Of most trades, and labourers; and about half the number are weavers' children.	Some are very anxious, others indifferent.	They do not pay anything except 1*s.* admission fee to the Master.
Not to my knowledge.	20 weavers', 8 watchmakers', the remainder various.	Some are very anxious, others apparently so, desirous only of getting the clothing, &c.	No payment of any kind by the parents.
Yes; the majority of the parish being Dissenters.—See *ante*.	More than half are weavers' children, and the rest labourers.	Parents have not much desire to send their children to school; they are poachers and night-people, which the children know, and grow up in the same feelings. The farmers think only of the nuisance of school-boys trespassing on their lands.	See *ante*.
Dissenters' children come to the school; a Roman Catholic once refused to send.	Children chiefly of weavers, colliers, and miscellaneous handicrafts.	Parents are very anxious to get children in; if there be a free vacancy it is filled up in a day or two.	Boys over the usual number pay something annually at Whitsuntide.
Yes.	Ribbon weavers and colliers.	Not so much as they ought to do.	No.
Children of members of the Church of England only admitted.	Various.		No.
No; Dissenters seek admission in the same proportion as they bear to the church, which is about 7 to 1.	About seven-tenths of the parents of the children are weavers.	Our fund cannot meet the applications for admission.	They do not pay anything for instruction, and the Trustees find pens, ink, and books free of expense, and from the sale of old copy books are gradually establishing a library.

Name and Locality of the Schools.	30. Are any Children kept away through the inability of their Parents to continue their Payments? or to make good their arrears?	31. Do the Children receive Gifts in Clothes or Money?	32. Do they wear a Uniform such as will distinguish them as Charity Boys and Girls from other Children?
City and Suburbs.			
1. Fairfax's Charity, Spon St., under Trustees who are Churchmen.	. .	They are annually clothed and furnished with books, and receive a suit of clothes on being put apprentice.	They do.
2. Bablake School and Hospital, Hill St., under Trustees who are Churchmen.	. .	The charity boys are annually clothed.	The charity boys wear a costume.
3. Bridget Southern's Charity for Girls, Vicar Lane, under the Society of Friends.	Nothing is paid.	Clothes once a-year.	The clothes, though all alike, can scarcely be called a badge.
4. Mrs. Catherine Bailey's Charity, Little Park Street, under Trustees who are Churchmen.	. .	No.	They are 3 years in the school, have as many suits of clothes; 3*l.* premium is given on their being apprenticed, and a good Bible and Prayer-book presented to them afterwards.
5. Baker, Billing, and Crowe's Charity, Cow Lane, under Trustees who are chiefly Unitarians.	No payment of any kind by the parents.	A suit of clothes yearly, and a new suit, 3*l.* for an apprentice fee, and a Bible when they leave the school.	A uniform.
6. Blue Coat Charity for Girls, Trinity Church-yard, under Trustees who are Chuchmen. [No return made, and the information therefore sought from the Charity Commissioners' Report.]	. .	All the girls are fully clothed once a-year.	Yes; and that of the six eldest girls is different from the rest.
Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly within the County of the City.			
7. Exhall. — Free-school (endowed for ten, and conducted jointly with a private day-school and a Church Sunday School.— *Viva voce testimony of the Schoolmaster.*	It is not inability, but desire to get their earnings. Parents say "they have done very well without education." Many of the farmers can neither read nor write.	No; and this makes the Sunday School badly attended, for at others they do.	No.
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.			
8. Bedworth.—National day and Sunday School. — *Viva voce testimony of the Schoolmaster.*	Cannot say whether early withdrawing of children is through necessity; in many cases it is not; but generally children are here immediately put to work of some kind.	All that have been in for 12 months (boys and girls) are clothed; the boys clothing being calculated at 24*s.*, and the girls at 20*s.* per head. They have a dinner yearly in Whitsun-week.	Those who are clothed.
9. Chilvers Coton.—Free-school.	. .	In clothes. Twelve boys and twelve girls of the poorest families are clothed entirely every year.	Yes.
10. Nuneaton.—Free Grammar School. [*No return.— Charity Report, and various evidence.*]	No.	No.	No.
11. Nuneaton.—Smith's Charity School.—*Return by a Trustee.*	No; but they formerly were.	They have the use of a cloak, cap, and bonnet, retained in the school, on the three days they attend church, and 1 pair of shoes is given to each child annually, to be retained by the child.	The cloaks and caps make them uniform and distinguish them as "Smith's Charity" on the three days they attend church; on other days they wear their own garments.

SCHOOLS.

s there a Deficiency of the ns of Instruction in the hbourhood?	34. What is the probable Proportion in the neighbourhood of Children who never go to School?	35. Are they generally in the Street, or at Work? What kind of Work?	36. During what Hours might they be spared for Instruction?
m not aware that there is; if there is, the means of in- tion will soon be more fully ded, as a day-school for girls a Sunday-school for boys is t to be erected in the parish.	I am not sufficiently informed to answer this question.	Children of very poor parents are early employed in the watch trade and weaving.	They could not be spared at all under the present arrangements of their employers.
onsider the means very con- able: there is a National, a asterian, and 4 or 5 Infant ls for the poor; and a new l-room is about to be erected . day and Sunday school for , and Sunday-school for boys, ected with this parish.	Cannot tell.	Cannot tell.	Cannot tell.
particular deficiency.	We cannot tell.	We cannot tell.	We cannot tell.
elieve not.	I cannot say; but I think there are a great many.	What there may be at work I cannot tell, but there are always a great many in the streets and fields.	I do not know.
nnot say.	Have no means of ascertaining this.	Cannot say.	Cannot say.
. .	. .	. .	. .
here are many children go to Baptists' Sunday-school at ngford. They do not complain want of schools. Many look on the school as a nuisance.	. .	Running about roads, if not filling or working. Parents, even when the boys are free, will not make them come to school. Two instances close at hand.	They might spare even a work- ing child a few hours for school.
here are branches at Colley- ft and at Bedworth Heath; latter aided by Mrs. Newdi- te and receiving children from tley. School would have more olars if it had more room.	Yes; there are some (though few) who go to neither Sunday nor day schools, and some go to Sunday-schools only.	Cannot say, but believe at work.	Cannot say.
No.	Cannot say.	Some in the streets, and some at work.	Two hours.
. .	. .	. .	. .
I cannot say there is, as there e many cheap day-schools in e parish; but the applications for lmission to a charity are far o numerous to be all enter- ined.	A very small proportion indeed, as they are sent to a cheap day school at a very tender age to save time of nursing; *and often nurse and child together, the combined ages of which will not number 7 years.*	Some few may, and do, wind silk in the evening; but, gene- rally, they play in the streets after school hours.	From 5 in the afternoon; and a Mechanics' Institution is now formed, where those who are in- clined, and can afford to sub- scribe, may read and hear lec- tures until 8 o'clock, but the chil- dren are too young, or too poor, to avail themselves of this, except in very few cases.

I.—PUBLIC ENDOWED DAY SCHOOLS.

Name and Locality of the Schools?	37. Add any general Remarks you may wish to offer?
City and Suburbs.	
1. Fairfax's Charity, Spon St., under Trustees, who are Churchmen.	The 45 private pupils of the master receive the same education as the boys on the foundation.
2. Bablake School and Hospital, Hill St., under Trustees, who are Churchmen.	I have nothing further to remark.
3. Bridget Southern's Charity for Girls, Vicar Lane, under the Society of Friends.	The mistress is allowed to instruct eight children, in addition, on her own account.—Signed, (on behalf of the Trustees) Arthur Atkins.
4. Mrs. Catherine Bailey's Charity, Little Park Street, under Trustees, who are Churchmen.	There is no difficulty in obtaining situations as apprentices for the boys, *as they are much sought after from the course of instruction they receive.—Charity Reports.*
5. Baker, Billing, and Crowe's Charity, Cow Lane, under Trustees, who are chiefly Unitarians.	. .
6. Blue Coat Charity, for Girls, Trinity Church-yard, under Trustees who are Churchmen. [No return made, and the information, therefore, sought from the Charity Commissioners' Report.]	. .
Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly within the County of the City.	
7. Exhall. — Free-school (endowed for ten, and conducted jointly with a private day-school and a Church Sunday-school.)—*Viva voce testimony of the Schoolmaster.*	All the marrying people, says the old parish clerk, are weavers, Many marry very young, sometimes at the last moment. Church 20 years ago well filled; now almost emptied through dissent.
Weaving Parishes begond the County of the City.	
8. Bedworth.—National day and Sunday School.—*Viva voce testimony of the Schoolmaster.*	The total outlay on the school is about 235*l.* 16*s.* 3¼*d.* per annum.
9. Chilvers Coton.—Free-school.	. .
10. Nuneaton.—Free Grammar School. [*No return.—Charity Report, and various Evidence.*]	. .
11. Nuneaton.—Smith's Charity School.—*Return by a Trustee.*	This question is the most difficult to answer. In 1811 there was but one place of religious worship in the parish that was capable of accommodating 1,000 or 1,200 people, the population then being about 5,000. The living a Crown gift, and, on the present value, worth about 900*l.* or 1,000*l.* a-year. The Vicar is not resident. A church has been erected at Stockingford (a populous extreme of the parish) capable of holding 600 or 700. The population is now extended to 8,000, or nearly so. There are six or seven Dissenting chapels now in existence. The children of the parish have no public playground; and each place of religious worship now has a school.

II.—PUBLIC UNENDOWED DAY SCHOOLS,

1. Name and Locality of the Schools?	2. Name of the Master or Mistress?
City and Suburbs.	
1. National School for Boys and Girls, Union Street.	Thomas and Mary Band.
2. Lancasterian Boys' School, Burges.	J. S. Weatherilt has been master 11 years, but has now resigned the situation, and leaves the school at Christmas, 1838.
3. Lancasterian Girls' School, Vicar Lane.	Miss A. M. Bateman.
4. St. John's National Girls' School, Allersley New Road.	Mrs. Adams, matron.
5. Roman Catholic School, Hill Street.	Mrs. Kelly.
6. Stoke National School for Boys and Girls.	Mr. and Mrs. Woodward.
7. Well Street, Infant Day School.	John and Sarah Kinder.
8. Sherbourne House Infant Day School, Thomas Street, Butts.	Joseph Squires and his wife.
9. Gosford Street, Infant School.	Mrs. Weale assisted by Mr. Weale.
10. Far Gosford Street, Infant School.	John and Eleanor Matthews.
Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly in the County of the City.	
11. Foleshill.—National Day and Sunday School. [Return refused; information derived from the best casual sources.]	James and Jane Moore.
12. Anstey and Shilton.—National Day and Sunday School. [No return; information derived from the best casual sources.]	Mr. Fawson.
13. Sowe.—National Day and Sunday School. [No return; information from the best casual sources.]	Mr. and Mrs. D Davis.
14. Sowe.—Infant School.	Mrs. Newbold.
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.	
15. Bedworth Heath.—National Day and Sunday School.	Robert Smith, assisted by his wife, Ann Smith.
16. Collycroft.—National Day and Sunday School.	Elizabeth Shilcock, assisted by Sarah Perry.
17. Bulkington.—National Day and Sunday School.	Richard Bird.
18. Chilvers Coton. — Roman Catholic Day Night, and Sunday School.	Mr. and Mrs. Kelsey, day and night school; voluntary teachers for Sunday School.

INCLUDING INFANT SCHOOLS.

3. Names of the most efficient Supporters of the School, or of the Committee superintending its affairs?	4. Funds by which the School is Supported; the Amount; and whether by Endowment, or Voluntary Subscriptions?	5. Salary and Emoluments of the Master or Mistress, and Teachers?	6. How many Children are there on the School Books?
Rev. T. Coker Adams, Lord Lifford, and the Clergy.	Property in the school buildings; bequests and annual subscriptions.	70*l.* per annum, house rent free, and firing for ditto.	Boys, 137; girls, 112:—249.
Friends, Dissenters, and Churchmen; Committee consists of same denominations.	Voluntary subscriptions amounting to about 40*l.* per annum. Out of which 24*l.* are paid for rent and taxes of the school-room.	Salary 20*l.* per annum, and 1*d.* per week from each child. The master has house rent, &c. to pay out of it.	Present number, 104. About 3 years ago there were 360, but owing to the very bad and untenantable state of the school-room, want of school requisites, and at that time advancing of the payment of children's schooling from 1*d.* to 2*d.* per week, the number rapidly decreased and dwindled to the present amount. It is not generally known by parents that the weekly payment is now altered to its original amount of 1*d.* The Committee are now about building a new school, and bestirring themselves.
Mrs. Joseph Cash, Mrs. and the Misses Gulson, Mrs. and Miss Hennell, Mrs. and Miss Gibbon, Mrs. Cheatham, and Mrs. Tollor.	By voluntary subscription, and the pence from the children; the former averaging 27*l.*, the latter 14*l.* or 15*l.*	Salary 16*l.* and the pence from the children with the perquisite of needle-work.	80.
Rev. T. Sheepshanks, and a Committee of Ladies to visit.	An annual sermon, and by voluntary subscriptions; not endowed.	Eight shillings per week, and house rent free.	55.
Catholic Congregation of Hill Street Chapel, Rev. S. Day, clerk.	Voluntary subscriptions.	Mistress of day-school 8*s.* per week; Sunday teachers gratuitous.	About 60.
Rev. W. F. Perkins, of Sowe.	By subscriptions and church charities.	10*l.* per annum for the free or Sunday school, and what he can get by taking day scholars besides.	About 28 free and Sunday; 35 day, which pay.
Committee: Messrs. C. Bill, C. Bray, T. Dewes, J. Dickison, W. Franklin, J. Gulson, Joseph Hands, S. Hennell, J. Jerard, T. Latham, J. Sibre, and G. Tollor.	By voluntary subscriptions of 5*s.* amounting to 16*l.* annually; not endowed.	School free; firing and the weekly pence from the children.	155.
Mr. Joseph Cash; visited by his family. No Committee.	Self-supported by the children's weekly pence, except a few incidental expenses defrayed by the proprietor, Joseph Cash.	Salary derived from the children's weekly pence; average sum 44*l.* per annum, and a comfortable cottage rent free.	180.
The school was built by Thomas Newell in 1832, by whom all repairs are defrayed and taxes paid. School materials provided by Mrs. Weale.	. .	Only emolument is 2*d.* per week for the first child of a family, and 1½*d.* for the second, third, &c.	About 70.
No Committee; supporters Mr. and Mrs. Bray.	Subscription.	Children's pence, with house and school rent free.	About 70, average number during the year about 80.
Committee: Mr. George Eld, Rev. T. Coker Adams, Mr. Seale, Mr. Sodin.	There is an endowment of 18*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.* per annum, besides subscriptions, chiefly at an annual sermon, by which the school is mainly supported.	Children pay 1*d.* each per week to master and mistress, who have also 20*l.* per annum from the endowment.	
Henry Cadwallader Adams, and Rev. Thomas Coker Adams.	Day, self-supporting; Sunday, by subscription; for Sunday-school, 10*l.* per annum; day, weekly pence from Christmas; subscriptions, voluntary.	Weekly pence, house rent, and 10*l.* per annum.	45 week day-school, 80 Sunday-school.
Rev. W. F. Perkins, of Sowe.	The children pay 2*d.* each, which is received by the master.	14*s.* per week for both master and mistress, besides house rent, firing, and school free.	25.
Lady and Mr. Smith, who is a clergyman at some distance from Sowe.	Lady and Mr. Smith pay the whole of the expenses.	25*l.* per annum, house, large garden, coals, &c., besides all school requisites.	57.
Governors of Bedworth Charity, Mrs. Newdigate of Arbury Hall, on account of Astley children attending the school. The rest of the funds arise from sermons.	The amount of funds vary, and are derived as before stated.	The master has had 3*d.* per week for each child, and 2*l.* 12*s.* per annum for Sunday teaching.	79, including 23 that attend on Sundays.
The Governors of the Bedworth Charity.	Partly by a sum of money given by the Governors of the Bedworth Charity, the rest supplied by sermons.	7*s.* a-week to the mistress, 3*s.* a-week to the teacher.	94.
The Minister and the principal inhabitants.	Considerably in arrears by expenses incurred by enlarging the school on account of the increase of children, and the purchasing of extra books; by voluntary subscriptions.	10*l.* per annum, besides pence of all, except 12 free scholars.	275.
Depends mainly for support on my own resources (those of the Pastor). None.	In part, by payment of the day and night schools; by voluntary subscriptions, and by my own resources; no endowment.	At the rate of 31*l.* 10*s.* per annum for the day-school, with the proceeds of the night-school in addition	42 in the day-school; 61 in the Sunday-school; from 2 or 3 to a score in the night-school; varies according to the season.

II.—PUBLIC UNENDOWED DAY SCHOOLS.

Name and Locality of the Schools?	7. How many generally attend?						8. What are the leading features of the System of Education adopted? Are the Plans of Bell, Lancaster, or others, followed in the School?	9. Enumerate what is Taught?
	Boys.		Girls.		Age and Sex undistinguished by the Teachers making the returns.	Total of Children.		
	Above 7.	Under 7.	Above 7.	Under 7.				
City and Suburbs.								
1. National School for Boys and Girls, Union Street.	67	70	52	60	..	249	National, or Bell's.	Reading, writing, and arithmetic, and needlework to the girls.
2. Lancasterian Boys' School, Burges.	..	..	..	..	75	75	Lancasterian, or British system.	Reading, writing, and arithmetic, or any other branch of education they may be fit to acquire.
3. Lancasterian Girls' School, Vicar Lane.	..	..	..	..	50	50	Lancaster's plan.	Reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, sewing, marking, and knitting.
4. St. John's National Girls' School, Allersley New Road.	..	..	40	15	..	55	National, or Bell's.	Reading, writing, arithmetic, and needlework.
5. Roman Catholic School, Hill Street.	16	14	10	20	..	60	" "	Reading, writing, and needlework.
6. Stoke National School for Boys and Girls.	..	..	..	..	50	50	Bell's, or National.	Reading, writing, and arithmetic; girls, likewise, sewing.
7. Well Street, Infant Day School.	20	50	18	40	..	128	Collective; by dictation and interrogation, while in the gallery, and monitorial, while reading. An imitation of Wilderspin's.	Rudiments of arithmetic, geometry, numeration, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, pence table, weights and measures table, writing, lessons on objects, &c.
8. Sherbourne House, Infant Day School, Thomas Street, Butts.	20	50	10	40	..	120	The infant-school system is generally adopted; the Lancasterian is used in teaching to read.	Reading, spelling, tables, natural history, Scripture lessons, the elements of geography, grammar, and geography.
9. Gosford Street, Infant School.	..	..	..	..	70	70	Brown and Bilby's.	" "
10. Far Gosford Street, Infant School.	20	30	10	20	..	80	Wilderspin's plan.	Reading, writing, mental arithmetic, geometry, and verbal instruction, according to Wilderspin's plan.
Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly in the County of the City.								
11. Foleshill.—National Day and Sunday School. [Return refused; information derived from the best casual sources.]	..	..	..	..	103*	103*	National.	Reading, writing, and arithmetic: the girls, likewise, sewing.
12. Ansley and Shilton.—National Day and Sunday School. [No return; information derived from the best casual sources.]	..	..	..	..	35	35	National, or Bell's.	Day, as above; Sunday, reading and spelling.
13. Sowe.—National Day and Sunday School. [No return; information from the best casual sources.]	..	..	10	15	..	25	Dr. Bell's	Reading, writing, arithmetic, and sewing.
14. Sowe.—Infant School.	..	..	..	..	50	50	Infant.	Reading, tables, spelling, knitting, and sewing.
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.								
15. Bedworth Heath.—National Day and Sunday School.	22	14	12	8	..	56	No particular system adopted beyond that of classing.	Reading, writing, and the first rudiments of arithmetic.
16. Collycroft.—National Day and Sunday School.	..	..	..	..	79	79	The children are so very young that no particular system has been adopted.	Reading, plain sewing, and knitting.
17. Bulkington.—National Day and Sunday School.	..	..	..	..	175	Avrge. 175	" "	Reading, spelling, &c.
18. Chilvers Coton.—Roman Catholic Day, Night, and Sunday School.	..	..	..	..	50	About 50	At present, being in its infancy, no particular system is followed.	Reading, writing, arithmetic, needlework, and grammar.
	165	228	162	218	737	1510		

* Number in 1837, as by District Report.

INCLUDING INFANT SCHOOLS.

10. Enumerate the Books and Lessons used in the School?	11. What Maps, Globes, or other Implements of Instruction?	12. How many Hours are devoted to each Subject, Daily or Weekly?	13. What Rewards are given? Is Emulation encouraged?
The National Society's school-books.	None.	According to Dr. Bell's division of time.	Books published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, clothes, &c. Yes.
Scripture Extracts, &c., the same as used by the British and Foreign School Society.	Same as used by the British and Foreign School Society.	Six hours daily, alternately.	Moral and religious books, principally the latter.
Scripture lessons.	None.	About six hours daily.	Frocks.
Bible, Testament, Prayer Book, and Easy Lessons.	None, except slates and writing books.	Morning, reading and spelling two hours, needle-work one hour.	Small books.
"	"	"	"
Those published by the Society and the Sunday-School Union. 1st, 2d, and 3rd class books.	"	"	Articles of clothing, and books.
Alphabets, elementary lessons in reading and spelling, lessons on objects, sacred natural history.	No maps or globes; geometrical and transparent frames, slates, &c.	One hour each morning to reading, three-quarters of an hour to physical exercise, and play; the remainder to the previously-named subjects; and so in the afternoon.	None.
Sunday School Union reading, spelling, and grammar books; Trimmer's Abridgement of the Scriptures; Pinnock's Geography and Infant-School Lessons.	Maps of England, Europe, and the hemispheres; frames with balls; box of miscellaneous objects; and large black board.	Reading one hour, tables and mental arithmetic one hour, spelling 20 minutes, Scripture lessons and natural history each half an hour; elder children write half an hour; all these lessons daily; grammar, geography and geometry about two hours in the week.	Occasionally a few small books, and an annual treat at the examination. Emulation is encouraged principally by commendation from the master, which the children greatly value.
Lesson-boards from the Infant School Depositaries.	None.	About five hours and a half daily.	None.
Scripture and Natural History Lessons, "Mayo's Lessons on Objects," Geography, for the use of Infant-Schools, and the pictures, boards, &c., peculiar to the Wilderspin System.	"	Read two hours, play one hour, gallery lessons three hours daily.	No rewards given.
"	"	"	"
Bibles and Testaments, Prayer Book and catechisms, besides elementary lessons.	"	Day, three hours morning, and three hours afternoon, about equally divided.	Books published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.
Those published by the society.	None.	According to Dr. Bell's division of time.	Small gifts of books.
Generally on cards; Scripture and Easy Reading Lessons.	None.	Six per day for the whole summer, five in winter.	"
Books from the stores of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.	None.	Three hours morning to spelling, reading, and arithmetic; afternoon, reading, writing, and catechism.	Books. Yes.
From the stores of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.	The needle, and the knitting-pins.	The boys are employed the whole of the day in reading and spelling; the girls are employed some part of the day in sewing, &c.	Books. Yes.
Bible and Testament, Parables, and other religious publications, published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.	None.	"	Religious books. Yes.
At present "Catholic school books," Dr. England's Rudiments, &c.; the Universal Reader, Gahan's Abridgement of the Old and New Testament.	Neither maps nor globes at present.	In the day-school six hours are devoted to the subjects generally; and from two to three hours in the Sunday-schools to reading and religious instruction.	Books, and occasional "school feasts."

1. Name and Locality of the School?	14. What Punishments? Is Corporeal Punishment employed, or Punishment by Tasks, &c.? Is Punishment inflicted for non-performance of Tasks?	15. What Improvements have been recently introduced?	16. What Improvements are considered as highly desirable?
City and Suburbs.			
1. National School for Boys and Girls, Union Street.	Tap on the hand, &c. occasionally; no, not generally.	Circulating system.	. .
2. Lancasterian Boys' School, Burges.	Both; detained after others are dismissed.	None, the funds have been too low to supply necessaries, or school requisites, &c.	A new school-room, an entire new set of books, lessons, and all other school requisites.
3. Lancasterian Girls' School, Vicar Lane.	Punishment by tasks.	None.	None in particular.
4. St. John's National Girls' School, Allersley New Road.	A tap on the hand or so; kept sometimes.	None.	Cannot tell.
5. Roman Catholic School, Hill Street.	Sometimes corporal punishments; sometimes by task.	. .	. .
6. Stoke National School for Boys and Girls.	Yes; yes, sometimes.	Circulating system in the classes.	. .
7. Well Street Infant Day School.	Various; by tasks and keeping overtime, depriving them of privileges, and sometimes corporal punishment.	Not of any account. I find that reading lessons backwards as well as forward is advantageous.	Greater encouragement held out to teachers. The lessons and method of teaching being rendered more natural, simple, pleasing, and attractive.
8. Sherbourne House, Infant Day School, Thomas Street, Butts.	The *only* punishments used are a slap on the hand, or standing within a circle chalked on the floor, and keeping them in during play-time for non-performance of tasks.	No improvements very recently.	No improvements are contemplated; but any suggestions will be valued.
9. Gosford Street, Infant School.	Corporeal, but as little and light as possible.	. .	. .
10. Far Gosford Street, Infant School.	Corporeal punishment very seldom inflicted; for non-performance, no punishment.	Improvements are frequently introduced.	. .
Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly within the County of the City.			
11. Foleshill.—National Day and Sunday School. [Return refused; information derived from the best casual sources.]	. .	. .	. .
12. Anstey and Shilton.—National Day and Sunday School. [No return; information derived from the best casual sources.]	Sometimes corporeal and at others confinement, and kept after school hours. Yes. Keep them until tasks are said.	. .	To admit children at half the present charge, or have a *free school*.
13. Sowe.—National Day and Sunday School. [No return; information from the best casual sources.]	According to circumstances.	. .	. .
14. Sowe.—Infant School.	Trifling ones.	. .	. .
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.			
15. Bedworth Heath.—National Day and Sunday School.	The rod; Proverbs, 13—24; 10—13, &c.; 23—13; tasks; kept in the school.	None.	A new and enlarged school-room; better means for regulating the conduct of parents in checking drunkenness and blasphemy.
16. Collycroft.—National Day and Sunday School.	The schoolmistress keeps a long stick which is more used to frighten than to punish.	None.	A new and enlarged school-room.
17. Bulkington.—National Day and Sunday School.	. .	. .	. .
18. Chilvers Coton.—Roman Catholic Day, Night, and Sunday School.	All punishment is as much as possible avoided; corporeal punishment is never inflicted.	. .	

INCLUDING INFANT SCHOOLS.

17. Is there a School Library? What Books are most used by the Children?	18. Is there a Play-ground attached to the School? State the size of it?	19. Upon the average, how long does a Child remain at School?	20. Do any of the Children leave the School before they can Read fluently or Write? If so, what number?
No.	About 20 yards square, each.	Uncertain.	Sometimes; the number uncertain.
No; scripture books, extracts, and lessons the same.	Yes, 80 feet by 30.	About 2 years.	Yes, to go to work, &c.
No; scripture lessons.	No.	About 3 years.	Some do; cannot say.
No.	No.	Uncertain; from 2 to 3 years generally.	Very few indeed.
Catholic books generally used.	No.	. .	. .
No.	12 yards by 7, or thereabouts.	From 1 to 4 years.	Yes, some.
No.	Yes, 15 yards by 9.	Uncertain, from 1 month to 5 years.	Yes, being so very young; the great majority.
There is a school library, consisting of a variety of books, provided by the proprietor; the amusing ones are read most.	There is a play-ground attached to the school, which measures 18 yards by 17.	The time is uncertain. Children often leave from their parents removing, or getting work for them; 30 now in the school have been there from the time of its opening in August 1835.	From the above causes by far the greater number of children leave before they can either read or write.
None.	36 feet by 27.	Uncertain.	. .
No.	12 yards by 8.	Uncertain.	Children do leave the school before they can read fluently.
. . .	. . .	. .	. .
No.	No.	About 4 years.	Very few.
No.	Yes, about 20 feet by 16.	Uncertain.	Some have.
. . .	The garden, which will be fenced out and bricked, about 12 yards square.	Not been long established.	Yes, instances have taken place.
No.	The whole heath.	The school has only been in existence 2 years.	Not one has left, but some have been turned out for misconduct and irregular attendance.
No; New Testament and moral and religious tracts.	No; but there is a wide and not much frequented lane.	The school has only been in existence a year and a half.	2 or 3 of the children have left to go to the neighbouring factory, *silk throwing*.
. .	No.	5 years.	. .
No school library.	At present none.	. .	. .

1. Name and Locality of the Schools?	21. Is any Religious Instruction given? If so, of what kind? Name, if Catechisms are taught?	22. Do any of the Children attend any Sunday School? What? And in what Number?	23. Are any Inquiries made respecting the Moral Character or Success in after-life of Children who have left the School? With what result?
City and Suburbs.			
1. National School for Boys and Girls, Union Street.	Yes; the doctrines taught by the Established Church; Church of England Catechism.	Children attend on the Sabbath.	Yes; favourable.
2. Lancasterian Boys' School, Burges.	No catechism used. The books and lessons consist of Scripture extracts, &c. the same as used by the British and Foreign School Society.	Attend church and the different Dissenting Sunday-schools; nearly proportionate.	Many have become very respectable members of society, and several are now Dissenting Ministers.
3. Lancasterian Girls' School, Vicar Lane.	Scripture lessons; no catechisms.	The greatest number attend Sunday-schools, only 4 or 5 exceptions.	• •
4. St. John's National Girls' School, Allersley New Road.	Scriptural instruction according to the Church of England.	The children, the same school on the Sabbath; a standing rule.	No.
5. Roman Catholic School, Hill Street.	Catholic Catechism taught.	Children generally attend on Sunday to the number of about 60.	• •
6. Stoke National School for Boys and Girls.	Yes; the Articles, and Creed, called the Apostles', and Church Catechism.	The Free or National children attend on the Sabbath as a condition of their attendance during the week.	• •
7. Well Street, Infant Day School.	Yes, of a general nature. No catechisms are used.	Four attend the Church Sunday-school; two Roman Catholics; twenty different dissenting Sunday-schools.	Occasionally; both pleasing and painful.
8. Sherbourne House, Infant Day School, Thomas Street, Butts.	The religious instruction is principally from the Scriptures, and the Sunday-school Union reading-books. No catechisms are taught.	All the elder children attend the different Sunday-schools of Churchmen and Dissenters.	The school has been opened too short a time to admit of such inquiry; but children who are removed into other schools, have been commended for their orderly conduct.
9. Gosford Street, Infant School.	• •	About three-fourths of the children attend Sunday-school.	They go generally to other schools.
10. Far Gosford Street, Infant School.	Moral instruction given; no catechism taught.	The children attend various Sabbath-schools.	Inquiries after leaving the school are made; results various.
Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly in the County of the City.			
11. Foleshill.—National Day and Sunday School. [Return refused; information derived from the best casual sources.]	• •	Also a Sunday-school; about one-third more on Sunday. Mr. Holmes, an undertaker, in his evidence, says, that the rule to exclude from the National all who did not go the Sunday-school was enforced; himself and others protested; and, after some difficulty, it was rescinded; but Dissenters' children, *for not going*, are fined 1*d.* per week in addition to what all regularly pay, viz. 1*d.*	• •
12. Anstey and Shilton.—National Day and Sunday School. [No return; information derived from the best casual sources.]	Yes, in accordance with the doctrines of the Church of England.	Yes, Church school.	Yes, generally pleasing.
13. Sowe.—National Day and Sunday School. [No return; information from the best casual sources.]	Yes, in accordance with the national system.	They come on the Sabbath.	Not at present.
14. Sowe.—Infant School.	Yes, Church Catechism.	• •	• •
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.			
15. Bedworth Heath.—National Day and Sunday School.	Yes, and strictly in accordance with the Church principles.	The day-scholars, according to a rule, attend the Sunday-school; but there are children who attend the Sunday-school only.	Vid. previous answer, which meets this as far as their success in after life goes; but a book in which their moral character at home was noted, has been kept.
16. Collycroft.—National Day and Sunday School.	Yes, and that strictly in accordance with the Church principles.	All the children attend the Sunday-school, and a certain number attend the Sunday-school only.	• •
17. Bulkington.—National Day and Sunday School.	Church Catechism and Lewis' Broken Church Catechism, published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.	The whole regularly.	Yes, good.
18. Chilvers Coton.—Roman Catholic Day, Night, and Sunday School.	None in the day-school, unless expressly required by the parents; and then catechetical instructions are given from the "Abridgment of Catholic Doctrine," and "Douay Catechism."	About one-half attend the Catholic Sunday-school; of the remaining half some attend the Methodist Sunday-school; but most of them attend none at all.	• •

INCLUDING INFANT SCHOOLS.

24. Do the parents belong to the Church of England? Or are any of them Dissenters? Or any Roman Catholics?	25. Do Parents, in any cases, keep their Children from the School through Religious Scruples?	26. Of what Trades, Occupations, or Professions, are the Parents generally? What is the proportion of Weavers' Children?	27. Do they manifest much anxiety to have their Children properly educated?
Generally to the Church; some few are Dissenters.	Yes, occasionally.	Various; two-thirds are weavers' children.	Parents very indifferent respecting it.
To all denominations.	Seldom or never.	Watchmakers and weavers; nearly or about half.	Not generally.
Principally Dissenters.	No.	Principally weavers.	Doubtful.
Church professedly, but thinks some are Dissenters.	Not that I know of.	Weavers, watchmakers, dyers, &c.; a majority of weavers.	They wish to have them brought on quick.
To Church of England, Dissenters and Roman Catholics.	. .	Generally weavers' children.	. .
Both; none.	Thinks not.	Weavers and labourers; weavers about two-thirds.	Yes.
Some to the Church, majority Dissenters; a few Roman Catholics.	A Roman Catholic has.	Tailors, watchmakers, boot and shoemakers, and weavers; five to one.	In book-learning, but not so in moral or physical training, or upon general subjects.
There are children of all the denominations here mentioned.	We have not heard of one instance.	Weavers, watchmakers, dyers, and day labourers; more than half are weavers' children.	The greater part are anxious to have their children educated.
No questions asked as to denominations in the admission of children; neither is it believed a question with parents of the neighbourhood.	Believed not to be a question with parents in the neighbourhood.	Major part weavers.	Too little.
This is not inquired into, as the school is open to all denominations.	No.	Trades various; majority weavers.	They desire most to have their children taught to read.
. .	. .	. .	. .
Church of England.	None whatever.	Weavers of ribbons and labourers; about equal number.	Yes, a great desire.
Chiefly Church.	Thinks not.	Weavers and labourers; about two-thirds weavers.	Believe they do.
Church principally; some are Dissenters.	Believe not.	Weavers, miners, and labourers; about half.	Yes, generally.
It is very difficult to answer this question, for the parents vary in their attendance at religious places of worship; but we may with safety say, they are not generally sound Church people; there are no Papists.	None that we know of; a Methodist preacher has his children in the school.	Almost all weavers.	The anxiety is manifested by their sending them.
The larger proportion belong to the Church of England; there are some Dissenters, and one Roman Catholic.	Certainly not.	The greatest proportion are colliers; the rest weavers.	They appear very anxious on this point, and send their children at a very early age.
Nearly all to the Church of England; none.	No.	Weavers as three to four.	. .
Some of each denomination, but chiefly Dissenters.	See answer to previous Question.	Of mixed trades and occupations, but weavers preponderate.	Yes, much.

Name and Locality of the Schools?	28. Do the Parents who send their children to the School Pay anything whatever for their Instruction? What Sums Weekly or Quarterly?	29. Are any Children kept away through the inability of their Parents to continue their Payments, or to make good their arrears?	30. Do the Children receive Gifts in Clothes or Money?
City and Suburbs.			
1. National School for Boys and Girls, Union Street.	Yes; 1*d.* per week.	Not many.	Yes; both.
2. Lancasterian Boys' School, Burges.	1*d.* each weekly.	Yes; and more so, when 2*d.* was demanded.	None.
3. Lancasterian Girls' School, Vicar Lane.	2*d.* per week.	When trade is bad; though sometimes attendance is better when trade is bad, *as the children are not employed at home.*	Frocks generally given as prizes.
4. St. John's National Girls' School, Allersley New Road.	Yes; 1*d.* per week; 1*s.* entrance.	No.	No.
5. Roman Catholic School, Hill Street.	. .	. .	No.
6. Stoke National School for Boys and Girls.	Yes; day-school from 4*d.* to 8*d.* each, weekly; free boys 2*d.* each.	Some I think have.	Occasionally.
7. Well Street, Infant Day School.	Yes, 2*d.* per week; if needle-work, &c. 3*d.* per week.	Some few are.	No.
8. Sherbourne House, Infant Day School, Thomas Street, Butts.	Generally 2*d.*, but under 18 months old 4*d.* weekly.	Many children are kept away through the inability of the parents to continue their pence, but are never refused readmission in consequence of their arrears.	No.
9. Gosford Street, Infant School.	Yes, 2*d.* per week for the first child of a family, and 1½*d.* each for the remainder.	It is believed that children in most instances are kept away for want of funds, arising from the parents' imprudences, and often thereby get into arrears and leave the school.	
10. Far Gosford Street, Infant School.	Parents pay for each child 2*d.* per week.	Yes.	No.
Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly in the County of the City.			
11. Foleshill.—National Day and Sunday School. [Return refused; information derived from the best casual sources.]			
12. Anstey and Shilton.—National Day and Sunday School. [No return; information derived from the best casual sources.]	Yes, in the day-school 4*d.*, 6*d.*, and 8*d.* per week. Not on the Sabbath.	Yes; some few.	No.
13. Sowe.—National Day and Sunday School. [No return; information from the best casual sources.]	Yes, 2*d.* each per week.	Cannot say.	Occasionally.
14. Sowe.—Infant School.	No; all is free.	No.	It is not a rule: when any appear very poor they have presents made of clothes, &c.
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.			
15. Bedworth Heath.—National Day and Sunday School.	No.	As they do not pay anything, that cannot be the case.	Each child *may* pay 1*d.* per week towards clothing. Books are occasionally given.
16. Collycroft.—National Day and Sunday School.	No.	No, as they pay nothing.	Each child is comfortably clothed; for they contribute the penny per week.
17. Bulkington.—National Day and Sunday School.	For such as attend the day-school, except 12 free scholars.	Many.	No.
18. Chilvers Coton.—Roman Catholic Day, Night, and Sunday School.	From 2*d.* to 6*d.* per week each.	Great numbers keep away through inability to pay at all.	In neither.

INCLUDING INFANT-SCHOOLS.

31. Do they wear a Uniform such as will distinguish them as Charity Boys and Girls from other Children?	32. Is there a deficiency of the means of Instruction in the Neighbourhood?	33. What is the probable proportion in the neighbourhood of Children who never go to School?	34. Are they generally in the Streets, or at Work? What kind of Work?
No.	No.	Cannot tell exactly; probably one-eighth.	Both.
None.	No; although there are many children who do not go to school at all.	Half, nearly.	Both; running errands, filling, winding, &c., for looms.
No.	Of a *good* education.	Cannot say.	
No.	I should think not.	One-fifth, perhaps.	Both.
No.			
No.	Not at this side the parish.		
No.	If there were any means to pay a master, without the children paying, another school *is* necessary.	One-third only go occasionally; one-tenth not at all.	Mostly in the streets, some nurse, others turn large winding engines, and some are "errand-boys."
No.	We think there is no deficiency of the means of education in this immediate neighbourhood.	We cannot ascertain.	Neglected children are generally in the streets; others employed in filling for the weavers.
None.	If 6,000 children, being one-fifth of 30,000, the population at Coventry at suitable years of instruction, calculations have been made that Coventry has not school-room for much above one-third of the 6000.	. .	. .
No.	For children above seven or eight no school nearer than the National and Lancasterian, a mile off.	Great number of children who never go to any school.	Many in the streets; others at work.
No.	Not on the Sabbath.	One-fifth, principally through poverty.	Young ones in the streets; elder ones work when they have it to do.
No.	No.	. .	. .
No.	. .	. .	. .
The clothing is uniform; last year one child only was not clothed in consequence of non-payment of the penny.	No.	There are scarcely any.	There are no streets.
Yes.	No.	None; but they usually leave the school at an early age to go to the factory.	This is answered in the next column.
No.	No.	. .	. .
None.	Yes, very great, for Catholics and Dissenters.	It is a general practice to send all children to school even before they can walk, not so much for the purpose of learning, as to keep them from the street, and to allow the parents an opportunity to work: four-fifths do not remain at school.	All work in brisk times of trade, in connexion with weaving and the collieries.

II.—PUBLIC UNENDOWED DAY SCHOOLS, &c.

Name and Locality of the Schools?	35. During what hours might they be spared for instruction?	36. Add any general remarks you may wish to offer?
City and Suburbs.		
1. National School for Boys and Girls, Union Street.	Young children day-time; elder after 8 at night.	. .
2. Lancasterian Boys' School, Burges.	Depends upon circumstances, their employ, &c.	Have no doubt but the school will flourish as formerly, if the Committee build and well and properly furnish the new school-room, appoint a good master, and have annual examinations of the children, &c. (Signed) J. S. Weatherilt.
3. Lancasterian Girls' School, Vicar Lane.	. .	A good and liberal system of national education is most desirable, affording stronger inducements to parents to send their children to school than any which at present exist.
4. St. John's National Girls' School, Allersley New Road.	Never made inquiries.	. .
5. Roman Catholic School, Hill Street.	. .	. .
6. Stoke National School for Boys and Girls.	. .	. .
7. Well Street, Infant Day School.	From 8 to 9 o'clock at night.	By delivering lectures, and circulating information upon education, and more frequently having public examinations, &c., the public might be aroused, and convinced of the necessity and value of a liberal education being imparted to their children. Now they are dead to, and ignorant of, its benefits generally.
8. Sherbourne House, Infant Day School, Thomas Street, Butts.	They have no spare time before 8 o'clock in the evening, and when trade is good they are frequently employed much later.	. .
9. Gosford Street, Infant School.	. .	. .
10. Far Gosford Street, Infant School.	Evenings at 8 o'clock.	The system upon which 4 out of the 5 infant schools in Coventry and its vicinity are established is worthy of remark. They are upon the self-supporting principle, (i. e.) the master and mistress receive the weekly pence and the house and school free of rent. Upon this plan a school might be established in every street for the same money that is frequently raised in many towns to support one. The school-rooms that are used by the different religious denominations are all, or at least most of them, convertible into infant schools at very little expense. C. B.
Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly in the County of the City.		
11. Foleshill.—National Day and Sunday School. [Return refused; information derived from the best casual sources.]	. .	. .
12. Anstey and Shilton.—National Day and Sunday School. [No return; information derived from the best casual sources.]	. .	. .
13. Sowe.—National Day and Sunday School. [No return; information from the best casual sources.]	Saturday afternoon and Sunday	. .
14. Sowe.—Infant School.	. .	. .
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.		
15. Bedworth Heath.—National Day and Sunday School.	. .	The only general remark to be made is, that, as this school is working well, and promises to do all that was proposed by its establishment, compulsory interference on the part of the Government would prove injurious. The questions embrace a wide field, and not only relate to the children who are receiving instruction, but also to the parents; and here it may be asserted that very frequently the good instruction given to the children at school is rendered nugatory by the blasphemous and filthy discourse, together with the drunkenness exhibited by the parents at home. Possibly the abolition of all the beer-houses, and two-thirds of the old licensed public houses, would do much to remedy the evil of drunkenness.
16. Collycroft.—National Day and Sunday School.	They work at the factory the entire day.	The only remark that need be made is, that the school is working as well as could have been expected under existing circumstances.
17. Bulkington.—National Day and Sunday School.	. .	. .
18. Chilvers Coton.—Roman Catholic Day, Night, and Sunday School.	Generally from 7 to 9 in the evening. N.B.—Those employed in factories excepted.	. .

III.—PUBLIC SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

1. Locality and Name?	2. Name of the Master or Mistress?	3. Names of the most efficient supporters of the School, and of the Committee superintending the same?	4. Funds by which the School is supported: their amount; and whether by Endowments or Voluntary Subscription?
City and Suburbs.			
1. St. Michael's Church Sunday School.	Head master, Thomas Band, for the boys; head mistress, Mrs. Band, for the girls, aided by voluntary teachers.	Churchwardens, subscribers, committee, and teachers.	Annual collection and voluntary subscriptions.
2. Holy Trinity Church Sunday School.	Managing teacher, Miss E. Steane, with 14 female voluntary teachers.	Subscribers, churchwardens, curate, and the Rev. Mr. Howells, vicar.	Annual collections and voluntary subscriptions. Amount uncertain.
3. St. John's Church Sunday School.	W. Cattle.	Rev. Thomas Sheepshanks and Joseph Bellamy.	Voluntary contributions.
4. Well Street Chapel, Independents' Sunday School.	Isaac Johnson, superintendent.	Joseph Newton, treasurer; John Phillips and others, committee.	Voluntary contributions, and an annual collection.
5. West Orchard, ditto	Voluntary teachers.	Committee consisting of 18 gentlemen.	Voluntary contributions.
6. Hill Field, ditto	About 24 voluntary teachers, male and female.	Supported by voluntary contributions, after a sermon preached for that purpose. The superintendents are Messrs. Mattocks, Dorrington, Cartwright, and Geo. Taylor.	Wholly by donations and voluntary contributions.
7. Vicar Lane, ditto	Conducted by superintendents and voluntary teachers.	The committee are Mr. Howard, Mr. Bird, Mr. Barton, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Goode, Mr. Squires, and Mr. Cavell.	The voluntary contributions of the congregation, amounting to 30*l.* or 35*l.* annually.
8. Spon End, ditto	Voluntary teachers.	Messrs. Weyman, Howard, and committee.	Annual charity sermons, about 6*l.* No endowments.
9. Radford, ditto	Conducted by a superintendent and voluntary teachers.	Mr. Cooke, Mr. Coley, Mr. Sansome, Mr. Dowell.	The funds by which the school is supported are very small (not more than 4*l.* a-year), out of which 3*l.* is paid for the rent of the house in which the school is held. They are raised annually by a collection after a sermon preached on behalf of the school.
10. Keresley, ditto	About 24 teachers.	Supported by voluntary contributions. The superintendents are Mr. Mattocks, Mr. Dowell, and Mr. Cartwright.	Altogether by voluntary contributions.
11. 12. Unitarian Sunday Schools: meet where most convenient.	Voluntary teachers.	A committee is chosen annually by the teachers; but the minister considers himself responsible for the entire management of the school.	Subscriptions made at the close of an annual sermon, amounting on an average to 20*l.*
13. Cow Lane, Baptists' Sunday School.	Gratuitous teachers.	Supported by the religious public, and managed by the teachers.	Voluntary subscriptions: amount varying from 20*l.* to 30*l.* annually.
14. Gosford Street, Wesleyan Methodists' Sunday School. 15. Warwick Lane, ditto	Voluntary teachers.	The two schools are united, and the supporters are the public. The committee are one treasurer, two secretaries, four visitors, six superintendents, and five others.	A charity sermon. The collection at the last was 8*l.* 9*s.*
16. Grove Street, Primitive Methodist Sunday School.	Voluntary teachers.	Mr. Joseph Sidwell, Mr. John Hobbins, Mr. Samuel Cooper, Mr. Thomas Bray.	Funds low. Supported by voluntary subscriptions.
17. White Friars Lane, Sunday School for all Denominations.	Joseph Clay.	Joseph Rainbow, Samuel Bradbury, Joseph Clay, Thomas Hussale, Charles Satchwell.	By voluntary subscriptions.
18. Stoke, Independent Sunday School.	Mr. Iliffe and Mr. Knight, secretary and superintendent.	Rev. J. Sibree, and committee of nine persons.	Annual charity sermons are preached, and collections made for the support of it, &c.

Locality and Name?	5. Salary and Emoluments of the Master, Mistress, or Teachers?	6. How many Children are there on the School Books?	7. How many generally attend?					
			Boys.		Girls.		Age & Sex undistinguished by the Teachers making the returns.	Total of Children.
			Above 7.	Under 7.	Above 7.	Under 7.		
City and Suburbs.								
1. St. Michael's Church Sunday School.	About 9*l.* each.	Boys 174. Girls 136.	Majority about exact number		above seven; the rest not known.		274	perhaps 274
2. Holy Trinity Church Sunday School.	Managing teacher 9*l.* per annum.	154.	..	..	100	54	..	154
3. St. John's Church Sunday School.	House free.	150.	..	..	..	..	80	80
4. Well Street Chapel, Independents' Sunday School.	All services rendered in the school are gratuitous.	135.	57	10	56	12	..	135
5. West Orchard, ditto	None.	220.	..	..	..	..	165	165
6. Hill Field, ditto	The services of the superintendents and teachers are gratuitous.	Nearly 200.	about 70	20	70	20	..	180
7. Vicar Lane, ditto	No salary.	358.	60	30	90	40	..	220
8. Spon End, ditto	None.	105.	Majority	part a	above	seven	105	105
9. Radford, ditto	There are no emoluments: the services of the teachers are given gratuitously.	41.	9	10	11	11		41
10. Keresley, ditto	Services of superintendent and teachers are gratuitous.	About 60.	..	..	..	..	60	60
11. Unitarian Sunday Schools: 12. meet where most convenient.	Their services are rendered gratuitously.	184.	62	20	70	32	..	184
13. Cow Lane, Baptists' Sunday School.	None.	About 200.	Very few		under	seven	150	150
14. Gosford Street, Wesleyan Methodists' Sunday School. 15. Warwick Lane, ditto.	None.	About 240.	..	..	..	..	about 240	about 240
16. Grove Street, Primitive Methodist Sunday School.	None.	150.	40	18	50	20	..	128
17. White Friars Lane, Sunday School for all Denominations.	Nothing.	165.	..	..	..	..	140	140
18. Stoke, Independent Sunday School.	Teachers all voluntary.	96.	..	..	..	..	70	70

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

8. What are the leading features of the system of Education adopted? Are the plans of Bell, Lancaster, and others followed in the School?	9. Enumerate what is taught?	10. Enumerate the Books and Lessons used in the School?	11. How many hours are devoted to each subject daily or weekly?
In accordance with the National system.	Reading principally.	Bible, Extracts from the same, Church Catechism, &c.	Morning, one hour and a half; afternoon, one hour.
National, or Dr. Bell's.	Church Catechism and Scripture reading.	Much the same as in the National School.	One hour and a half morning, one hour afternoon.
National.	Church Catechism, Collects, and Scripture reading.	Bible, New Testament, and Catechism of the Church of England.	Two, morning; one, afternoon.
The system of Lancaster is partially adopted.	The Holy Scriptures.	First class reading lessons, Bible, and Testament.	Three hours and a half every Sabbath.
Generally Gall's system.	. .	Assembly's Catechism, with and without Scripture proofs, and Dr. Watts's First and Second Catechism. A Map of Palestine.	Four hours each Sabbath.
. .	Watts's and Assembly's Catechisms, reading the Holy Scriptures, and James Gall's Lesson System. Writing taught on two evenings in each week.	Watts's and Assembly's Catechisms, Holy Scriptures, and James Gall's Lesson System.	About three hours on the Sabbath, and two hours in the week.
The system recommended by the Sunday-school Union in connexion with Gall's.	Reading, spelling, and catechism.	The scriptures and the works of the Sunday-school Union.	One hour to each subject weekly.
Gall's, and the Lancasterian.	Reading the Scriptures, and moral duties and obligations.	First, Second, and Third Class Books, published by the Sunday-school Union, London; Bible and Testaments, besides Catechisms.	Depends upon circumstances.
Gall's system is adopted for the upper classes—Lancasterian for the lower.	Reading, not only the letter of Word, but the Spirit also. Writing is not taught; because the the teachers being dependent upon their labour for subsistence, and all of them coming from Coventry, could not, without abridging those labours, and consequently their income (which is now far too small), go over on the *week-day night* to teach it.	The Old and New Testaments, and the Class Books printed by the Sunday-school Union.	One hour and a half is devoted to reading, interrogating, &c., and half an hour for an address suited to the capabilities of the children (given by superintendents), and closes with singing and prayer in the morning, and in the same manner in the afternoon.
. .	Watts's and Assembly's Catechisms, Holy Scriptures, and James Gall's Lesson System; also writing.	Watts's and Assembly's Catechisms, Holy Scriptures, and James Gall's Lesson System.	About three hours on the Sabbath.
The system of instruction is mixed.	Reading, writing, and arithmetic.	Amongst others we use the Edinburgh Sessional Books.	From 9—12 A. M.; 2—4 P. M., on the Sunday
Religious. They are not.	Reading, spelling, and the knowledge of the Scriptures.	The Scriptures and Class Books, containing extracts from the Scriptures.	Four hours on the Sabbath, and one hour in the week for writing.
. .	Reading and spelling.	The Old and New Testament.	Four on the Sunday.
Gall's system of education.	Schripture reading and spelling.	Scripture reading.	Two hours in the morning, and one hour and a half in the afternoon.
Gaul's Lesson System.	The Christian religion.	One, two, three, and four lessons; and the Scriptures.	Two.
Gall's, or Lesson System.	Reading, spelling, and religious instruction on the Sabbath; writing on two week nights.	Bible, Testaments, Sunday-school publications, &c.	Four on the Sabbath, one and a half on week nights.

Name and Locality of the Schools?	12. What Rewards are given? Is Emulation encouraged?	13. What Punishment? Is Corporeal Punishment employed, or Punishment by Tasks? and is Punishment inflicted for non-performance of Tasks?	14. What Improvements have been recently introduced?
City and Suburbs.			
1. St. Michael's Church Sunday School.	Pence, and small books.	Very lenient.	None.
2. Holy Trinity Church Sunday School.	Pence and books. Yes.	Placed on the form, and talked with. No. No.	None, particular.
3. St. John's Church Sunday School.	One halfpenny reward books. By the reward books.	Detained after school hours a short time.	Not particularly.
4. Well Street Chapel, Independents' Sunday School.	Small books are liberally given.	Corporeal punishments are avoided; efforts are used to rule the children by kindness.	. .
5. West Orchard, ditto	Books; not to any great extent.	Very little punishment; not by tasks.	Continue the old Sunday-school system.
6. Hill Field, ditto	Books are given as rewards.	Corporeal punishment is not allowed; only reproof.	. .
7. Vicar Lane, ditto	Tickets and small books.	No corporeal punishment; punished by witholding the accustomed rewards.	Gall's Lesson System.
8. Spon End, ditto	Small reward books. Yes, by the rewards and promotion.	Sometimes; generally talked with, and kept.	Lesson System.
9. Radford, ditto	Tickets; and these are exchanged for books. Yes.	No; except in extreme cases.	The Lesson Systems, by Gall, have been introduced, and the old method done away.
10. Keresley, ditto	Books are given as rewards.	Only reproof.	. .
11. 12. Unitarian Sunday Schools: meet where most convenient.	We give tickets, which have a certain value, and, in return for which, we give books.	No corporeal punishment; as little as possible by tasks; I think none. We refuse to take their money for a week, in case of late attendance; for other offences I speak to them; if we cannot do anything with them we exclude them.	. .
13. Cow Lane, Baptists' Sunday School.	Books. Yes.	Nothing more than serious reproof.	Nothing important.
14. Gosford Street, Wesleyan Methodists' Sunday School. 15. Warwick Lane ditto.	By rewards for attendance.	None.	None.
16. Grove Street, Primitive Methodist Sunday School.	Small books.	No punishment.	None, particular.
17. White Friars' Lane, Sunday School for all Denominations.	Books; yes.	Good advice, and kind reproof.	The Lesson System.
18. Stoke Independent Sunday School.	Books.	Very seldom; kept and tasked.	. .

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

15. What Improvements are considered as highly desirable?	16. Is there a School Library? What Books are most used by the Children?	17. Upon the average, how long does a Child remain at the School?	18. Do any of the Children leave the School before they can Read fluently? If so, what number?
Cannot say.	No.	Uncertain.	. .
Do not know of any.	No.	Uncertain.	Yes, some few.
Not engaged the attention of teachers, &c.	No.	Uncertain.	Some few do.
. .	No.	About four years.	Some leave to go into charity-schools, where they are clothed as well as taught, and some to be apprenticed; the number of both is comparatively small.
. .	Yes; biography.	About seven years.	We have many leave the school before they have obtained the ability to read well.
. .	Yes; books published by the London Religious Tract Society, mostly.	Various; some ten years.	Most can read well, and many write well.
The daily instruction of the children.	Yes; chiefly the memoirs of eminently pious individuals.	From four to five years.	A great many, perhaps half; but few can write.
Teachers better qualified.	. .	. .	Yes; some are moved to other schools.
. .	There are a few books lent to the children to read, which, while they amuse and entertain, at the same time impart religious knowledge.	Five years.	It is a case that rarely occurs, unless the capabilities of the child be very limited indeed, or the time he has been in the school a very short one.
. .	No.	Many eight and ten years,	Most can read well, and some few write well.
. .	Yes; it is composed principally of moral and sectarian tracts, which are much read; some works of biography and natural history.	I cannot calculate an average, but the time depends on the necessities of the parents, who will generally sacrifice their education to obtain the services of their children.	Many; the parents think they confer a favour on the conductors of the school to which they send their children, and hence often remove them, from caprice, from disappointed expectations of charity, &c.
. .	Yes; the publications of the Religious Tract Society, principally.	Five years.	Yes. Few.
. .	Yes; for children and teachers.	Eight or nine.	None.
. .	There is no library to the school.	Six or seven years.	Yes, some; I know not how many.
More piety, perminent teachers, and a new school-room.	No.	Six or severn years.	No.
On week days there wants a school quite free from doctrines and payments.	Yes.	From one to six and even seven years.	A few.

Locality and Name.	19. Is any Religious Instruction given? If so, of what kind? Name if Catechisms are taught?	20. Are any inquiries made respecting the Moral Character or Success in after life, of Children who have left the School? With what success?	21. Do the Parents belong to the Church of England, or are any of them Dsisenters, or any Roman Catholics?
City and Suburbs.			
1. St. Michael's Church Sunday School.	Yes, according to the articles of the Church.	Not generally.	Mostly to the church; some few are Dissenters.
2. Holy Trinity Church Sunday School.	Yes, in accordance with the doctrines of the Church of England.	. .	Generally. No Roman Catholic
3. St. John's Church Sunday School.	An address is given, Church *Catecusms* are taught.	Yes; pleasing.	Generally, but not exclusively to the church; some are Dissenters.
4. Well Street Chapel, Independents' Sunday School.	Dr. Watts' Catechism and that of the Assembly of Divines.	Some become teachers; others give proof, by their conduct, of having been benefited by instruction.	The parents are of various denominations. No respect to persuasion in religion is exercised in receiving children into the school
5. West Orchard, ditto	Assembly's Catechism, with and without Scripture proofs, and Dr. Watts' 1st and 2nd Catechisms.	The moral character of the children who have left the school is considered favourably off.	Various denominations.
6. Hill Field, ditto	Watts and Assembly's Catechisms, reading the Holy Scriptures, and Jas. Gall's Lesson System.	Yes; results generally good.	Most are Dissenters.
7. Vicar Lane, ditto	Chiefly evangelical, from the Scriptures, and the Catechisms of Watts, the Assembly's, and Gall's.	Yes, by the teachers; frequently of a pleasing, and sometimes of a painful nature.	Principally Dissenters.
8. Spon End, ditto	Yes, principally of a religious nature.	Yes; some are encouraging, others are painful.	Generally Dissenters.
9. Radford, ditto	Yes; religious instruction is considered of paramount importance. The important truths of Scripture, free from all bigotry, superstition, or sectarianism, and we hope everything else that would act prejudicially to their welfare. The catechisms used are Watts' and Milk for Babes.	An anxious and watchful eye is kept upon them by their teachers; some have become immoral, whilst others have become both moral and useful members of society. It is a fact, that many who are vitiated and immoral characters, would never have been such had they been properly educated.	The majority of those who pay any regard to religion are Dissenters; very few belong to the Church of England; we do not know of one in the village that is a Roman Catholic.
10. Keresley, ditto	Watts' and Assembly's Catechisms, Holy Scriptures, and Jas. Gall's Lesson System.	Yes; mostly good.	Most are Dissenters.
11. } Unitarian Sunday Schools: 12. } meet where most convenient.	The Bible is read in the elder class; in the junior classes selections from the moral portions of it.	We act upon no system of making inquiries; personally, however, I know very many who are now performing their duties respectably in life as domestic servants, weavers, &c. I find a marked difference in the characters of those who have attended our Sunday schools and those who have not, in favour of the former.	We have, I believe, the children of parents of every mode of faith in our schools, though I make no inquiries into the subject, lest it might appear like a violation of that Catholic spirit which I wish to diffuse.
13. Cow Lane, Baptists' Sunday School.	Reading, spelling, and the knowledge of the Scriptures.	Yes; various.	We make no inquiries.
14. Gosford Street, Wesleyan Methodists' Sunday School.	Nothing but religious instruction given; and the catechisms Wesleyan.	. .	Some of each; but few, if any, Catholics.
15. Warwick Lane, ditto			
16. Grove Street, Primitive Methodist Sunday School.	Reading of the Scriptures; catechisms are taught.	Yes; and the result as been that some have become eminent for piety.	Most of them are Dissenters.
17. White Friars Lane, Sunday School for all Denominations.	General principles of the Christian religion.	Yes; some has been very Encouradging; others has been to the contrary.	Of all denominations.
18. Stoke Independent Sunday School.	Yes, Initiary; Watts, and Assembly's Catechisms.	Yes; and a select class meet on Sabbath evenings of those who have left the school.	Principally Dissenters.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

22. Of what trades, occupations, or professions are the Parents generally? What is the proportion of Weavers' Children?	23. Do they manifest much anxiety to have their Children properly educated?	24. Are any Children kept away through the inability of their Parents to continue their payments, or to make good their arrears?	25. Do the Children receive Gifts in Clothes or Money?
Variety of trades; mostly weavers.	. .	. .	Yes. By paying one penny per week during the year, they have half the amount added to it at the year's end.
Very many; equal to all the rest.	Some do, others do not.	. .	Yes. By depositing a penny per week throughout the year, they have half the amount added to it, to furnish them with useful and necessary articles of clothing.
Generally dyers and watchmakers; minority weavers.	Appear interested in their children's education.	. .	A few reward books.
Various occupations; chiefly engaged in the ribbon weaving.	Some are much concerned, others indifferent.	. .	No.
One-third of the parents are weavers, one-sixth watchmakers.	It is to be desired that a greater anxiety could be felt.	. .	None
Ribbon-weavers; very few others.	Yes.	Often are kept away for want of proper clothing; parents very poor.	None.
Weavers, watchmakers, &c.; one-half.	Yes; but have not the means.	No; but frequently kept from school for want of clothing.	No.
Principally weavers and watchmakers; about equally divided.	Too careless.	. .	No; small reward books are given.
Two-thirds of them are weavers, the remaining part agricultural labourers.	Yes, it is a feeling that greatly prevails. It is a source of trouble to many that their children cannot be properly educated.	No; but some are kept away (especially in winter) because their parents cannot provide them with decent clothes to come in.	The funds are too small to allow of either.
Farmers' labourers.	Yes.	Often kept away for want of clothing.	None.
Weavers, watchmakers, shoemakers, &c. The proportion of weavers' children is three-fourths in the boys' school, two-fourths in girls' school.	If I judged from the number of applicants, I should say yes; if by the causes assigned for their removal, I should say no.	Many are kept away from want of proper clothing, many to give their assistance to their parents.	We distribute hats, caps, and shawls at Christmas, but always require that the children pay a certain proportion. The children bring each a penny weekly, which accumulates till Christmas, when we return it with interest; it teaches them prudence, and is of direct advantage to them in the winter.
Principally weavers.	Some do; but the majority are indifferent.	No.	Occasionally in clothes, and annually in books.
Weavers, five to one.	Yes.	None.	Only trifling rewards in books.
Weavers generally.	Yes, some do.	No; they are not.	No, they do not.
Weavers, three-fourths.	Yes	No.	No.
Weavers, labourers, and gardeners;—weavers two-thirds.	Generally.	No.	No.

1. Locality and Name.	26. Is there a deficiency of the means of Instruction in the Neighbourhood?	27. What is the probable proportion in the Neighbourhood of Children who never go to School?	28. Are they generally in the Streets or where?
Sunday Schools.			
1. St. Michael's Church Sunday School.	Thinks not.	. .	. .
2. Holy Trinity Church Sunday School.	I should say there is not.	Cannot say.	. .
3. St. John's Church Sunday School.	Think not.	Probable number, one-fifth do not go to any school.	Part in the streets and part at work.
4. Well Street Chapel, Independents' Sunday School.	There is certainly room for further benevolent exertion.	. .	. .
5. West Orchard, ditto	Considered not.	. .	. .
6. Hill Field, ditto	Yes, very many.	Cannot say.	. .
7. Vicar Lane, ditto	Yes.	One-half under 8 years of age, above that age few are able to attend other than Sunday-schools, One-seventh.	The great majority at work in various departments of the silk trade. Generally so, some nurse.
8. Spon End, ditto	Yes; on the week-days especially.		
9. Radford, ditto	Yes; there is no other means either of moral or religious instruction in the village.	Three-fourths who never attend a day-school.	There are very, very few who roam about the streets; they are put to work through the poverty of their parents sooner than they ought, before they have sufficient physical strength, at filling shute, nursing, &c.
10. Keresley, ditto	Yes, very great.	. .	. .
11. Unitarian Sunday Schools: 12. meet where most convenient.	Very great.	I cannot tell, but certainly very great; the mass of ignorance and consequently of petty crime is appalling.	Not in the streets. The poverty of the parents make the services almost of an infant valuable.
13. Cow Lane, Baptists' Sunday School.	We are not prepared to answer this question.	We cannot tell.	. .
14. Gosford Street, Wesleyan Methodists' Sunday School.	Yes.	The neighbourhood has been canvassed, and all that will attend do.	. .
15. Warwick Lane, ditto			
16. Grove Street, Primitive Methodist Sunday School.	There is.	A great number.	At work, generally weaving.
17. White Friar's Lane, Sunday School for all Denominations.	No.	One-fourth.	In the street on the Sabbath.
18. Stoke, Independent Sunday School.	. .	. .	. .

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

29. During what Hours might they be spared for Instruction?	30. Add any general Remarks you may wish to offer.
After giving over work, but too weary to attend to it.	
	(Signed) Isaac Johnson, Superintendent.
	(Signed) Thomas Hennell, Secretary.
	The building, which was erected about 2 years since, is vested in 13 Trustees, viz.—Henry Chetham, William Freeman Taylor, John Newell, Richard Dewes, Isaac Steane, Thomas Hennell, George Taylor, Henry Dewes, Joseph Mattocks, David Dowell, Samuel Wall, John Shortley, and Joseph Cartwright. A debt remains of 200*l.* which the Trustees would feel happy to be assisted to remove. (Signed) W. F. Taylor.
Occupied from 8 till 8.	It is the opinion of the friends of the school that a general system of education is highly necessary and desirable for the benefit of the working classes.
Evening.	Parents do not value education, nay, many of them think they are doing a kindness to teachers and managers by sending their children to the school. (Signed) Kinder and Howard.
Under the present system they work from 6 in the morning till 8 or 9 in the evening, in the summer, and in the winter from daylight till 9 or 10 at night; so that without ameliorating their condition by abridging their hours of labour, &c. &c. they cannot be spared at all.	I shall add but two or three remarks. This school is situated in a neighbourhood, the population of which is greatly increasing, and as I have before remarked there is no means of moral or religious instruction except till the last few weeks. The Wesleyan Methodists have borrowed the room in which the school is kept (which we have granted) for preaching on the Sunday evenings. We are much crippled in our exertions for the want of funds, having to pay 3*l.* a-year for the rent of the place in which the school is kept (not having a proper built school-room); and the collection never exceeding 4*l.*, we have very little left for the purchase of books and other incidental expenses of the school, very little to give to the children in rewards for their diligence, improvement, and good behaviour, and none for gifts either in clothes or money. We are too poor to purchase a library; having, as I have said before, only a few books to lend to the children. It is high time that some salutary measures were devised for the amelioration of the moral condition of the working classes—for recovering these most industrious though degraded classes of society from that state of moral degradation into which they have been plunged by the iron hand of tyranny and oppression; but the time will come, for He whose power controls all worlds declares that the arm of the oppressor shall be broken. (Signed) W. Cooke, Superintendent.
	The building is vested in Trustees; a debt of 100*l.* remains, which the Trustees would feel happy to be assisted to remove. (Signed) Joseph Mattocks.
Any hours would be equally convenient, for nothing but the poverty or the selfishness of the parent demands the time of the child.	Our Sunday-schools do some good, but they are nothing like adequate to the wants of the people. The education given there is necessarily imperfect from want of time, and that is as imperfectly conveyed from the fact of our depending on the gratuitous services of the teachers, who are principally from the humbler ranks, and to whom the office attaches some little importance. This evil attaches to every Sunday-school with which I am acquainted. The impressions, too, which are made on the Sunday are effaced during the week amidst the ignorance and the immorality of their parents. I think nothing will meet the necessities of the people but a comprehensive system of national education. Private benevolence does much, but it is without system, and often introduces an exclusive or sectarian spirit, which, by the moral ills it inflicts, more than counterbalances the intellectual advantages it confers. Private benevolence, too, can never meet, because it seldom knows, the real necessities of the people. The present state of things is very discouraging, yet there are materials enough in existence for the formation of a system of national education if our enlightened government would but undertake the task. (Signed) Henry Wreford, Presbyterian Minister.
	(Signed) Edward Franklin, Henry Newsome, Richard Watson, John Hine, Superintendents.
From 8 till 9 at night.	
From 9 o'clock in the morning till 4 in the afternoon.	

1. Locality and Name ?	2. Name of the Master or Mistress ?	3. Names of the most efficient supporters of the School, and of the Committee superintending its affairs ?	4. State the Funds by which the School is supported; the amount, and whether by Endowments or Voluntary Subscriptions ?
Rest of the Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly in the County of the City.			
Foleshill Parish.			
19. Red House Lane, Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School.	Fourteen voluntary teachers.	Thomas Quiney, William Lowe, Thomas Rowney, George Gazey.	Annual collection amounting to about 6*l.*, out of which 4*l.* is paid for the room, leaving only 2*l.* for books and incidentals.
20. Lockhurst Lane, ditto	Voluntary teachers.	James Harrison, Superintendent; John Bywater, Thomas Marston, William Yardley, and James Haddon, Committee.	The only funds by which the school is supported are raised by a public collection, made in the chapel, by which a sum from 6*l.* to 8*l.* is raised annually.
21. Carpenter's Lane, ditto	Voluntary teachers.	Committee:—William Mason, William Lenton, William Sadthern, John Payne, Thomas Cramp.	Voluntary Subscriptions.
22. Foleshill, Independent Sunday School.	Voluntary teachers.	. .	From 12*l.* to 20*l.* varying with the fluctuations of trade.
23. Paradise Row, Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School.	George Orton, and other voluntary teachers.	George Orton, John Barnes, William Kelly, Jabez Clare, William Biddle, William Currall, and others.	By voluntary subscriptions to the amount of about 4*l.* per annum.
24. Church End, Bell Green, do.	Voluntary teachers.	H. Goode, William Francombe, John Williamson, John Coltman, William Boan, Joseph Whealey, Hew Goode.	A public collection is had annually, 8*l.* or thereabouts.
25. Alderman's Green, ditto	Voluntary teachers.	Joseph Darley, William Hartlett, John Ebburn, Joseph Lambeth, William Birch, William Mitchell.	The amount of the fund varys, but is entirely by voluntary subscription.
26. Longford, Baptist Sunday School.	Voluntary teachers.	John Walker, George Smith, William Shepard, William Croft, John Herbert, Thomas Randle.	A public collection is made anually, when the parents of the children and the congregation attending the chapel contribute their mite, which amount varies, being sometimes 16*l.*, at others only 10*l.* or 12*l.*
27. Longford (Union Place) General Baptist Sunday School.	Voluntary teachers.	. .	By annual colections.
Sowe Parish.			
28. Wykin Square, Independent Sunday School.	. .	Mr. J. Peake, J. Harrison, Mr. D. Leaves.	By voluntary subscriptions.
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.			
Bedworth Parish.			
29. Wesleyan Methodis Sunday Scool, Bedworth.	Samuel Wringrove.	Samuel Wringrove, Superintendor of this Scool.	Wee have no funds nor indowments, but volentary subscriptions.
30. Baptist Sunday School, Bedworth.	William Lee.	G. T. Congreve, William Lee, Benjamin Walker, P. Curtis.	Supported by annual charity sermons; the average amount thereof from 13*l.* to 16*l.*
31. Primitive Methodist SondaySchool, Bedworth Heath.	William Hands.	Thomas Crew, Henry Hartap, W. Randle, W. Bayle, James Wright, W. Shilton. *Femules:* Elizabeth Gee, Elizabeth Crew, Ann Brown.	Fonds, non; supported by voluntary subscriptions.
32. Independent Chapel Sunday School, Bedworth.	. .	The 28 Teachers and 4 Superintendents form the Committee, names of the latter:—Messrs. Linnay, Tyler, Tustin, and Hanson.	The average sum 25*l.* per annum, raised by voluntary contribution.
33. Little Heath, Independent Sunday School.	. .	. .	About 6*l.* per annum; voluntary contribution.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

5. Salary and Emoluments of the Master, Mistress, and Teachers?	6. How many Children are there on the School-Books?	7. How many generally attend?						8. What are the leading features of the System of Education adopted? Are the plans of Bell, Lancaster, or others, followed?
		Boys.		Girls.		Age and Sex undistinguished by the Teachers making the returns.	Total of Children.	
		Above 7.	Under 7.	Above 7.	Under 7.			
Voluntary.	102.	Majo	rity a	bove	Seve	n. 102	102	In classes of 8 or 10 children; neither exactly.
None.	100.	24	16	25	35	..	100	Reading the Scriptures in the higher classes, and the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Class Lesson Books, as published by the Sunday School Union, in the lower classes of the school.
None.	100.	30	10	46	14	..	100	Gall's Lesson System of reading and teaching the Scriptures.
. .	Above 200.	..	..	..	..	160	160	No general system.
The labours of all given gratuitously.	,, 90.	23	12	35	20	..	90	The leading features adopted in our way of education mostly resembles that of Bell's.
Teachers give their services gratis.	,, 95.	..	..	..	..	95	95	They are taught to read and spell.
. .	Upwards of 60.	..	..	..	..	60	60	Lancastarian.
The teachers give their services gratuitious.	,, 250.	Cannot correctly ascertain, but the greater proportion is above 7 years, as the chilldren enter at 5 years and leave about 16.				280	Perhaps 280	They are merely taught to read and spell without adherence to any particular system.
Gratuitously.	,, 177.	..	..	..	..	100	100	. .
The teachers give their services gratuitously.	100.	..	..	..	..	90	90	No particular system. The plan most resembles that of Lancaster.
Wee have no salery but wot awaits us above.	34 boys and girls; seldom les then 32 attend.	12	3	19	..	..	34	In classes, Bibles and Testaments, and other religious books.
21*s.* for 12 months service.	General average from 65 to 70.	..	..	..	..	65	65	Spelling, reading, and writing; the old plan of education.
Non.	Boys 22; Girls 39—61.	17	5	33	6	..	61	The docterings of Jesus Christ.
None.	100.	..	..	..	..	90	90	Neither Bell's nor Lancaster's plan is adopted.
None.	28.	8	2	11	2	..	23	. .

Locality and Name.	9. Enumerate what is Taught.	10. Enumerate the Books and Lessons used in the School.	11. How many Hours are devoted to each subject Daily or Weekly?
Rest of the Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly in the County of the City.			
Foleshill Parish.			
19. Red House Lane, Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School.	Reading and spelling, besides religious conversation and interrogation.	Bible, Testament, and Scripture Extracts.	Four hours each Sabbath.
20. Lockhurst Lane, ditto	. .	Bibles and Testaments; also Scripture Lesson Books.	About three hours weekly, exclusive of the time devoted to public worship.
21. Carpenter's Lane, ditto	. .	Bibles, Testaments, &c.	Four hours weekly.]
22. Foleshill, Independent Sunday School.	Reading, spelling, and catechism.	The Scriptures, and Easy Class Books.	About two hours and a half on the Sabbath-day.
23. Paradise Row, Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School.	Different lessons, chiefly abstracted from the Word of God, with the Bible and Testament.	Bibles and Testaments, with Union Spelling Books.	Six hours each Sabbath.
24. Church End, Bell Green, do.	Reading and spelling.	Bibles, Testaments, and Spelling Books.	About two hours and a half on Sunday.
25. Alderman's Green, ditto	Reading and spelling.	The Scriptures and others.	. .
26. Longford, Baptist Sunday School.	Reading and spelling.	The Old and New Testament, and Abridgement for the lower classes.	About two hours weekly.
27. Longford (Union Place) General Baptist Sunday School.	The knowledge of reading and spelling.	The Bible, and easy religious books for the lower classes.	. .
Sowe Parish.			
28. Wykin Square, Independent Sunday School.	Reading and spelling	The Bible, and selections from Scriptures for the lower classes.	About two hours weekly.
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.			
Bedworth Parish.	:		
29. Wesleyan Methodis Sunday Scool, Bedworth.	Wee teach them to Sing the hynms Wee yous and read the Scriptures.	Bibles, Testaments, and one Class Book, two ditto, three ditto Class.	Half our to sing, one our to read in the morn, one afternoon.
30. Baptist Sunday School, Bedworth.	Spelling, reading, and writing.	The Bible and Testemant, and the Union Spelling and Reading Books.	Two hours and an half to spelling and reading, and one hour to writing.
31. Primitive Methodist Sunday School, Bedworth Heath.	Alphabet; easy book class; books one, two, and three; spelling-book, Testament and Bible.	Bibles, 12; Testaments, 12; first class, 11; second class, 10; third class, 12; easy books.	Three hours and a half.
32. Independent Chapel Sunday School, Bedworth.	Reading, spelling, and catechism.	Sunday School Union Reading and Spelling Book, New Testament and Bible.	To general teaching, three hours per Sabbath.
33. Little Heath, Independent Sunday School.	Principally reading and spelling.	The Sunday School Union, reading and Spelling Book, and the New Testament.	About four hours on the Sabbath.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

12. What Rewards are given? Is Emulation encouraged?	13. What Punishments? Is Corporeal Punishment employed, or Punishment by Tasks, &c.? Is Punishment inflicted for Non-performance of Tasks?	14. What Improvements have been recently introduced?	15. What Improvements are considered as highly desirable?
Books; yes, by giving books, &c.	Yes; and tasks likewise.	Lesson system.	. .
Small books from a ½*d.* to 2*d.* each.	No. Yes. Yes; kept at school till the task is performed, which has never exceeded half an hour.	None.	Not aware of any.
Small books monthly. Yes.	. .	. .	. .
Small books, as far as the funds will admit.	. .	. .	Infant and other schools.
Union Books and tickets. Yes.	Corporeal punishments are employed in a measure.	Some improvements have been made to the good of the school.	One improvement would be to learn the children to write.
Little books.	Sometimes the stick; sometimes no rewards.	None.	. .
Small books.	. .	. .	To learn them to write.
Ticketts which they obtain in great numbers, for which they receive in return catechisms and other books of a similar nature.	Corporeal punishment is very rarely used: the children are sometimes confined if disorderly, No punishment for non-performance, except the withholding of rewards.	None; with the exception of a better classing of the children.	Something to prevent the children runing wild after schooll hours are expired.
Emmulation is encouraged by the gift of propper books.	. .	. .	. .
Religious works. Yes.	. .	. .	To learn them to write would be one among others.
A hymn Book which is yousd for Divine Worship and other small Books.	Our children are But Small and many friend Less so We Deel much in Love with them our Greatest punishment is for them to Stand at the Bench Wile the Service is, But very seldom Don	Betor supplied with teachers then formely.	. .
Bibles, Testaments, and Hymn Books.	Admonition and reproof, and corporeal only when unavoidable.	None particularly.	A larger supply of books, both as rewards, and for the use of the school.
Small reward books.	Tasks. Close confinement.	Christ Jesus is rought upon the harts of the children to prase him.	Non grat then that.
Quarterly reward of books in religious and useful knowledge to those who behave and attend well, and are diligent, with a Bible on leaving school.	No corporeal punishment allowed.	. .	. .
Small religious books.	No corporeal punishment allowed.	. .	. .

Locality and Name?	16. Is there a School Library? What Books are most used by the Children?	17. Upon the average how long does a child remain at the School?	18. Do any of the Children leave the School before they can read fluently? If so, what number?
Rest of the Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly in the County of the City.			
Foleshill Parish.			
19. Red House Lane, Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School.	No.	From one to five years.	Yes; only a few.
20. Lockhurst Lane, ditto.	None.	. .	Very few; and writing is not taught.
21. Carpenter's Lane, ditto.	Bibles, Sunday School Union Books, &c.	From five years of age and upwards.	. .
22. Foleshill Independent Sunday School.	There is a library connected with the school.	Six or seven years.	They do.
23. Paradise Row, Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School.	No library.	From six to seven years.	Some do, but not many.
24. Church End, Bell Green, do.	None.	Nine or ten years.	Some do, but their number is few.
25. Alderman's Green, ditto.	. .	Admitted at six and removed at sixteen years of age.	We think not.
26. Longford Baptist Sunday School.	A small Teachers' library: the books most used by children are small ones; Useful and Pious Characters depicted, &c.	Eight or nine years.	Some do, but their number is few; for when they leave the school, their conduct having been good, they are presented with a Bible, and being able to read it is a necessary qualification.
27. Longford (Union Place) General Baptist Sunday School.	No.	Six or seven years.	. .
Sowe Parish.			
28. Wykin Square, Independent Sunday School.	No; somtimes the New Testament, and religious books of different sorts.	Mostly ten or eleven years.	It is seldom they are dismissed until that is the case, when they are presented with a copy of the Scriptures.
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.			
Bedworth Parish.			
29. Wesleyan Methodis Sunday Scool, Bedworth.	No Libery.	Six years.	Yes the leave, and go into other Scools for wee do not learn them to rite.
30. Baptist Sunday School, Bedworth.	No.	From six to eight years.	Yes, their parents often take them out of the school before they can do so.
31. Primitive Methodist Sunday School, Bedworth Heath.	Non.	Five years.	No.
32. Independent Chapel Sunday School, Bedworth.	No school library.	Four years, in a few cases longer.	Very few.
33. Little Heath Independent Sunday School.	No.	Four years.	. .

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

19. Is any Religious Instruction given? If so, of what kind? Name, if Catechisms are taught?	20. Are any Inquiries made respecting the moral character or success in after life? Of Children who have left the School? With what result?	21. Do the Parents belong to the Church of England, or are any of them Dissenters, or any Roman Catholics?	22. Of what Trades, Occupations, or Professions, are the Parents generally? What is the proportion of Weavers' Children?
According to the doctrines taught by John Wesley.	Yes, some have been morally and spiritually benefited.	Wesleyans generally.	Principally weavers, nine-tenths.
Yes, some of the children are met at stated times for the purpose of religious conversation and prayer. Wesley Catechisms are taught.	Yes, and it is found that many are good moral characters, and useful members of society; others are decidedly pious, and are useful teachers in Sunday-schools. Several of the teachers in this school were once scholars in the same.	Some Church of England, and some Dissenters; none Roman Catholics.	Nearly all weavers, and a few labourers.
Wesley's Catechisms.	. .	Dissenters.	Weavers' children, five to one.
Assembly's Catechism.	. .	. .	The parents are weavers, and the children are most of them bronght up to the same business.
The children are chiefly taught the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, as held out in the Scriptures.	Some inquiries have been made, and good has been the result; for we hope some of the children have died and gone to glory.	Chiefly Dissenters.	Chiefly weavers and day-labourers; chiefly poor.
The Bible and the Wesleyan Catechism.	Yes, the children leaving the school become teachers.	Church of England and Wesleyan Methodist.—No.	Weavers.
Wesleyan Catechisms are taught.	. .	Chiefly Dissenters.	Weavers principally; the greater.
Yes, in conjunction with learning to read the teachers impress the sacred truths on the youthful mind, they have Dr. Watts's First and Second Catechisms.	Yes, the children leaving the school mostly become teachers, consequently their moral character is watched with anxiety.	Mostly Dissenters, we think no Roman Catholics.	Weavers principly; and the greater proportion of children are those of the weavers.
Purely Evangelical.	. .	Dissenters.	Ribbond weavers.
They are taught the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, and attend public Service; Dr. Watts's Catechism.	Mostly the children who leave the school become teachers, and possessing a good moral character is a necessary qualification.	Chiefly Dissenters; we think no Catholics.	Coal-miners and weavers; the lesser.
No perticular Catheshism, only wot We Catheshism our-selfs.	There are some Wo was Scollards, are noW teachers.	Nine children out of thirty-four fatherles or motherles, six of their parents go to Churh, the rest Decentors.	Laberours, two weavers, the remainder Coliers.
Yes; Scriptural?—yes.	Yes, more pleasing in some than others.	To both. But none of them are of the Catholic persuasion that we know of.	Weavers; three-fourths.
Weselen Methodist.	Yes, some have become pious.	Some Church of England; some Dissenters;—Non.	Generaly weavers.
Yes; taught Dr. Watts's and the Assembly's Catechisms.	Many acknowledge their obligations to Sunday-school instruction.	No Roman Catholics; but both Church people and Dissenters.	Perhaps two-thirds, the children of weavers.
Yes; the Short Catechism by Dr. Watts.	The school has been established too recently to admit of a reply.	No Roman Catholics, mostly Dissenters.	Perhaps two-thirds weavers.

Locality and Name?	23. Do they manifest much anxiety to have their Children properly Educated?	24. Are any Children kept away through inability of their Parents to continue the payments, or to make good their arrears?	25. Do the Children receive Gifts in Clothes or Money?
Rest of the Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly in the County of the City.			
FOLESHILL PARISH.			
19. RED HOUSE LANE, WESLEYAN METHODIST Sunday School.	Yes, generally.	. .	No.
20. LOCKHURST LANE, ditto.	Yes.	. .	No.
21. CARPENTER'S LANE, ditto.	Yes, in reading and learning the Scriptures.	. .	No.
22. FOLESHILL INDEPENDENT Sunday School.	Yes, many of them, but they have not the means.	. .	In books.
23. PARADISE ROW, WESLEYAN METHODIST Sunday School.	We believe they do.	Its all free.	No.
24. CHURCH END, BELL GREEN, do.	Yes.	No, there are no payments; when they have no shoes they stop away.	No.
25. ALDERMAN'S GREEN, ditto.	We think so.	. .	No.
26. LONGFORD BAPTIST Sunday School.	They do vastly more than their pre-scribed means.	No; as there are no payments; but some are kept away in consequence of their parents being unable to find them shoes and stockings, or other wearing apparrel.	Formerly the children used to receive hats and bonnets; but, since the great depression of trade, it has been discontinued, and, as rewards for good behaviour, good attendance, &c., they receive small books, sometimes Testaments.
27. LONGFORD (UNION PLACE) GENERAL BAPTIST Sunday School.	. .	. .	
SOWE PARISH.			
28. WYKIN SQUARE, INDEPENDENT Sunday School.	Yes; much more than their means well allow.	No; kept away sometimes through deficiency of suitable clothing.	No.
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.			
BEDWORTH PARISH.			
29. WESLEYAN METHODIS Sunday Scool, Bedworth.	The are Generly at Scool; this is the best proof wee can give.	None at all.	The pay one peny each Sunday towords their clothing; their instruction is free; clothing is given once in the year.
30. BAPTIST Sunday School, Bedworth.	In few instances.	No.	In clothes.
31. PRIMITIVE METHODIST Sunday School, Bedworth Heath.	Sertenly	No.	Clothing.
32. INDEPENDENT Chapel Sunday School, Bedworth.	Yes.	I know of none.	They pay one penny per week, and receive clothing annually.
33. LITTLE HEATH INDEPENDENT Sunday School.	Yes.	No; we know of none.	They pay one penny per week, and receive gifts in clothes annually.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

26. Is there a Deficiency of the Means of Instruction in the Neighbourhood?	27. What is the probable proportion in the neighbourhood of Children who never go to School?	28. Are they generally in the streets, or where?	29. During what Hours might they be spared for Instruction?
Yes, on week-days.	One-sixth.	Some go to work very early, to wind, warp, &c., others are in the street.	In the evening.
There is no day-school, except for infant children by aged women.	Nearly all the children attend Sunday-schools.	At work generally at the silk.	Don't know.
A very great deficiency.	Most of the children attend a Sabbath-school only.	" "	" "
A great one for the want of money.	Not many.	" "	" "
Yes.	There are some.	In the lanes or fields on a Sunday.	All the school hours on a Sunday.
A great one.	One-forth.		
A very great deficiency,	One-third.	In the streets or fields, the neighbourhood affording such facilities for such conduct.	Generally speaking, all the school hours on the Sunday.
Yes, a great one; no day-school for some distance.	One-fourth.	" "	" "
I think not; for thier are many Scools for small ones and for larger.	I cannot give a sure answer to these questions.	" "	" "
We think not universally so.	We cannot say.	We think their parents are obliged to put them to work as soon as possible in the low parts of the ribbon trade.	Cannot say exactly.
No.	But few.	Work; silk employment.	" "
Very little.	Perhaps one in ten, or one in fifteen.	" "	" "
Very little.	It is difficult to say, perhaps one in ten, or one in fifteen.	" "	" "

Locality and Name?	30. Add any general remarks you may wish to offer?	Locality and Name?
Rest of the Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly in the County of the City.		*Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City (continued.)*
Foleshill Parish.		Bulkington Parish.
19. Red House Lane, Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School.	I have witnessed 8 boys in the school without shoes or stockings on the Sabbath. The weavers are very poor, and cannot afford to pay for the education of their children.	34. Bulkington Independent Sunday School.
20. Lockhurst Lane, ditto	. .	35. Ryton Wesleyan Sabbath School.
21. Carpenter's Lane, ditto	. .	36. Barnacle Sunday School for Independents and Wesleyan Methodists.
22. Foleshill Independent Sunday School.	We consider infant and other schools would be advantageous to the rising population.	
23. Paradise Row, Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School.	. .	Nuneaton Parish.
24. Church End, Bell Green, do.	We could wish some general system of national education adopted by our Government.	37. Zion Chapel Independent Sunday School, Bond End, Nuneaton.
25. Alderman's Green, ditto	Some efficient means afforded the parents, so that they may have their children educated.	38. Wesleyan Association Sunday School, Wash Lane, Nuneaton.
26. Longford, Baptist Sunday School.	We could wish some general system of national education adopted by the Legislature, by which those who are now unable to have their children educated any father than at a Sunday School, might have them so far instructed in writing, arethmtic, and other useful branches of useful knowledge, that would render them useful and honourable members of civil and social society, and thereby enable them to confer a benefit on themselves and those around them; for this we have petitioned, and trust Government will not disapoint our fervant desires.	39. General Baptist Sunday School, Nuneaton.
		40. Church of England Sunday School, Nuneaton.
27. Longford (Union Place) General Baptist Sunday School	. .	41. Church of England Sunday School, Stockingford.
		42. Church of England Sunday School, Attleborough.
Sowe Parish.		43. Baptist Sunday School, Attleborough.
28. Wykin Square, Independent Sunday School.	We wish for some legislative enactment in behalf of a general system of education.	44. Independent Methodist Sunday School, Stockingford.
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.		
Bedworth Parish.		Coton Parish.
29. Wesleyan Methodis Sunday Scool, Bedworth.	I have answered these questions to the best of my judgment; forgive all errows and mistakes.	45. Independent Methodist Sunday School, Heath End.
30. Baptist Sunday School, Bedworth.	. .	
31. Primitive Methodist Sonday School, Bedworth Heath.	. .	46. Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School, Chilvers Coton.
32. Independent Chapel Sunday School, Bedworth.	The means of instruction seem to be nearly adequate to the wants of the district; but in most of the existing week-day schools the quality wants improving, and a well-conducted infant school I think would be of great advantage. (Signed) Thos. Dix.	
33. Little Heath, Independent Sunday School.	The means, as it respects the Sabbath, are, in my opinion, nearly as great as the wants of the district: as it respects week-day instruction, more is wanted on the spot, and the quality needs much improvement. A well-conducted infant school would be a great advantage to the neighbourhood. (Signed) Thos. Dix, Minister Independent Congregation.	Hartshill Hamlet.
		47. Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School, Hartshill.
		48. Independent Sunday School, Hartshill.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

2. Name of the Master or Mistress?	3. Names of the most efficient supporters of the School and of the Committee superintending its affairs?	4. State the funds by which the School is supported, the amount, and whether by endowments, or voluntary subscriptions?	5. Salary and emoluments of the Master, Mistress, and Teachers?
. .	. .	Collections made after annual sermons for its benefit.	. .
Superintendents, Joseph Cluse and John Vann.	Rev. Benjamin Wood, Messrs. John Randle, William Burton, Joseph Kennard, John Russell, Thomas Birch, and John Vann.	5*l.* voluntary subscriptions.	None.
Gratuitous teachers.	. .	By collections at an annual sermon.	None.
Voluntary teachers.	The affairs of the school managed by the senior teachers, superintended by Mr. Joseph Garrett and others.	Supported by voluntary contributions; the funds not more than 9*l.* per year, clear of expenses.	No emoluments.
Mr. Bindley, superintendent.	Committee:—Mr. Slack, Mr. Birkin, Mr. Corbey, Mr. Townsend, Mr. Hanson, Mr. Moore, Mr. Riley.	By an annual public collection.	Not any.
No master, no mistress, but 10 affectionate teachers.	Edward Parker, William Hand John Smith, Thomas Lees, James Clarke, to superintend its affairs.	The fund is supported by a collection once a year by our kind benefactors and friends, the amount about 5*l.* 10*s.* per annum.	No salary, but all gratious.
John Rayner, James Green, and Mrs. Hood. Joseph Jeffcott. John Harris.	Committee, W. H. King, J. Craddock, W. Bull, W. Ball, T. R. Docker.	Subscriptions about 35*l.* per annum.	About 30*l.*
Voluntary teachers.	No committee; one male superintendent.	Annuall sermons are preached, when collections are made for the support of the school.	None.
Voluntary teachers.	Superintending, Joseph Hallam, Avery Bunney, and six Committee.	Supported by a weekly contribution from poor people.	No salary can wee give.
Voluntary teachers.	Thomas Palmer, Robert Hardy, Thomas Beasley, Thomas Hough, Mary Ann Hands, Sophia Broadaway, and others.	By Charity Sermons. No Enduments.	All gratiuious labour.
Voluntary teachers.	Superintendents —— Rev. B. Woodl, Rev. J. T. Walker, Wesleyan Minister, and William Towe; John Messenger, Secretary; Committee—George Gould, Joseph Sidwell, John Clay, George Allcott, George Gould, and others.	Collections made at two Sermons annually.	None.
Principally Mr. Redgate, Mr. Clements, Mr. Hardcastle, and Mr. Ward; but there are six males and three females in the whole.	Mr. Redgate, Mr. Clements, Mr. Hardcastle, and Mr. Ward, &c., with the public.	By two Charity Sermons annually; the collections amount to 4*l.*, which is expended in rent and books.	Voluntary teachers.
Various teachers, both male and female.	Committee: — Thomas Nurse, Benjamin Allsop, J. Percival, A. Hankenson, G. Vernon, W. Robottom, W. Page.	By collection at Charity Sermon yearly, from 8*l.* to 9*l.*	All gratuitously.

Locality and Name?	6. How many Children are there on the School Books?	7. How many generally attend?						8. What are the leading features of Education adopted? Are the plans of Bell, Lancaster, or others, followed in the school?
		Boys.		Girls.		Age and Sex undistinguished by the Teachers making the Returns.	Total of Children.	
		Above 7.	Under 7.	Above 7.	Under 7.			
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City (continued).								
Bulkington Parish.								
34. Bulkington Independent Sunday School.	110.	..	..	..	..	85	85	Mr. Gall's Lesson System, and such parts of Lancaster's as are suitable.
35. Ryton Wesleyan Sabbath School.	82.	27	19	25	11	..	82	Something after the Lancerster.
36. Barnacle Sunday School for Independents and Wesleyan Methodists.	. .	..	..	..	..	144	144	. .
Nuneaton Parish.								
37. Zion Chapel, Independent Sunday School, Bond End, Nuneaton.	94.	37	8	44	7	..	96	The old system of teaching. The children are taught their letters, spelling, pronunciation, and reading lessons for children, when capable. The New Testament, then the Old.
38. Wesleyan Association Sunday School, Wash Lane, Nuneaton.	58.	..	..	..	..	50	50	. .
39. General Baptist Sunday School, Nuneaton.	90.	25	18	37	10	..	90	Reading, Spelling, Wrighting, and Chatisemans.
40. Church of England Sunday School, Nuneaton. 41. Church of England Sunday School, Stockingford. 42. Church of England Sunday School, Attleborough.	The books of one of the schools not at present to be found; but we numbered on the day of the coronation above five hundred.	..	..	..	..	Perhaps 300	300	. .
43. Baptist Sunday School, Attleborough.	. .	31	8	28	20	..	87	The school is divided into classes; each child reads separately.
44. Independent Methodist Sunday School, Stockingford.	107.	..	..	..	..	100	100	. .
Coton Parish.								
45. Independent Methodist Sunday School, Heath End.	55.	18	6	23	8	..	55	Confined wholey to the reading of the Scriptures.
46. Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School, Chilvers Coton.	122.	51	5	51	15	..	122	We are under the descipline and plan of the Wesleyan Conference.
Hartshill Hamlet.								
47. Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School, Hartshill.	73.	37	..	36	..	..	73	Hearing them read in classes.
48. Independent Sunday School, Hartshill.	Above 160.	..	..	..	..	160	160	The Bible, Testament, spelling, catechism, &c.
	Total in Sunday Schools .	638	220	350	337	3165	5210	

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

9. Enumerate what is taught?	10. Enumerate the Books and Lessons used in the School?	11. How many Hours are devoted to each Subject, daily or weekly?	12. What Rewards are given? Is Emulation encouraged?
Reading, and a general acquaintance with Christian principles and duties.	Bible and Testament, with the complete set of books published by the Sunday School Society in London.	. .	Cards of nominal value, which are afterwards exchanged for religious books.
Spelling, reading, &c., Sunday; week evenings, writing, &c.	Bibles, spelling, and catechisms.	One hour reading &c., week evenings, two hours.	Books.
Reading, and the principles of religion.	. .	. .	. .
Reading, spelling, catechism, &c.	. .	About five hours each Sabbath, including Divine service, on which they attend.	Rewards of a pious character, suited to a Sabbath School, from $\frac{1}{2}d.$ up to $6d.$ per book.
Reading and spelling.	Bibles, Testaments, or any other the teachers think proper.	One hour and a half to reading, and one hour and a half to spelling, making three hours each Sabbath.	Reward books are given for good attendance, good behaviour and good progress.
14 Bible, 20 Testament, 50 in first and two and three parts.	Bible, Testament, and other Scripture pecies, with one, two, and three parts, and lessons.	From 9 to 11 morning, from 1 to half-past 2 evening.	They are rewarded with Magazenes, and other Scriptural reward books, according to task.
On Sunday, reading, spelling, catechism, and hymns; on Tuesday and Saturday evenings, writing and arithmetic, to the elder children, those of the Bible and Testament class.	*Vide* previous answer.	. .	*Vide* subsequent answer.
Reading, spelling, and writing.	Alphabet, easy books, Testament, and Bible.	Four hours weekly are devoted to the various branches.	Baptist Children's Magazines are for rewards.—In some cases it is.
The Old and New Testament, with Riting and spelling.	This is enumerated before.	. .	According to merit wee give presents of small books.
. .	First, second, and third classes of Scriptural books, spelling books, catechisms, Testaments, and Bibles.	From 9 in the morning till 12, from half-past 1 till half-past 2, as service begins.	Small Scripture books, such as the teachers can afford.
Bibles, Testaments, Reading-Made-Easy, and spelling books.	. . .	One hour for spelling, and two hours for reading, every Sabbath day.	We endeavour to stimulate them by giving reward tickets, reward books, and, on leaving the school, we dismiss them with a Bible.
Reading, spelling, and religious instruction.	Bible, Testament, Sunday School Union Books, and Wesley's Catechisms.	Four hours for the whole.	Books;—yes, by rewarding them.
The Scriptures, with writing, two nights in the week.	Bibles, testaments, spelling and other elementary books.	One hour and a half to writing each night, on Sunday one hour and a half before service, afternoon the same.	Tickets for committing portions of Scripture to memory, and small books.

Locality and Name ?	13. What Punishments ? Is Corporeal Punishment employed, or Punishment by Tasks, &c. ? Is Punishment inflicted for non-performance of Tasks, &c. ?	14. What Improvements have been recently introduced ?	15. What further Improvements are considered as highly desirable ?
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City (continued).			
Bulkington Parish.			
34. Bulkington Independent Sunday School.	Corporeal punishments are very rare.	. .	. .
35. Ryton Wesleyan Sabbath School.	Tasks generally.	. .	. .
36. Barnacle Sunday School for Independents and Wesleyan Methodists.	. .	. .	. .
Nuneaton Parish.			
37. Zion Chapel Independent Sunday School, Bond End, Nuneaton.	No corporeal punishment. They are remonstrated with for being late at school, bad behaviour, or neglected tasks.	No recent improvements have been introduced.	The want of an adequate school-room prevents many desirable improvements, as the children are taught and seated in the chapel, where the worship of God is conducted.
38. Wesleyan Association Sunday School, Wash Lane, Nuneaton.	Singled out, and exposed to the whole school : no withholding rewards.	Not any.	Writing, mental calculation, and geography for one school.
39. General Baptist Sunday School, Nuneaton.	By task.	We have found great impovement by incourageing in rewarding our children with books.	For want of proper school-room to the Chappel, we have to teach in the Chappel.
40. Church of England Sunday School, Nuneaton.	Occasional corporeal punishment, more commonly confinement.	Resuming a long discontinued practice of teaching arithmetic and writing on the week days.	The addition of geography to the week night instructions.
41. Church of England Sunday School, Stockingford.			
42. Church of England Sunday School, Attleborough.			
43. Baptist Sunday School, Attleborough	Corporeal punishments is not employed : punishment is inflicted by tasks.	None.	. .
44. Independent Methodist Sunday School, Stockingford.	. .	. .	. .
Coton Parish.			
45. Independent Methodist Sunday School, Heath End.	By tasks ; if tasks not got they are kept in according to crime.	Wrighting within this last year.	A day school is very desirable in the neighbourhood.
46. Wesleyan Methodist School, Chilvers Coton.	Punishment by tasks ; and for non-performance of task we make an example of them.	. .	. .
Hartshill Hamlet.			
47. Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School, Hartshill.	Striving to make them sensible of the evil of doing wrong. Occasionally.	Mr. Kinder, Sunday School Missionary, has taught us the Lesson System, and Circulating Classes, Interrogatory and Eleptical Modes.	. .
48. Independent Sunday School, Hartshill.	At certain times it is found necessary.	We hope our small library has been useful in improving the young.	Enlargement of school-room.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

16. Is there a School Library? What Books are most used by the Children?	17. Upon the Average how long does a Child remain at the School?	18. Do any of the Children leave the School before they can read fluently? If so what number?	19. Is any Religious Instruction given? If so of what kind? Name of Catechism if taught?
No.	. .	A few do so.	Westminster, Assembly's, and Dr. Watts's.
No.	Two hours and half each noon.	No.	Yes, Scripture, &c.; Wesleyan Methodist.
. .	. .	. .	The principles of religion.
No lending library.	From five to seven years on an average.	Some leave to go into other schools. No writing taught. Have not calculated the number.	Religious instruction is added to other instruction; catechisms used are the Assembly's, Watts's, and Miller's.
When our funds will allow we intend to have one.	Taken into the school at the age of five, and dismissed upon an average at sixteen.	They are not taught to write.	They are taught the pure doctrines of the New Testament. No catechisms of desent are taught.
The school provides all books, but the Testaments and lessons are the most used.	Sum have remained untill they have been fourteen or fifteen years old, but no reward of a Bible untill they have been three years.	A many have left through their paraints being in distress, and the Children put out to prentice.	Watse's and Pike's Catisemes, Firs and Second parts of Question books of differunt kinds.
No.	Nine years.	None removed till they can read tolerably.	Vide previous answer.
No library.	From six tofourteen years of age.	Generally they can read fluently; not so in writing.	Catechisn s are taught.
Whe have no library, but one is much needed.	Seven years.	. .	The Wesleyan Catechisins are taught.
No Liberey at all; whe have not it in our power.	As the children goe to work at an Early Age, an canat have the privilage of A week day instruction, no time is set.	Not Maney.	Wesleyan Catechisms; the fall of Man, Through sin the restoration by Christ.
No.	From about five years old to fourteen or fifteen.	The general part of them can both read and write before they leave the school.	Yes, we use the Wesleyan Catechisms, and they are taught the doctrines contained in them.
No.	Some are in now that entered when the school was first established in October 1836.	Yes, for writing is not taught.	Yes, in accordance with the principles of J. Wesley, and the Conference Wesleyan Catechism.
A small library principally purchased by the teachers; the Tract Society's publications.	From six till fourteen years of age.	In some few circumstances this may be the case.	Dr. Watts's First and Second Catechisms, &c.

Locality and Name?	20. Are any inquiries made respecting the moral character or success in after life? Of children who have left the School? With what result?	21. Do the Parents belong to the Church of England? Or any of them Dissenters? Or any Roman Catholics?	22. Of what Trades, Occupations, or Professions are the parents generally? What is the proportion of Weavers' Children?
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City (continued).			
BULKINGTON PARISH.			
34. BULKINGTON INDEPENDENT Sunday School.	Notice is always taken of the subsequent conduct of such children as remain in the neighbourhood, and in many cases with pleasing results.	Both to the Church of England and to Dissenters,—principally the latter; no Roman Catholics.	Chiefly weavers; probably three-fourths of them are weavers' children.
35. RYTON WESLEYAN Sabbath School.	Yes, favourable.	Desenters generally;—none.	Weavers generally.
36. BARNACLE SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR INDEPENDENTS AND WESLEYAN METHODISTS.	The school has had a beneficial moral influence.	Independents and Wesleyan Methodists; the teachers being of both persuasions.	Weavers and agricultural labourers.
NUNEATON PARISH.			
37. ZION CHAPEL INDEPENDENT Sunday School, Bond End, Nuneaton.	A solemn address given them by the minister at leaving the school. Inquiry is made respecting their observing the Sabbath; some become good and usefnl teachers, and pious christians.	Some of them belong to the Church of England;—some Desenters; but none Catholics.	The parents generally are workers in silk;—more than half.
38. WESLEYAN ASSOCIATION Sunday School, Wash Lane, Nuneaton.	No.	All Dissenters.	They are all weavers with a few exceptions.
39. GENERAL BAPTIST Sunday School, Nuneaton.	Perticluar inquirey is made conserning a futer life for the well fair of the sole, and whe are incouraged to persevere.	Few belong to the church, and others Decenters.	The greater part are weavers.
40. CHURCH OF ENGLAND Sunday School, Nuneaton.	The usual inquiries of every clergyman respecting his flock—young or old.	Chiefly of the Church of England, and several Dissenters.	Ribbon weavers.
41. CHURCH OF ENGLAND Sunday School, Stockingford.	Ditto.	Ditto.	Ditto.
42. CHURCH OF ENGLAND Sunday School, Attleborough.	Ditto.	Ditto.	Ditto.
43. BAPTIST Sunday School, Attleborough.	Inquiries have been made; the results have hitherto been favourable.	Some few parents belong to the Church of England; no Roman Catholics.	Greatest proportion weavers' children.
44. INDEPENDENT METHODIST Sunday School, Stockingford.	A goodly number have become usefull teachers, and members of the church.	• •	Some mineors, some lababorers, but the major part weavers.
COTON PARISH.			
45. INDEPENDENT METHODIST Sunday School, Heath End.	This school is begun but five years.	Some parents belong to the Church of England; some Decenters; the Roman Catholics will have nothing to do with us.	Some of the fathers are miners' labourers, some weavers, the mothers mostly weavers.
46. WESLEYAN METHODIST Sunday School, Chilvers Coton.	Yes, by inquiry we have found some doing well and others not so well.	Most of them belong to the Church of England and the Wesleyan body, but we are not particular; but the Roman Catholics will not have anything to do with us.	The fathers of the children are the greater part of them weavers and some miners, but the mothers are mostly all weavers.
HARTSHILL HAMLET.			
47. WESLEYAN METHODIST Sunday School, Hartshill.	Yes, good.	Wesleyan Methodists.	Carpenters, weavers, and labourers; weavers one-third.
48. INDEPENDENT Sunday School, Hartshill.	The teachers are ancious for the welfare of the children after they have left school, and give them sutable advice when an opportunity is afforded them.	Both Church and Dissenters; not any.	Principally ribon weavers and coal miners; probably the weavers' children are more than four to one.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

23. Do they manifest much anxiety to have their Children properly educated?	24. Are any children kept away through the inability of their parents to continue their payments or to make good their arrears?	25. Do the Children receive gifts in Clothes or Money?	26. Is there a deficiency of the means of Instruction in the neighbourhood?
. .	. .	No.	Certainly.
Not so much as they ought.	. .	In books.	We think there is.
. .	. .	. .	Yes.
Great anxiety is manifested by some that their children may be properly educated.	In some instances for want of clothing; no pay in this school.	The children receive books for rewards, also a Bible when they honourably leave the school, but neither clothes or money.	The means of instruction are many, but the whant of cloathing in some instances is an obstacle to their attendance.
The children are put to work at an early age, and the parents care but little about their education.	. .	Not any.	A deplorable deficiency in the neighbourhood.
They have a great desire for education.	In no case with us.	What is not expended in books, is laid out in shoes for them.	There is deficicencey of teachers, they will not come forward gratious or we could teach many more.
Yes, generally so.	. .	Rewards occasionally of books or wearing apparel.	Vide: next answer.
Ditto.	. .	Ditto.	Ditto.
Ditto.	. .	Ditto.	Ditto.
They do manifest a desire that their children may learn to read and write.	No.	Not at the present time.	Pecuniary means are wanting on the part of the parents.
Very much considering their circumstances.	. .	Whe have no such things to give the children.	There is a great deficiency, as the nearest day school is more than a mile and quarter disstan.
Very few.	The parents have nothing to pay.	The teachers, and Comitte, and friends of this school are poor and have nothing to give.	But whe are without the means to establish one.
Yes, generally.	. .	Neither.	. .
Yes, most of them.	No.	No.	Not just here.
Probably they would if they had the means of doing it.	. .	Reward books for good behaviour, and each child a Bible on leaving school.	There is a very great deficiency of education in this neighbourhood.

Locality and Name?	27. What is the probable proportion in the Neighbourhood of Children who never go to School?	28. Are they generally in the Streets, or where?
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City (continued).		
Bulkington Parish.		
34. Bulkington Independent Sunday School.	Proportion unknown, but it is very large.	Generally at work in the ribbon trade.
35. Ryton Wesleyan Sabbath School.	We cannot give a positive answer; but the proportion not attending a day-school is very great; but we think most attend a Sunday-school.	. .
36. Barnacle Sunday School for Independents and Wesleyan Methodists.	. .	. .
Nuneaton Parish.		
37. Zion Chapel Independent Sunday School, Bond End, Nuneaton.	We have not ascertained the proportionate number.	They are generally at work when work is plentiful, winding, wharping, and weaving.
38. Wesleyan Association Sunday School, Wash Lane, Nuneaton.	Not one-half attend day-schools.	The children at the age of 7 or 8 wind shoot for the weavers, at 12 work in looms.
39. General Baptist Sunday School, Nuneaton.	There are many round our neighbourhood that never go to school.	In the streets.
40. Church of England Sunday School, Nuneaton. 41. Church of England Sunday School, Stockingford. 42. Church of England Sunday School, Attleborough.	The Number of children receiving education in all the Sunday-schools is about 1000 King Edward's Day School . . . 60 Smith's Day and Sunday School . 130 Dame schools and boarding schools. 400 1,590 This, of course, is a large proportion out of a population of 8000.	. .
43. Baptist Sunday School, Attleborough.	. .	. .
44. Independent Methodist Sunday School, Stockingford.	. .	. .
Coton Parish.		
4 . Independent Methodist Sunday School, Heath End.	A goodly number.	At work when any to due thei ıSpare time is taken up in the Street, if aney Money at the beer shops.
46. Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School, Chilvers Coton.	. .	. .
Hartshill Hamlet.		
47. Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School, Hartshill.	. .	. .
48. Independent Sunday School, Hartshill.	Probably one-third. From eight years of age and upwards they begin to wind a little silk.	Some winding silk.

UNDAY SCHOOLS.

29. During what Hours might they be spared for Instruction?	30. Add any general Remarks you may wish to offer?
	I should be happy to give any general information in my power if it was desired. Wm. Rhead, Dissenting Minister.
We think from 9 to 12, and from 2 to 4.	
On Saturday, in the afternoon.	Many improvements might be made in the school; but the want of a school-room, and the want of money to build one, prevents much usefulness in the populous town of Nuneaton. (Signed) Thomas Brook, one of the Committee.
Night schools would answer well here.	
On a Sabbath-day.	P.S. To excuse my bad wrighting. (Signed) Edward Parker.
	Taking into consideration the poverty of the parents of our children, a library would be of great advantage. (See the Letter contained in the observations on Schools.)
Their time is not their own till 7 or 8 o'clock at knight.	All Efforts seem to bee Nearly in vain Since so many beer Shops have been premited to Drinck beer on the primeces whe dread the consequence in futer if not prevented.
n hour or two on Monday or Tuesday evening.	Many of the older people in this neighbourhood have received little or no education; and through the badness of the ribbon trade, and, in some cases, not knowing the value of education, their children have been much neglected. I should consider an Infant School in this neighbourhood a great blessing. (Signed) W. Page, Superintendent.

Locality?	2. Name of the Master or Mistress?	3. How many Children are there on the School-books?	4. How many generally attend?					
			Boys.		Girls.		Age and Sex undistinguished in the Returns.	Total of Children.
			Above 7.	Under 7.	Above 7.	Under 7.		
City								
1. Junction-street.	Mrs. Elizabeth Walker.	About 32	..	..	..	..	26	26
2. Spon-end.	Mrs. Price.	,, 13	..	5	..	8	..	13
3. Ditto	Mrs. Harrison.	,, 11	..	1	..	10	..	11
4. Chapel-yard, Spon.	Mrs. Sanders.	,, 12	..	3	..	9	..	12
5. Spon-bridge.	Mrs. Lindon.	,, 16	..	6	..	10	..	16
6. Spon-street.	Mrs. Albriton.	,, 12	..	10	..	2	..	12
7. Ditto	Mrs. Bannard.	,, 10	2	5	..	3	..	10
8. Ditto	Mrs. Welton.	,, 6	..	2	..	4	..	6
9. Ditto	Mrs. Fossett.	,, 36	..	6	21	9	..	36
10. Sherbourne-street.	Mrs. Keatley.	,, 6	..	2	..	4	..	6
11. Ditto.	Mrs. Smith.	,, 25	7	7	5	6	..	25
12. Thomas-street.	Mrs. Taylor.	,, 25	..	13	..	12	..	25
13. Ditto	Mrs. Tipson.	,, 20	..	12	..	8	..	20
14. Union-street, Butts.	Mr. and Mrs. Marsh.	,, 40	12	6	16	8	..	42
15. Sovereign-place, Butts.	Mrs. Turner.	,, 22	..	12	3	7	..	22
16. Fleet-street.	Mrs. Green.	,, 12	..	6	6	..	..	12
17. Dalton's-buildings, Butts.	Mrs. Lee.	,, 16	4	4	4	4	..	16
18. Spon-street.	Mrs. Stockman.	,, 20	..	..	..	..	20	20
19. Ditto.	Mrs. Russell.	,, 24	..	..	..	..	16	16
20. Howes'-court, Spon-street.	Miss Smith.	,, 20	..	..	..	..	18	18
21. Smithfield-street.	Mrs. Cleaver.	,, 25	1	6	1	12	..	20
			When the soldiers are in the barracks frequently forty					
22. White Friars'-street.	Mrs. Ward.	,, 20	..	..	..	..	18	18
23. Ditto.	Mrs. Chandler.	,, 16	..	..	..	..	14	14
24. White Friars'-lane.	Mrs. Housinoux.	,, 10	..	..	..	..	9	9
25. Midsford-street.	Mr. Thomas.	,, 56	..	..	..	..	56	56
26. White Friars'-street.	Mr. Ward.	,, 14	..	..	..	..	14	14
27. Much Park-street.	Mrs. Bradshaw.	,, 20						
28. Ditto	Mrs. Docker.	,, 23	..	..	..	..	71	71
29. Ditto	Mrs. Burton.	,, 20						
30. Ditto	Mrs. Rowley.	,, 8	..	..	..	..	8	8
31. Bricklin.	Mrs. Downes.	,, 14	..	..	..	..	14	14
32. Salutation-row.	Mrs. Sanders.	,, 10	..	..	..	..	10	10
33. Mill-lane.	Phœbe Gooch.	,, 20	..	..	..	..	16	16
34. Jordan well.	Mr. and Mrs. Holland.	,, 110 day scholars; 30 evening scholars.	45	15	20	15	..	95
			Evening scholars, from 8 to 16 years of age				30	30

DAY AND DAME SCHOOLS.

5. What Sums, Weekly or Quarterly, do the Parents who send their Children to the School pay for their Instruction?	6. Enumerate what is Taught?	7. Enumerate the Books and Lessons used in the School?	8. Upon the Average, how long does a Child remain at the School?
4*d.* to 8*d.* per week for each child.	Reading, spelling, writing, sewing, knitting, arithmetic, history, and a little fancy needle-work.	Bible, Testament, Pinnock's works, Butler's Spelling Book, Grammar, and Catechisms.	From 1 to 3 or 4 years.
3*d.* per week.	Easy reading and plain sewing.	Chiefly penny primers.	Some more and some less; average not two years.
4*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
3*d.* ditto	Reading, writing, sewing, &c.	Principally the common school Primers, with the Church Catechisms and Testaments.	Never, after they are eight years of age.
3*d.*, 6*d.*, and 8*d.* ditto, according to what they learn.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
3*d.* ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
3*d.*, 6*d.*, and 8*d.* ditto, according to what they learn.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Some have been in 7 years, average 4 years.
3*d.* and 4*d.* ditto	Reading, spelling, and sewing.	The common Primers, Watts's Catechism, Divine Songs, and the Scriptures.	Never after they are 8 years old.
3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Little Primers and Battledores.	School recently established.
3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
4*d.*, 6*d.*, and 8*d.* ditto	Reading, writing, arithmetic, sewing and needle-work.	Dilworth's Guide, Universal Spelling Book, Bible, and Testament.	Uncertain, as they come and go so much.
3*d.* ditto	• •	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
3*d.*, 4*d.*, and 6*d.* ditto	Reading, spelling, writing, knitting, and needle-work.	Bible and Testament, catechism, and spelling-books.	One, two, or three years, as the case may be.
3*d.* ditto.	Reading, spelling, and catechism.	Watts's Divine Songs, Catechism, and Psalms and Hymns, Testament, and the Sunday School Union Class Book.	One year, perhaps, until they are taken away to be sent to those more able to teach them.
3*d.* and 4*d.* ditto	Not stated.	Testaments, spelling-books, alphabets, and easy reading.	Uncertain.
3*d.* and 4*d.* ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
3*d.* and 4*d.* ditto	Reading, knitting, sewing, and spelling.	Testaments, spelling-books, catechisms, and small easy reading-books.	From 1 to 3 years.
2*d.* and 3*d.* ditto.	Reading, spelling, and sewing.	Small reading and spelling-books.	Uncertain.
3*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Elder ones, reading, writing, knitting, and sewing.	Testaments, small spelling, and easy reading-books, besides battledores and alphabets.	From 1 month to 2 years.
3*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
3*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
3*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Reading, writing, arithmetic, &c.	Guy's, and other spelling-books, Bible, Testament, and Easy Lessons, such as are sold at the stationer's (Ward)	1 or 2 years
3*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
3*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Reading and spelling; elder girls sewing and knitting.	Testaments, spelling-books, alphabets, and battledores.	Very uncertain.
3*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
3*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
3*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
3*d.* ditto	Little reading; have them to keep safe, while parents are at work.	None worth naming.	Uncertain.
3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto	Ditto
3*d.*, 4*d.*, and 6*d.* ditto.	"Why, to be still, and read, as well as I can."	Small books of various kinds.	Sometimes a week, sometimes a month, sometimes a year or two.
Day pupils 4*d.* and 6*d.* per week; evening pupils 3*d.* per week (find them pens and pencils, and often books and slates, and small rewards).	Reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, the elements of grammar, and geography.	The Bible, Guy's British Reader, Guy's Spelling Book, Carpenter's Spelling Book, Walkingame's Arithmetic, Pinnock's Catchisms, Watts's Hymns for Children.	3 to 4 years.

Locality?	9. Do any of the Children leave the School before they can read fluently or write? If so, what number?	10. Do the Parents belong to the Church of England, or are any of them Dissenters, or any Roman Catholics?	11. Is any Religious Instruction given? If so, of what kind?
City (continued).			
1. Junction-street.	Very few.	Some few, generally Dissenters.	Yes; I converse with them, explain the fundamental principles of the New Testament, and earnestly pray for them.—Watts' Catechism, and Moral Songs, and Pike's Catechism.—Every child in the school can repeat the whole of Watts' Divine Songs by rote.
2. Spon End.	Most of them do.	Some of each.	They are taught to repeat the Lord's Prayer and the Church Catechism.
3. Ditto.	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
4. Chapel-yard, Spon.	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
5. Spon Bridge.	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
6. Spon-street.	Most of them.	Some are Churchmen, some Dissenters, and one or two Roman Catholics.	They are taught the Church Catechism and Watts' First Catechism.
7. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
8. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
9. Ditto	No.	Ditto	Ditto ditto
10. Sherbourne-street.	Frequently.	Both Church of England and Dissenters, no Catholics.	Church Catechism.
11. Ditto	Sometimes very few can write.	Ditto	Ditto, with Dr. Watts' Catechism and Divine Songs.
12. Thomas-street.	Yes; none write.	Some belong to the Church, others Dissenters.	No; only hearing them say the Church Catechism.
13. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
14. Union-street, Butts.	Yes; one-half of them.	Church of England and Dissenters.	Very little.
15. Sovereign-place, Butts.	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Church Catechism.
16. Fleet-street.	Very few.	Principally to the Church.	Yes; in accordance with the doctrines of the English Church; Church Catechism.
17. Dalton's Buildings, Butts.	Yes, most of them.	Generally Dissenters.	Yes, of a simple nature; Watts' Divine Songs.
18. Spon-street.	Yes; the majority.	Both.	"To the best of our ability we teach the Church Catechism and Prayers."
19. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
20. Howe's-court, Spon-street.	Yes; some few for other schools.	"Both; some I fear go not to any place of worship."	Prayers and Church Catechism.
21. Smithfield-street.	Majority of them.	"To both, I believe."	Not in general.
22. White Friars'-street.	Yes; two to one.	Church and Dissenters.	According to the doctrines of the English Church;—Church Catechism.
23. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
24. White Friars'-lane	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
25. Midsford-street.	Yes; some go to other schools	Few Catholics.	Occasionally Church Catechism.
26. White Friars'-street.	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
27. Much Park-street.	The generality of them do.	Majority of the Church, some are Dissenters.	Church Catechism, &c.
28. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
29. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
30. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
31. Bricklin.	Nearly all.	Do not know.	No.
32. Salutation-row.	Ditto	Ditto	No.
33. Mill-lane.	Very few, unless to go to endowed schools for the advantages of clothing, &c. Two-thirds of the children read fluently, and write tolerably well.	"I never inquire; both I think."	"I tell them right as far as I know; no Catechisms."
34. Jordan Well.	Not established long.	Several different persuasions; but I do not know of one being a Roman Catholic.	Watts's First Catechism, Watts's Hymns, and the Bible; passages are repeated and written.
35. Primrose Hill-place.	Ditto.	Part of each; no Roman Catholics.	Bible instruction.
36. Ditto	Yes, sometimes; a minority.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto

AND DAME SCHOOLS.

12. Do Parents in any cases keep their Children from the School through Religious scruples?	13. Do the Children attend any Sunday School? What? And in what number?	14. Of what Trades or Occupations are the Parents generally? What is the proportion of Weavers' Children?	15. Do they manifest much anxiety to have their Children properly educated?
No.	Yes, about one-third attend dissenting Sunday-schools.	Watchmakers, publicans, weavers—weavers, one-fourth.	They are desirous to have them improving.
No.	There are four.	Dyers, carpenters, weavers, watchmakers, and labourers—weavers, one-half.	Some do and others do not.
No.	None old enough.	Ditto ditto —weavers, one-sixth.	Ditto
No.	All go to the Sunday-school at the chapel in the neighbourhood.	Ditto ditto —weavers, one-sixth.	Ditt
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto —weavers, one-half.	Ditto
No.	All who are old enough go to those Sunday-schools their parents wish.	Weavers, watchmakers, and dyers —weavers, not more than one-tenth.	Some do, but most of them do not.
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto itt
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditt ditt
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
No.	All who are old enough.	Weavers and watchmakers—weavers, one-fourth.	Some do; a great many do not.
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
No.	Too young to attend Sunday-schools.	Weavers and watchmakers—weavers, one-half.	They are anxious to have them learn to read.
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
No.	About 10.	Weavers, watchmakers, dyers, and tradesmen—weavers, about one-half.	Some of them do, others do not.
No.	About 6.	Ditto ditto —only 4 weavers' children.	Yes.
No.	St. John's Church school; one-fourth.	Bakers, dyers, watchmakers, and weavers—one-fourth.	Yes, the major part of them.
"Not heard of any that have."	Four attend Vicar-lane Chapel Sunday-school.	Weavers—the whole.	Some do, and some do not.
Very seldom.	Church Sunday-school; one-sixth.	Dyers, watchmakers, and weavers—one-third.	Not very much.
Ditto.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	The elder scholars attend the Sunday-schools of the Church and Dissenters.	Butchers, dyers, watchmakers, weavers—one-third.	Most of them do.
No.	Very few; too young.	Weavers soldiers, hatters, porters, &c.—one-fifth.	Not in general.
No.	A few of the elder scholars; Church schools.	Weavers and shopkeepers—two-thirds.	Many of them do
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	Yes, majority.	Weavers and trades-people generally—small majority.	The major part of them do.
No.	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	Some of the elder ones; principally the Church.	Weavers, hucksters, butchers, bakers, shoemakers, &c.—one-third.	Not in a general way, except in reading.
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
No.	Too young.	Weavers, winders, and throwsters—majority.	"Not they."
No.	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	Some few that are old enough; meeting-school.	Mostly weavers.	Not much.
"None that we know of."	By far the greatest number attend at different Sabbath-schools.	Principally mechanics—three-fourths weavers' children.	Several do.
No.	Generality of them do.	Weavers generally.	Yes, great anxiety.
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto	Ditto

Locality?	16. Are any Children kept away through the inability of their Parents to continue their Payments, or to make good their Arrears?	17. Is there a deficiency of the means of Instruction in the neighbourhood?
City (continued).		
1. Junction-street.	Very few, I think; I have experienced it.	Yes, amongst the poor especially.
2. Spon End.	Very often.	Room for more children, if the parents had the ability and disposition to send them.
3. Ditto.	Ditto.	Same.
4. Chapel-yard, Spon.	Ditto; says she has as much as 3*l.* owing her, although the payments are so small.	Ditto ditto
5. Spon Bridge.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
6. Spon-street.	A great many.	The governesses say no, and they want more children.
7. Ditto	Ditto.	Ditto ditto
8. Ditto	Ditto.	Ditto ditto
9. Ditto	Ditto.	Ditto ditto
10. Sherbourne-street.	Very frequently, especially the weavers' children.	No, for there is room for more children in both schools, if parents could and would send them.
11. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
12. Thomas-street.	Yes, the parents often keep them away on that account.	No.
13. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
14. Union-street, Butts.	A great many.	Both schools have room for more children, if the parents had the desire and ability to send them.
15. Sovereign-place, Butts.	Ditto.	Ditto ditto
16. Fleet-street.	Very few.	Plenty of schools.
17. Dalton's Buildings, Butts.	"May be sometimes; some, I believe, do not try to pay when they might, but get in debt and then leave. I know my customers pretty well now; and those whom I think wont pay I send back home again."	Just round this neighbourhood there is.
18. Spon-street.	Yes, some get in arrears and never pay.	"Oh, bless ye, Sir, no; plenty of schools."
19. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
20. Howe's-court, Spon-street.	Some are; and others from carelessness.	Thinks not.
21. Smithfield-street.	Yes, I believe there are many.	Yes, a great deficiency exists.
22. Whitefriars'-street.	Yes, many do so, because they will not pay.	Yes.
23. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
24. White Friars'-lane.	Ditto ditto	Ditto
25. Midsford-street.	"A very few; may be."	Ditto
26. Whitefriars'-street.	Ditto ditto.	Ditto
27. Much Park-street.	"Some, may be; many are kept away through carelessness and improvidence."	Yes; to a great extent.
28. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
29. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
30. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
31. Bricklin.	Some of them are not able to pay.	Yes; a great deficiency.
32. Salutation-row.	Ditto ditto	Ditto
33. Mill-lane.	Some are very poor indeed; others are unconcerned and wont pay.	Ditto
34. Jordan Well.	Very seldom, except in cases of bad trade; last winter, for instance, the number decreased from 80 to 40 on that account.	"I think not."
35. Primrose Hill Place.	A few occasionally.	Yes; a great deficiency.
36. Ditto	Ditto.	Ditto
37. Grove-street.	Have reason to believe they do.	Yes, in both streets.
38. Jordan Well.	A great deal of trouble to get the money sometimes; some are too poor, and others will not pay.	

DAY AND DAME SCHOOLS.

18. What is the probable proportion, in the neighbourhood, of Children who never go to School?	19. Are they generally in the streets or at work? What kind of work?	20. During what hours might they be spared for instruction?
One-eighth.	Both.	• •
One-fourth, except Sunday-schools.	Mostly at work in the several departments of the silk trade.	Not until nearly 8 o'clock in the Evening.
Ditto ditto	Ditto.	Ditto ditto
Ditto ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
Ditto ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
It is supposed one-fourth.	Playing about.	Not before eight o'clock in the evening.
Ditto ditto	Ditto.	Ditto ditto
Ditto ditto	Ditto.	Ditto ditto
Ditto ditto	Ditto.	Ditto ditto
Very few under eight years of age.	Some in the streets, others at work; going of errands, filling quills, and nursing.	Some in the daytime, but most of them not before 8 o'clock in the evening.
Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto.	Ditto ditto
None.	In the streets, filling quills, and nursing.	Not until 7 or 8 o'clock in the evening.
One-half.	Ditto ditto.	Ditto ditto
Three-fourths above the age of eight who go to no School besides a Sunday-school, and a good many under that age.	Some in the streets and fields, some employed in various departments of the silk and watch trades, and others nursing.	Some in the day-time, but the great majority not before 8 o'clock in the evening.
Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
Cannot say.	Too many.	Cannot say.
Ditto	Many are in the lanes, fields, and streets, likewise.	Some day; others best in the evening who go to work.
From what I could gather, about one-ninth.	Both.	Day-time.
Ditto ditto	Ditto.	Ditto
One-tenth.	Ditto.	Any time.
One-seventh	Mostly; some turn engines fill, &c.	Young ones during the day; those who work, in the evening.
• •	Too many are.	Mostly in the evening.
• •	Ditto.	Ditto
• •	Ditto.	Ditto
One-seventh.	Generally in the fields, some on errands, or nursing children.	Mostly all day, some after they have done working.
Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
That never go, one-eighth; that go but seldom, one-sixth.	Some nurse and go of errands; many are frequently in the streets.	Younger. during the day-time; elder, evenings.
Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
Cannot tell.	Suppose so.	• •
Ditto.	Ditto	• •
Should think one out of every six or seven; cannot say exactly.	I see a great many in the streets.	Young all day, others at 8 o'clock in the evening.
I cannot say; I had an extraordinary case this last month, of a little boy about seven years of age taken away to sweep chimneys; the inducement held out was 1*d.* per chimney; the father was an *idle, tyrannical man.*	Many children are employed to fill quills, others to nurse, at too early an age.	Best in the evenings.
About one-half.	Both.	The elder ones after work at night, the younger all day.
Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
Not very many, because they are sent to Dame Schools in general.	Many are.	Evening is the best time for the older ones.
• •	Yes.	All day most of them.

1. Locality?	2. Name of the Master or Mistress?	3. How many Children are there on the School Books?	4. How many generally attend?					
			Boys.		Girls.		Age and Sex undistinguished in the Returns.	Total of Children.
			Above 7.	Under 7.	Above 7.	Under 7.		
City (continued).								
35. Primrose Hill-place.	Mrs. Pugh.	About 14.	..	..	..	..	12	12
36. Ditto	George Knapp.	19.	..	..	..	..	14	14
37. Grove-street.	Frederic Grindon.	18.	..	..	..	..	18	18
38. Jordan Well.	Mrs. E. Hayes.	30.	..	..	..	..	24	24
39. New-street.	Mrs. Allen.	12.	..	..	..	..	10	10
40. Hill Field.	Mrs. Eliza Wagstaff.	35.	6	9	12	6	..	33
41. Primrose Hill-street.	Mrs. Gilbert.	30.	..	..	..	..	25	25
42. Ditto	Mrs. Ball.	22.	..	..	..	..	18	18
43. Gosford-street.	Mary Wooten.	12.	..	..	..	..	8	8
44. Ditto	Mary Clarke.	9.	..	..	..	..	12	12
45. Ditto	William Barnes.	40.	..	..	..	..	35	35
46. Ditto	Mr. and Mrs. Baker.	90.	..	..	..	..	90	90
47. Read's-row.	Mrs. Waters.	10.	..	..	..	..	9	9
48. Payne's-lane.	Mrs. Russell.	24.	..	..	..	..	18	18
49. Far Gosford-street.	Mrs. Treadwell.	23.	..	..	..	..	20	20
50. Ditto	Mrs. Pound.	10.	..	..	..	..	10	10
51. Harnall Terrace.	Alice Macock.	12.	..	..	..	..	16	16
52. Parish's-row.	Mrs. Yates.	9.	..	..	..	..	9	9
53. Little Park-street.	Mrs. Mary Hobley.	24.	..	..	..	..	20	20
54. Ditto	Mrs. Marston.	24.	..	..	..	..	20	20
55. Ditto.	Miss Taylor.	22.	..	..	..	..	18	18
56. Cow-lane.	Mrs. King.	30.	..	..	..	..	28	28
57. Large Butcher-row.	Mrs. Barrows.	20.	..	..	..	..	16	16
58. Little Butcher-row.	Mrs. Holbeck.	30.	..	..	..	..	22	22
59. West Orchard.	Mrs. Mary Harris.	Sometimes 50, now 35.	..	..	..	..	34	34
60. New Buildings.	Mrs. Weale.	10.	..	..	..	..	8	8
61. Bull and Anchor-yard.	Catherine Chaplin.	30.	..	..	..	..	24	24
62. Union-street.	Mrs. Eggington.	16.	..	6	..	8	..	14
63. Agnes-lane.	Mrs. Hulm.	14.	All under seven.				12	12
64. Radford-road.	Priscilla Warrington.	12.	..	..	..	..	12	12
65. Dog-lane.	Martha Middlehurst.	25.	..	..	..	..	25	25
66. Gas-street.	Miss Hephzeba Barber.	20.	6	20	10	16	..	52
67. Ditto	Miss Martha Hasterly.	12.	..	..	..	..	12	12
68. Ditto	Mrs. Mann.	20.	..	..	..	..	20	20
69. Well-street.	Mrs. Mary Rowley.	60.	6	6	26	12	..	50
70. Cook-street, Tower.	Mrs. Mary Hewitt.	10.	..	..	..	..	8	8
71. Ditto	Mrs. Ellice Fardon.	14.	..	..	..	..	12	12
72. Swanswell-terrace.	Mary Hollowday.	16.	..	4	..	12	..	16
73. Chantry-place.	Mrs. Elizabeth Payne.	28.	..	..	20	2	..	22
74. Half-moon-yard.	Mrs. Pearson.	20.	..	..	..	..	18	18
75. Bayley-lane.	Mrs. Upton.	12.	..	..	..	..	10	10

DAY AND DAME SCHOOLS.

5. What Sums, weekly or quarterly, do the Parents, who send their Children to School, pay for their Instruction?	6. Enumerate what is Taught?	7. Enumerate the Books and Lessons used in the Schools?	8. Upon the average how long does a Child remain at School?
4*d.* weekly.	Reading, writing, and arithmetic.	Bible, Guy's Spelling Book, and Introductory lessons.	Uncertain.
4*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
3*d.*, 4*d.*, and 6*d.* each, per week.	Reading, writing, and arithmetic.	Bible, Testament, spelling-books, dictionary, and easy reading.	Not long established.
3*d.* and 4*d.* ditto	Reading, writing, sewing, and knitting.	Testaments, spelling-books, and elementary lessons.	" "
3*d.* and 4*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	" "
4*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Gospel History, Scripture Reading, writing, and arithmetic.	Bible, Pinnock's Histories and Helps, Duncan's Expositor, Guy's Spelling, &c.	Uncertain.
3*d.* and 4*d.* ditto	Reading and writing; girls sewing.	Testaments, spelling-books, and easy lessons, besides catechisms.	Ditto
3*d.* and 4*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
3*d.* and 4*d.* ditto	Reading and spelling; little writing.	Spelling-books of an easy nature and battledores.	Cannot say, very uncertain.
3*d.* and 4*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
4*d.*, 6*d.*, and 8*d.* ditto	Reading, writing, and arithmetic.	Bible, Testament, spelling-books, dictionary, and easy reading.	2 years; some not so long.
4*d.*, 6*d.*, and 8*d.*, ditto	Ditto ditto	The children use their own; any they are pleased to bring.	Uncertain.
3*d.*, 4*d.*, and 6*d.* ditto	Reading, spelling, sewing, and knitting.	Testaments and small reading-books.	"Infant Schools rob us, so that very few remain long."
3*d.*, 4*d.*, and 6*d.*, ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
3*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Reading, writing, marking, sewing, and knitting.	Bibles, Testaments, spelling, catechisms, and other easy books.	From 1 to 4 years.
3*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	" "
3*d.* ditto	Reading, spelling, and a little sewing.	Church Catechism, spelling-books, and alphabets.	" "
3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	" "
3*d.* and 4*d.* ditto	Reading, spelling, and sewing.	Various kinds of small books and Testaments.	Very uncertain.
3*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Reading, writing, arithmetic, knitting and sewing.—(Elder Scholars.)	Testaments, Butler's Spelling-Books, Teacher's Assistant, Pupil's Assistant, Church and Watts's Catechisms.	Uncertain.
3*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
4*d.* ditto	Reading, spelling, writing, sewing, and knitting.	Bibles, Testaments, spelling-books, and catechisms.	From 1 month to 4 years.
3*d.*, 4*d.*, and 6*d.* ditto	Reading, writing, needlework, knitting, &c.	Church Catechism, Testaments, spelling-books of various kinds and alphabets.	From 6 months to 2 years.
3*d.*, 4*d.*, and 6*d.*, ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
3*d.* ditto	Reading and spelling; sewing sometimes.	Various kinds of easy reading, tracts, and Testaments.	Very uncertain.
3*d.* ditto	Reading, spelling, and a little sewing and knitting.	Small reading-books.	Until taken to the Lancasterian or National School.
4*d.*; some 6*d.* ditto	Reading, writing, needlework, knitting, &c.	Testaments, spelling-books, Reading-made-Easy, and Church Catechisms.	From 1 to 3 years.
3*d.* ditto	Reading and spelling; a little sewing.	Various easy readings, catechisms, &c.	Uncertain.
3*d.* ditto	Reading, spelling; a little sewing and knitting.	Small reading-books.	Until taken to the Lancasterian or National School.
3*d.*, 4*d.*, and 6*d.* ditto	Writing on slates, reading, and sewing.	Testaments, spelling-books, and easy lessons.	Cannot say.
3*d.*, 4*d.*, and 6*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
4*d.* to 6*d.* each, weekly; 8*s.* to 12*s.* each, quarterly.	Reading, writing, and arithmetic.	Bibles, Testaments, spelling-books, easy readings, &c.	Uncertain.
4*d.* to 6*d.* weekly	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
4*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
3*d.*, 4*d.*, and 6*d.* per week.	Writing, reading, spelling, and needlework.	Bible, spelling, and easy reading-books.	Ditto
3*d.*, 4*d.*, and 6*d.* ditto	Reading, spelling, knitting, sewing, &c.	Spelling and easy reading, Testament for elder scholars.	Uncertain; some 1 month and others 12.
3*d.*, 4*d.*, and 6*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
3*d.* ditto	Keep them out of harm's way; and a little reading, &c.	"Oh, very little, reading and spelling."	Some longer than others, a month, or 2 years perhaps.
3*d.*, and 4*d.* the elder ones, ditto	Reading, knitting, sewing, &c.	Numerous spelling-books, easy readings, and Testaments.	From 1 to 3 years.
3*d.* ditto	Reading, spelling, &c.; a little sewing.	Testaments and easy spelling.	" "
3d. ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	" "

Locality?	9. Do any of the Children leave the School before they can read fluently or write? If so, what Number?	10. Do the Parents belong to the Church of England, or are any of them Dissenters, or any Roman Catholics?	11. Is any Religious Instruction given? If so, of what kind?
City (continued).			
37. Grove-street.	Yes; most of them.	Generally Dissenters.	Fundamental principles of the Christian religion.
38. Jordan Well.	Yes; more than half.	Church and Dissenters.	"Yes; I tell them their duty to God and their parents; Church Catechisms."
39. New-street.	Ditto.	Ditto	Ditto ditto
40. Hill Field.	Sometimes, but very few.	Some to each.	Yes, of a general nature; Watts's and Pinnock's Scripture Catechisms, Roman Catholic Catechism to Roman Catholic children.
41. Primrose Hill-street.	Yes; majority.	Some to both, no Catholics.	Church Catechism.
42. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
43. Gosford street.	Yes; almost all.	Church and Dissenters.	No.
44. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	No.
45. Ditto	Very often.	Of different persuasions.	The Collects and Church Catechisms.
46. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
47. Read's-row.	Yes; majority.	Church and Dissenters.	. .
48. Payne's-lane.	Ditto	Ditto	. .
49. Far Gosford-street.	Some certainly do, especially since other schools have been established around us.	Both.	The rudiments of religion are taught; Church Catechism and Watts's.
50. Ditto.	Ditto ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
51. Harnall-terrace.	Yes; nearly the whole.	Mostly Dissenters.	None, except the Church Catechism to one child.
52. Parish's-row.	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
53. Little Park-street.	Yes; one-half.	"To both I should think, but I never inquire about such things."	Not particularly.
54. Ditto	Yes.	Both.	Yes, general principles; Watts's and Church Catechisms.
55. Ditto	Yes; about three-fourths.	Ditto	Ditto ditto
56. Cow-lane,	Yes; since infant schools have been established they leave to go there, sometimes.	Ditto	Yes, as I find it in the Bible and Testament; Church Catechism and Watts's.
57. Large Butcher-row	Yes; one-fourth.	Majority belong to the Church.	Yes, of a general nature; church
58. Little Butcher-row.	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
59. West Orchard.	Yes; many do.	Both persuasions; many attend no place of worship.	Too young for it.
60. New Buildings.	Yes; most of them.	Church and Dissenters.	A little of a general character.
61. Bull and Anchor-yard.	Yes; some are taken away and sent to infant and other large schools.	Mostly, I think, to the Church.	Not particularly; Church Catechism.
62. Union-street.	Yes; one-third.	Both; no Catholics.	Church Catechisms.
63. Agnes-lane.	Yes; most of them.	Church and Dissenters.	A little of a general character.
64. Radford-road.	Yes; cannot tell.	Some do; some go to Dissenting chapels, too many go nowhere.	Not generally; Pinnock's on Scripture.
65. Dog-lane.	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
66. Gas-street.	Some do; major part.	Dissent and Church.	Yes, occasionally; no particular creed.
67. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
68. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
69. Well-street.	Some do; cannot exactly state a majority.	All.	Yes, of a general nature; Church, and one boy Catholic.
70. Cook-street, Tower.	Yes.	Dissenters mostly; some Church, no Catholics.	None.
71. Ditto	Yes.	Ditto ditto	Ditto
72. Swanswell-terrace.	Yes; great many of them.	All.	Not much.
73. Chantry-place.	Yes; major part of them.	Mostly Church people.	Yes, according to the Church; Church Catechism.
74. Half-Moon-yard.	Yes; almost all of them.	Church and Dissenters.	Church Catechism to the elder scholars.
75. Bayley-lane.	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto

AND DAME SCHOOLS.

12. Do Parents in any cases keep their Children from School through Religious Scruples?	13. Do the Children attend any Sunday Schools? What? And in what Number?	14. Of what Trades or Occupations are the Parents generally? What is the proportion of Weavers' Children?	15. Do they manifest much anxiety to have their Children properly educated?
No.	One-half attend Sunday-schools; Church and Dissenters.	Great majority are weavers.	Pretty much so.
No.	"Yes, the elder ones do, and they appear none the better for it; I talk to them about what their teachers say to them, but very little good is done them."	Mostly weavers.	They generally like them to get on in their reading.
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
No.	Most of them attend Hill Field Sunday-school.	Weavers, watchmakers, coopers, carpenters, and clerks—majority of weavers' children.	They do.
No.	Elder children attend the Church and Dissenting schools.	Principally weavers—five to one.	Not generally.
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	Yes, a few do; chapel schools.	Mostly weavers.	Thinks not.
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto	Ditto
No.	Many go to a Sunday-school.	Dyers, watchmakers, and weavers—one-fourth are weavers.	Some of them.
Only one, and that was a Roman Catholic.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	Yes, Church and Wesleyans; about half.	Generality of them are weavers and watchmakers—three to two.	A few do.
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	The elder scholars all attend either the Church or Dissenting Sunday-schools.	Weavers, butchers, bakers, and publicans, besides watchmakers, &c.—about equal.	Some take a pride in their children being brought up well.
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
No.	Four attend the Dissenting Sabbath-school, Hill Field.	Weavers, tailors, and labourers—majority weavers' children.	Not much.
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	Some few, Cow-lane chapel.	Weavers mostly	Some do, others do not.
Thinks not.	Some attend the Church and others Dissenting Sunday-schools, 12 or so.	Ditto	Generally.
Ditto.	Ditto ditto	Ditto	Ditto
No.	One-fourth attend Sunday-schools of various denominations.	Weavers, butchers, bakers, &c.—weavers, five-sixths.	Pretty well.
No.	Some of the elder ones.	Weavers, butchers, publicans, and shopkeepers—weavers, double any of the rest.	Some are very anxious, others careless.
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
No.	A few attend the Dissenting-school, West Orchard Chapel.	Dealers in crockery, hatters, bookbinders, butchers, and weavers—weavers, one-fourth.	They like them kept warm and comfortable.
Thinks not.	Some few attend a Sunday-school.	Principally ribbon-weavers.	Some few, the generality do not.
"Not that I know of."	Church and Dissenters.	Butchers, flour-dealers, shoemakers, and weavers—more weavers than of any one trade besides.	The more respectable do.
No.	Too young.	Weavers, smiths, and warpers—three-fourths.	Not particularly.
Thinks not.	Some few attend a Sunday-school.	Principally ribbon-weavers.	Some few do, they generally do not.
Not usually.	Those above seven.	Various—weavers, four-fifths.	Not sufficient.
Ditto.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	Some few go to Sabbath-schools.	Gas-works, watchmakers, weavers, dyers, &c.—more of weavers than any other.	Not sufficient anxiety manifested by the majority of parents.
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
No.	Attend Church and Dissenters.	Various.	Not so much as is desirable
No.	The elder scholars do; mostly Dissenters.	Weavers.	Not very much.
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto	Ditto
No.	Too young to go.	Ditto—four-fifths	Not much.
None.	Most of the senior ones attend the Church school.	Ditto—for the most part.	No.
No.	Most of them are too young.	Hatters, weavers, shoemakers, saddlers, confectioners, &c.—about equal.	Too careless
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto

Locality.	16. Are any Children kept away through the inability of their Parents to continue their Payments, or to make good their Arrears?	17. Is there a deficiency of the means of Instruction in the neighbourhood?
City (continued.)		
39. New-street.	A great deal of trouble to get the money sometimes; some are too poor, and others will not pay.	Yes, in this neighbourhood.
40. Hill Field.	Sometimes.	Yes.
41. Primrose Hill Street.	Some few cannot pay; a great many will not that might.	Plenty of little schools; in want of a large one very much.
42. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
43. Gosford-street.	Yes, some might pay that do not.	Thinks there is.
44. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
45. Ditto	Yes, a great many very often.	Yes.
46. Ditto	Ditto ditto	No.
47. Read's-row.	Yes, some are.	In this part of the city there is.
48. Payne's-lane.	Ditto.	Ditto ditto
49. Far Gosford-street.	Yes, some few; "Many will not pay, and if you were to take a carriage for them, you would not get them to come, I believe."	A little; not so much as there used to be.
50. Ditto	"When in arrears they will leave."	Ditto ditto
51. Harnall-terrace.	Yes, many do; some through carelessness, or because they will not pay.	Great deficiency.
52. Parish's-row.	Ditto ditto.	Ditto
53. Little Park-street.	More are kept away through carelessness on the part of parents than on account of real poverty.	Yes.
54. Ditto	Some may be.	Yes, towards St. John's-street.
55. Ditto	Ditto.	Ditto ditto
56. Cow-lane.	I think so. I am not much troubled with them, for if they do not bring their money after the first week, I send them back, and will not have them.	Not in this neighbourhood.
57. Large Butcher-row.	Very few indeed; weavers sometimes send word that they will pay when warps are down, and never send their children after running 2 or 3 weeks bad.	Yes, of popular Schools for elder children.
58. Little Butcher-row.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
59. West Orchard.	Some cannot pay; many do not try to pay.	Yes; for the poor.
60. New Buildings.	Some are, but not many; too many have not a principle to pay when they might.	Yes; of a good kind.
61. Bull and Anchor-yard.	I think most of them might pay. Many, at different times, do not pay: I fear it is because they have not a good principle.	I believe there is.
62. Union-street.	Yes; many, I believe, would send them if they could pay.	No.
63. Agnes-lane.	Some are, but not many; too many have not a principle to pay when they might.	Yes; of a good kind.
64. Radford road.	Yes, a great many; and a great many will not pay.	Yes, in and about Dog-lane.
65. Dog-lane.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
66. Gas-street.	Yes; others will not, we fear, when they might. When in arrears, they neither pay nor send their children too often.	No.
67. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
68. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
69. Well-street.	Yes, sometimes.	Ditto.
70. Cook-street, Tower.	Very much troubled to get the money, as much from bad principle as poverty. They will get in debt and then leave. The very low people manifest the worst principle.	For elder children there is.
71. Ditto	Ditto ditto.	Ditto ditto
72. Swanswell-terrace.	Mostly because they will not pay. I have lost pounds from this cause. When bad in books they generally leave.	Yes.
73. Chantry-place.	Few; more will not than cannot.	I think so.
74. Half-Moon-Yard.	Thinks not.	There is.
75. Bayley-lane.	Ditto.	Ditto

DAY AND DAME SCHOOLS.

18. What is the probable proportion, in the neighbourhood, of Children who never go to School?	19. Are they generally in the streets or at work? What kind of work?	20. During what hours might they be spared for instruction?
Oh, a great many; I should think every fifth child.	Both.	All day most of them.
Nearly, if not quite, one-half attend no school.	Both.	Some all day, others at night.
One-fifth.	Too many are in the streets.	Ditto ditto
Ditto	Ditto.	Ditto ditto
Cannot tell.	"O yes, scores."	During any time.
Ditto	Ditto.	Ditto
Very few.	Some in the streets, others are filling and nursing.	After 8 o'clock.
Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
• •	Too many are.	• •
• •	Ditto.	• •
"Well, a great many, but I cannot state the exact number; one-seventh I think."	Mostly in the streets or fields.	Some day-time, others in the evening.
Ditto ditto	Ditto.	Ditto ditto
Two-thirds.	Yes; some go to work at the brick-kiln, fill for weavers, nurse children, &c.	Majority all day, elder children in the evening.
Ditto	Ditto ditto.	Ditto ditto
"Why, I should think nearly one-half are always in the streets, and never go to any school: it is astonishing to see what numbers there are playing about."	"Streets, bless ye! and up the Park-lane."	Most of them all day.
See Returns Bayley-lane Charity School.	See return for Bayley Lane Charity School.	See Returns for Bayley-lane Charity School.
Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
Not many but what go to some school; one-twelfth probably.	Both.	• •
Cannot tell.	Many are generally in the streets.	Evenings.
Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
One-sixth.	Both in the street, and at work turning engines, filling for weavers, errand-boys, &c.	Ditto
One-eighth.	Both.	Any time, if parents wished to send them to be properly educated.
Not able to speak correctly upon the question.	• •	• •
One-twelfth.	Yes.	• •
One-eighth.	Both.	Any time, if parents wished to send them to be properly educated.
Cannot say.	Great many are always in the streets.	Elder at night, younger in the day-time.
Ditto	Ditto. ditto	Ditto ditto
One-eighth.	Yes.	Any or all times.
Ditto	Ditto.	Ditto
Ditto	Ditto.	Ditto
Probably one-third.	Both.	Night from 8 to 9 o'clock.
Probably one-sixth.	Too many are; others nurse and go of errands.	Evenings best.
Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
Don't know; a great many are always in the streets.	Yes.	Almost any time, if their parents were inclined to send them to School.
One in ten, but they remain only a short time at any School.	Yes.	All day.
One-eighth.	Nursing, and in the streets likewise.	• •
Ditto	Ditto ditto.	• •

IV.—PRIVATE

1. Locality?	2. Name of the Master or Mistress?	3. How many children are there on the School Books?	4. How many generally attend?					
			Boys.		Girls.		Age & Sex undistinguished.	Total of Children.
			Above 7.	Under 7.	Above 7.	Under 7.		
Suburbs of the City.								
76. Radford.	Miss Payne.	14	..	..	..	..	36	36
77. Keresly.	Mrs. Townsend.	24	..	..	..	..		
78. Ditto	Mrs. Slingsby.	24	..	..	..	..		
79. Stoke.	Mr. Iliffe.	20	..	..	..	..	30	30
80. Ditto	Mrs. Tew.	18	..	..	..	..		
Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly within the County of the City.								
81. Foleshill.	Mrs. Orton.	20	..	..	..	..	40	40
82. Ditto	Mrs. Hickison.	16	..	..	..	..		
83. Ditto	Emilia Smith.	10	..	..	..	..		
84. Ditto	Mrs. Arnold.	28	..	..	..	..	30	30
85. Ditto	Mrs. Newbold.	12	..	..	..	..		
86. Ditto	Mrs. Serjeant.	16	..	..	..	..	44	44
87. Ditto	Mrs. Whitmore.	8	..	..	..	..		
88. Ditto	Mrs. Chattaway.	18	..	..	..	..		
89. Ditto	Mrs. Brooks.	6	..	..	..	..		
90. Little Heath, Foleshill.	Mrs. Betts.	10	..	..	..	..	32	32
91. Ditto	Mrs. Appletree.	25	..	..	..	..	..	..
92. Alderman's Green, Foleshill.	Mrs. Birch.	16	..	..	10	34	..	44
93. Ditto	Miss Clarke.	20						
94. Trussell's Bridge, Foleshill.	Mrs. Hewitt.	8						
95. Longford (Foleshill parish).	Mr. G. Smith.	50	..	..	..	..	44	44
96. Longford (Foleshill Parish), Day School.	Miss Hunt.	16	..	..	..	..	30	30
97. Ditto	Miss Ryley.	15	..	..	..	..		
98. Ditto	Mrs. Caunt.	36	..	..	..	..	32	32
99. Exhall.	Mr. and Mrs. Cox.	20	13	..	..	7	..	20
100. Sowe.	Mrs. Smith.	15	About equal				..	20
101. Ditto	Mrs. Kingdom.	6						
102. Potter's Green (Sowe), Day and Sunday School.	Jas. and Eliz. Rice.	196	..	..	..	..	160	160
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.								
103. Bedworth.	Mrs. Knight.	8	..	..	8	17	..	25
104. Ditto.	Mrs. Jeffcoat.	14						
105. Ditto	Miss Linney.	9						
106. Bedworth (Sleet Yard.)	Mrs. Porter.	20	All under seven				40	40
107. Ditto (Green Hill.)	Mrs. Wheeler.	30						
108. Ditto	Mrs. Gilbert.	26	..	..	..	..	24	24
109. Ditto	Mrs. Johnson.							

DAY AND DAME SCHOOLS.

5. What Sums, Weekly or Quarterly, do the Parents who send their Children to the School pay for their Instruction?	6. Enumerate what is taught?	7. Enumerate the Books and Lessons used in the School?	8. Upon an average how long does a Child remain at the School?
2*d.* to 6*d.* per week each child, according to what is taught them.	Reading, writing, knitting, and sewing.	Bible, Testament, and spelling books.	From 1 to 3 years.
2*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
2*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
3*d.* to 6*d.* weekly.	Writing, arithmetic, reading, and spelling: girls sewing.	Bible, Testament, and spelling-books.	From 6 months to 3 years.
3*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
Some 2*d.*, others 3*d.* per week.	Reading, spelling, knitting, and sewing.	Testaments, spelling-books, Church Catechisms, and alphabets.	Very uncertain.
2*d.* and 3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
2*d.* and 3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
3*d.* ditto	Reading, writing, spelling, knitting and needle-work.	Bibles, Testaments, and easy books.	From 1 to 4 years.
3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	. .
2*d.* and 3*d.* per week.	Reading, spelling, and sewing.	Testaments, Watts' Divine Songs, and easy reading.	Very uncertain.
2*d.* and 3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
2*d.* and 3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
2*d.* and 3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
From 9*s.* to 12*s.* per quarter.	Reading, writing, arithmetic, knitting, and needle-work.	Bible, Testament, Pinnock's Catechisms, Assembly's, Watts, and the Church Catechisms, besides easy reading.	From 1 to 3 years.
2*d.* each per week.	Reading, spelling, and knitting.	Ditto ditto	Ditto
2*d.*, 3*d.*, and 4*d.* ditto.	Reading, writing, sewing, and a little of arithmetic.	Bible, Testament, and easy reading.	Sometimes a month, and at others from 1 to 3 years.
2*d.*, 3*d.*, and 4*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
2*d.*, 3*d.*, and 4*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
3*d.* ditto	Reading, writing, tables, &c.	Testament, Union Class Books, lessons on boards from Scripture, and easy reading.	One, 2, 3, or even 4 years.
From 3*d.* to 8*d.* per week, and from 8*s.* to 10*s.* per quarter.	Reading, spelling, accounts, sewing, history, rudiments of grammar, and needle-work of all kinds.	Bible, Testament, Murray's Works.	From 1 to 4 years.
Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
3*d.* each weekly.	Reading, spelling, and sewing.	Little books, and some read in the Testament.	Quite uncertain.
3*d.* ditto.	Reading, writing, and arithmetic, Church Catechism, on which days (twice a-week) the children of Dissenters are often ordered by their parents to be at home.	Bible, Testament, Guy's Spelling Book, and Vyse's; boys bring what spelling books parents think well; Enfield's Grammar.	From 1 to 3 years.
3*d.* to 5*d.* weekly.	Reading, spelling, sewing, marking, and knitting.	Bible, Testament, and spelling books.	From 1 to 3 or 4 years.
3*d.* to 5*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
Sunday school is entirely gratuitous, in consideration of about 14*l.* annually from the Sunday-school Funds, raised by voluntary contributions; day-school not exceeding 6*d.* each scholar per week.	Reading, writing, and arithmetic.	Bibles, Testaments, spelling, Select Lesson Books, and Watts' Catechisms.	Average till 10 or 11, and in some cases till 14 years of age.
2*d.* to 6*d.* each weekly.	Reading and sewing.	Easy reading.	Uncertain.
2d. to 6*d.* ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
2*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Ditto	Bible and Testament.	Ditto
2*d.* each weekly.	Reading, spelling, and a little sewing.	One book for the whole school.	Uncertain, generally leave for the Free-school at 7.
2*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Easy reading.	Ditto ditto
2*d.* to 4*d.*, ditto	Reading and spelling.	Testament and easy reading books.	. .
2*d.* to 4*d.* ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto	. .

Locality?	9. Do any of the Children leave the School before they can read fluently or write? If so, what number?	10. Do the Parents belong to the Church of England, or are any of them Dissenters, or any Roman Catholics?	11. Is any Religious Instruction given? If so, of what kinds? Name of Catechism if taught.
Suburbs of the City (continued).			
76. Radford.	Yes.	Both Churchmen and Dissenters.	" "
77. Keresly.	Ditto	Ditto ditto	" "
78. Ditto.	Ditto	Ditto ditto	" "
79. Stoke.	Yes; they go to the National School afterwards, from the Dames.	Both; majority are Dissenters.	Of a general character.
80. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly within the County of the City.			
81. Foleshill.	Yes, about half.	Both.	Yes, of a general nature.
82. Ditto	Ditto	Both.	Ditto ditto
83. Ditto	Ditto	Both.	Ditto ditto
84. Ditto	One-third.	Both.	When required.
85. Ditto	Three-fourths.	Both.	Ditto
86. Ditto	Yes; very many.	Both, professedly.	Not particularly.
87. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
88. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
89. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
90. Little Heath, Foleshill.	Yes; one-fourth.	Both, Dissenters most.	Yes; Assembly's, Watts's, and Church Catechisms.
91. Ditto	Yes; three-fifths.	Both; Dissenters most.	Yes; Assembly's, Watts,' and Church Catechisms.
92. Alderman's Green, Foleshill.	Yes; one-third.	Both.	Very little.
93. Ditto	Ditto	Both.	Ditto
94. Trussell's Bridge, Foleshill.	Ditto	Both.	Ditto
95. Longford (Foleshill Parish).	Yes; one-fourth.	Both; majority Dissenters.	Yes; their duty to God and man, and those fundamental doctrines of Repentance, Faith, the Atonement, &c., contained in the New Testament.
96. Longford (Foleshill Parish), Day Schools.	Yes, some few; one-fourth.	Both.	Yes; Pike's, Watts,' and Church Catechisms.
97. Ditto.	Ditto	Both.	Ditto ditto
98. Longford (Foleshill Parish), Day School.	Yes; half.	Both.	"Not a bit."
99. Exhall.	Can seldom turn them out well; they get merely the rudiments of reading and writing, which many neglect in after life.	Both.	Church Catechism and Bible.
100. Sowe.	Yes; one-fourth.	Churchmen, Baptists, Independents, &c.; no Catholics.	Of no particular kind; not doctrinal.
101. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
102. Potter's Green (Sowe), Day and Sunday School.	Unavoidable circumstances sometimes oblige poor parents to take their children away before they can attain a competent knowledge of reading and writing.	Some to the Church of England, and others to various denominations of Dissenters.	From the Bible, and Bible Catechisms, and Dr. Watts' Catechism.
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.			
103. Bedworth.	Yes; half.	Both Churchmen and Dissenters.	A little, to the elder scholars, of a general nature; Church and Watts' Catechisms.
104. Ditto	Ditto	Both.	Ditto ditto
105. Ditto	Ditto	Both.	Ditto ditto
106. Bedworth (Sleet Yard).	Yes; four-fifths.	Both.	" "
107. Ditto (Green Hill).	Ditto	Both.	" "
108. Ditto	Yes; most of them are off to the charity-school when seven years of age for the sake of getting the clothing.	Both.	Not generally.
109. Ditto	Ditto	Both.	Not generally.

AY AND DAME SCHOOLS

12. Do Parents in any cases keep their Children from the School through Religious Scruples?	13. Do the Children attend any Sunday School? What? and in what Number?	14. Of what Trades or Occupations are the Parents generally? What is the proportion of Weavers' Children?	15. Do they manifest much anxiety to have their Children properly Educated?
. .	Independents'.	Weavers, labourers, and graziers; weavers, two-thirds.	Yes.
. .	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Yes.
. .	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Yes.
No.	8, Dissenters' school.	Weavers and labourers; weavers, two-thirds.	Yes, most of them.
No.		Ditto ditto	Ditto
Think not.	6, Wesleyans'.	Weavers mostly; four-fifths.	Some.
Ditto		Ditto ditto	Some.
Ditto		Ditto ditto	Some.
No.	12, Wesleyan and Primitive Methodists'.	Weavers and publicans; weavers, seven-eighths.	Yes.
No.		Ditto ditto	Yes.
No; except Roman Catholics.	6, Wesleyan and Wesleyan Association.	Weavers, bakers, and shoemakers; weavers, three-fourths.	Mostly.
Ditto ditto		Ditto ditto	Mostly.
Ditto ditto		Ditto ditto	Mostly.
Ditto ditto		Ditto ditto	Mostly.
No.	12, Independents'.	Mostly weavers; four-fifths.	Yes.
No.	Independents'.	Ditto ditto	Yes.
No.	8, Wesleyans'.	Weavers, miners, boat-builders, &c.; weavers, three-fourths.	Yes.
No.		Ditto ditto	Yes.
No.		Ditto ditto	Yes.
No.	10, Baptists'.	Weavers generally; seven-eighths	Yes, pretty much so.
No.	12, General Baptists'.	Weavers, grocers, tailors, &c.; weavers, two-thirds.	Yes.
No.		Ditto ditto	Yes.
"Not they."	6, Baptists'.	Weavers and coal-higlers; weavers, three-fourths.	"To be sure."
Yes; the majority of the parish being Dissenters. See *Ante*.	Also a Sunday-school. The same children attend; those who are not Dissenters, which is frequently the majority. This is the only Church Sunday-school in the parish.	More than half are weavers' children, and the rest labourers.	Parents have not much desire to send their children to school; they are poachers and night people, which the children know and grow up in the same feelings. The farmers think only of the nuisance of school-boys trespassing on their lands.
No.	4, Independents'.	Wheelwrights, carpenters, labourers, miners, and weavers; weavers, two-thirds.	Many do.
No.		Ditto ditto	Ditto
"Not in the least, to the best of my knowledge."	All of them generally; the greater part attend this as a Sunday-school, others at the neighbouring schools.	Coal-miners and weavers; weavers, about half.	Some appear truly anxious for the education of their offspring; others are indifferent, principally, I conceive, from their own ignorance of its importance.
Never knew them to do so.	About 8 from the whole.	Weavers and miners; weavers, four-fifths.	Some are, others are very careless.
Ditto ditto		Ditto ditto	Ditto
Ditto ditto		Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	They are too young for a Sunday-school.	Weavers and miners; weavers, three-fifths.	Sometimes.
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Sometimes.
No.	One goes to the Dissenting school on the Sabbath.	Weavers and miners; weavers, four-fifths.	"We have only little ones, to keep them out of their parents' way, and so teach them a little."
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto

Locality.	16. Are any Children kept away through the inability of their parents to continue their payments or to make good their arrears?	17. Is there a deficiency of the means of Instruction within the neighbourhood?
Subnrbs of the City (continued).		
76. Radford.	Very few.	Yes, of an improved kind.
77. Keresly.	Ditto	Ditto
78. Ditto.	Ditto	Ditto
79. Stoke.	Sometimes, and others are careless about it.	Yes, of a free (gratuitous) na ure.
80. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Weaving Parishes contained wholly or partly within the County of the City.		
81. Foleshill.	Yes, some are very poor; others are improvident.	Plenty of little schools; not a sufficiency of large free ones.
82. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
83. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
84. Ditto	Yes; many of the weavers are too poor to send them.	Yes; it being more than a mile to the *parish* school.
85. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
86. Ditto	Yes, some spend what should pay for their children's schooling in the public-house.	Yes, of a good kind.
87. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
88. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
89. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
90. Little Heath, Foleshill.	Yes.	Not just here.
91. Ditto.	Yes.	Ditto
92. Alderman's-green, Foleshill.	Yes, some are.	Yes.
93. Ditto	Ditto	Yes.
94. Trussell's-bridge, Foleshill.	Ditto	Yes.
95. Longford (Foleshill parish.)	Sometimes.	Yes; a lamentable deficiency.
96. Ditto ditto	Very few.	Yes; of public free schools for the poor.
97. Ditto ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
98. Ditto ditlo	"Aye, that there is, many a one."	"I should think not, but I do not know either."
99. Exhall.	It is not inability, but desire to get their earnings; parents say "They have done very well with out education; many of the farmers can neither read nor write.	There are many children go to the Baptist Sunday school at Longford. They don't complain of want of schools. Many look upon them as a nuisance.
100. Sowe.	Some may.	Thinks not.
101. Ditto.	Ditto	Ditto
102. Potter's-green (Sowe), Day and Sunday School.	In some cases, parents, in consequence of declension of trade, are unable to continue to pay for their children and are obliged in consequence thereof to keep them away.	
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.		
103. Bedworth.	Thinks so, but more are, through carelessness, or not caring to pay for them.	Yes.
104. Ditto ditto	Ditto	Yes.
105. Ditto ditto	Ditto	Yes.
106. Bedworth (Sleet-yard).	Yes, I believe there are cases where they do; many expned it in the beer-shops and will not pay.	Yes, in this particular neighbourhood.
107. Ditto (Green-hill).	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
108. Bedworth.	"I cannot tell; sometimes it may be so; I have a deal of money owing me; my cupboard-door is chalked all over four feet deep and three feet wide with old debts. They come with false names and lying tales, get into your debt, take their children away, and you see no more them; it is very trying."	No.
109. Bedworth.	Same answer.	No

AY AND DAME SCHOOLS.

18. What is the probable Proportion in the neighbourhood of Children who never go to School?	19. Are they generally in the Street, or at work? What kind of Work?	20. During what Hours might they be spared for Instruction?
Cannot say.		
Ditto		
Ditto		
One-eighth.	Both	
Ditto	Ditto	
One-fifth.	"Many; some are sent to work just as they should be sent to school." Winding and filling mostly.	If prices were higher for labour, all day.
Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
Ditto	Many are, and others begin to nurse, fill, wind, &c.	Little ones, all day; elder, summer evenings
Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
Ditto	Both.	
Ditto	Ditto	
Ditto	Ditto	
Ditto	Ditto	
	Many are.	
	Ditto	
One-sixth.	Some; others work at the pits, boats, and filling.	
Ditto	Ditto ditto	
Ditto	Ditto ditto	
One-fifth.	Yes.	Younger, all day; elder, evenings.
Cannot say; great many.	Yes; wind, warp, fill, &c. for weavers.	
Ditto	Ditto ditto	
"One out of five."	"Yes, up to all manner of mischief; some work at filling and winding."	ome all day; others at night.
	Running about the roads, if not filling or working. Parents, even where boys free, will not make them come to school; two instances close at hand.	They might spare even a working child a few hours at school.
Some parents, having a number of small children and but a scanty means of support, are obliged to put them very early to work.	Generally at work, principally winding silk. If sufficiently strong they assist at the coal mines, or other out labour.	Most probably in the evening of the day.
One-fifth. "Many only go now and then."	Streets, lanes, and fields.	Almost any time.
Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
Don't know exactly.	Many are playing in the streets.	
Ditto	Ditto ditto	
Many are in the street; cannot say how many do not go to any school.	Many in the streets.	
Many are in the street; cannot say how many do not go to any school.	Many in the streets.	

1. Locality and Name.	2. Name of the Master or Mistress.	3. How many children are there on the School Books?	4. How many generally attend?					
			Boys.		Girls.		Age & Sex undistinguished.	Total of Children.
			Above 7.	Under 7.	Above 7.	Under 7.		
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City (continued).								
110. Bedworth (*continued*). (Bennett's Court).	Mrs. Butler.	9	Nearly all under 7				27	27
111. Ditto (Coal Pit Field.)	Mrs. Walker.	20						
112. Ditto	Miss Adkins.	23	About equal				42	42
113. Ditto	Mr. Lee.	24						
114. Ditto	Mr. and Mrs. Hall.	46	..	..	..	..	44	44
115. Ditto	Mrs. Evans.	10	..	..	..	..	32	32
116. Ditto	Mr. Beck.	14						
117. Ditto (Collycroft)	Elizabeth Kinder.	Also 12 evening Scholars						
118. Ditto	Mrs. Reaves.	10 20	..	..	..	..	26	26
119. Bulkington.	Mrs. Wakelin.	13	..	..	..	..	50	50
120. Ditto	Mrs. Clarke.	30						
121. Ditto	Mrs. Neale.	12						
122. Barnacle (Bulkington Parish)	Mrs. Birch.	10	..	..	..	..	20	20
123. Ditto ditto	Mrs. Wilson.	15						
124. Chilvers Coton.	Mr. Pinchback.	12	..	..	..	..	26	26
125. Ditto	Mrs. Ensor.	16						
126. Ditto	Mrs. White.	12	..	..	..	..	32	32
127. Ditto	Mr. Gunn.	10						
128. Ditto	Mrs. Boffin.	14						
129. Ditto	Mrs. Sarah Ward.	26	..	..	..	..	56	56
130. Ditto	Miss Mary Howe.	30						
131. Nuneaton.	Mrs. Fletcher.	26	..	..	..	..	36	36
132. Ditto	Mrs. Atkins.	12						
133. Ditto	Mrs. Groves.	28	..	..	..	..	36	36
134. Ditto	Mrs. Baker.	12						
135. Ditto (Attlebro')	Mrs. Scott.	24	..	..	..	..	30	30
136. Ditto ditto	Mrs. Weston.	8						
137. Ditto, Wash Lane.	Mrs. Rason.	10	..	..	..	..	30	30
138. Ditto ditto	Mrs. Burton.	24						
139. Ditto, Back-lane Dame School	Mrs. Cunningham.	30	..	..	..	..	50	50
140. Ditto, Bond-street, ditto.	Mrs. Whitmore.	20						
141. Ditto, Hincks' Buildings.	Mrs. Turner.	10						
142. Ditto, Abbey-street.	Mrs. Pritty.	10	..	..	..	..	23	23
143. Ditte ditto	Mrs. Swinfield.	16						
144. Ditto ditto	Miss Biddle.	20	..	..	..	..	40	40
145. Ditto ditto	Mrs. Osburne.	26						
146. Ditto ditto	Mr. Shaw.	26	About equal				40	40
147. Ditto, Pye-corner.	Mrs. Cooke.	15						

DAY AND DAME SCHOOLS.

5. What Sums, Weekly or Quarterly, do the Parents who send their Children to the School pay for their Instruction?	6. Enumerate what is taught.	7. Enumerate the Books and Lessons used in the School.	8. Upon the average how long does a child remain at the School?
2*d.* and 4*d.* per week.	Reading and spelling.	Testament and easy reading books.	Uncertain, not more than 2 years.
2*d.* and 4*d.* ditto	Reading, sewing, and slate-writing.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
3*d.* to 8*d.* weekly; 8*s.* to 10*s.* quarterly.	Reading, and writing.	Bible, Testament, spelling books, Goldsmith's History, Pinnock's Church, and Watts' Catechisms.	From 1 to 4 years.
Ditto	Reading, writing, and arithmetic.	Ditto ditto	Ditto
4*d.*, 6*d.*, 8*d.*, and 1*s.* each weekly	Reading, writing, arithmetic, history, geography, drawing, and all needle-work.	Bible, Testament, Catechisms, Goldsmith's History, Pinnock's Catechism, &c.	Two or 3 years.
3*d.* to 6*d.* each per week. Evening scholars 6*d.* per week.	Writing, arithmetic, reading, spelling, and needle-work.	Bible, Testament, spelling books, and Church Catechism.	From 1 to 4 years.
3*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
2*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Reading, spelling, and a little sewing.	Testament, easy books, and Watts' Catechisms.	Uncertain.
2*d.* to 6*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
3*d.* and 4*d.* ditto	Reading, spelling, sewing, and knitting.	Testament, Church and Watts' Catechisms, and easy reading books.	Uncertain.
3*d.* and 4*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
3*d.* and 4*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
3*d.* ditto	Writing on slates, reading, and spelling.	Bible, Testament, easy books.	From 1 to 3 years.
3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
2*d.* and 3*d.* ditto	Reading, spelling, writing, and sewing.	Testaments, Waldenses' and Albigenses' Church Catechism, and easy reading.	Sometimes 1 or 2 years.
2*d.* and 3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
2*d.* and 3*d.* ditto	Reading and spelling a little.	"I has the Bible and Prayer-Book, and reads myself, and tells them tales like; they are so young." No books.	Very uncertain.
Ditto	Ditto ditto	Easy reading and A B C.	Ditto
Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
2*d.* to 3*d.* each, weekly.	Reading, writing, sewing, knitting, and arithmetic.	Testament, Scripture Extracts, Psalms, Watts' and Church Catechisms, Reading-made-Easy, &c.	From 1 to 3 years.
2*d.* and 3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
2*d.* and 3*d.* ditto	Reading, spelling, and sewing.	Testament, Watts' and Church Catechisms, spelling-books, and alphabets.	From 1 to 3 years, some less.
2*d.* and 3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
2*d.* and 3*d.* ditto	Alphabet only.	Bible, Testament, and easy reading.	Uncertain.
2*d.* and 3*d.* ditto	Reading, sewing, and knitting.	Ditto ditto	Ditto
. .	Reading, spelling, and little sewing.	Testaments, spelling-books, alphabets, &c.	One to 3 years.
. .	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
2*d.* ditto	Reading, spelling, and sewing.	Reading-made-Easy, Testament, and alphabets.	One or 2 years.
2*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
Most part pay 2*d.*, some 3*d.* each per week.	Reading, spelling, knitting, and sewing.	Testament, easy reading, Church Catechism, and alphabets.	From 1 to 3 years.
2*d.* and 3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
2*d.* and 3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
2*d.* each per week.	Reading, and spelling.	A B C and very easy ones.	Uncertain.
2*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
2*d.* and 3*d.* each, weekly.	Reading, spelling, and sewing.	Small easy reading ones and the alphabet; elder scholars' Testaments and Church Catechism.	Uncertain.
2*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto Ditto	Ditto
3*d.* to 6*d.*, ditto	Reading, writing, and arithmetic.	Testament, History, Cobbett's Grammar, and easy reading.	Uncertain, not long established.
Weekly from 4*d.* to 1*s.*; quarterly 8*s.* to 15*s.*	Reading only.	Ditto ditto	Ditto

Locality.	9. Do any of the Children leave the School before they can read fluently, or write? If so, what number?	10. Do the Parents belong to the Church of England, or are any of them Dissenters, or any Roman Catholics?	11. Is any religious instruction given? If so of what kind? Name of Catechism, if taught?
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City (continued).			
110. Bedworth (*continued*). Bennett's Court.	Yes; majority.	Both.	. .
111. Ditto (Coal Pit Field).	Ditto	Both.	. .
112. Ditto	Some few for the Gift-schools.	Both.	Yes, of a general nature.
113. Ditto	Ditto	Both.	Ditto ditto
114. Ditto	Very seldom; very few.	Generally Dissenters.	Yes; upon the fundamental points, &c. Church and Watts' Catechisms.
115. Ditto	Sometimes; nearly one-third.	Both.	Not particular. Church Catechism.
116. Ditto	Ditto	Both.	Ditto ditto
117. Collycroft (Bedworth).	Yes; one-half.	Mostly Dissenters.	Watts' Catechism, and religious conversation.
118. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
119. Bulkington.	Yes; nearly half.	Both.	Yes, plain, as derived from the New Testament, Watts' and Church Catechisms.
120. Ditto	Ditto	Both.	Ditto ditto
121. Ditto	Ditto	Both.	Ditto ditto
122. Barnacle (Bulkington Par.)	Yes; to go to work.	Churchmen and Dissenters; majority Church.	Yes, of a general bearing.
123. Ditto ditto.	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto
124. Chilver's Coton.	Yes; nearly all.	Both.	Yes, "upon the principles of nonconformity," and Church, Albigenses, and Waldenses Catechisms.
125. Ditto	Ditto	Both.	Ditto ditto
126. Ditto	Yes; five-sixths.	Both.	No.
127. Ditto	Ditto	Both.	No.
128. Ditto	Ditto	Both.	No.
129. Ditto	Yes; some for the Free-school, others go to work very young.	Both.	Yes; the fundamental principles as generally believed, Church and Watts' Catechisms.
130. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Both.	Ditto ditto
131. Nuneaton.	Yes; one-third.	Both.	Church and Watts's Catechism.
132. Ditto	Ditto	Both.	Ditto ditto
133. Ditto	Yes; three-fourths.	Both.	Yes; Church Catechism.
134. Ditto	Ditto	Both.	Ditto ditto
135. Ditto (Attleborough).	Yes; half.	Both.	Not any particularly.
136. Ditto ditto.	Ditto	Both.	Ditto ditto
137. Ditto, Wash Lane.	Yes; more than one-half.	Both.	Not particular. Church Catechism.
138. Ditto ditto.	Ditto	Both.	Ditto ditto
139. Ditto, Back-lane, Dame School	Yes; one-half.	Both Churchmen and Dissenters; two Catholics.	Only the Church Catechism read.
140. Ditto, Bond-street, ditto.	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
141. Ditto, Hinck's Buildings, ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
142. Ditto, Abbey-street.	Yes; most of them.	Both Churchmen and Dissenters.	No.
143. Ditto ditto.	Ditto	Ditto ditto	No.
144. Ditto ditto.	"Oh, yes; half or more."	Both.	Not pointedly.
145. Ditto ditto.	Ditto	Both.	Ditto
146. Ditto ditto.	Yes; almost all.	Both.	No.
147. Ditto, Pye-corner.	Ditto	Both.	No.

DAY AND DAME SCHOOLS.

12. Do Parents in any cases keep their children from the School through religious scruples?	13. Do the Children attend any Sunday School? What? And in what number?	14. Of what Trades or Occupations are the Parents generally? What is the proportion of Weavers' Children.	15. Do they manifest much anxiety to have their Children properly educated?
. .	Some few; cannot say the exact number, as the children are at home.	Weavers, colliers, brickmakers, and labourers; weavers, three-fourths.	Some of them.
. .	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	6 to Dissenters' Schools.	Weavers, grocers, butchers, and miners; weavers, two-thirds.	Yes.
No.		Ditto ditto	Yes.
Not any.	Three-fourths attend the Dissenters' Sunday-school.	Drapers, weavers, miners, and and grocers; weavers, three-fourths.	Yes.
Never knew it to be done.	12, Church and Dissenters'.	Weavers and colliers; weavers, two-thirds.	Too careless, the major part.
Ditto ditto		Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	A few to the Dissenters.	Weavers and colliers, or miners; about equal.	Some certainly do.
No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	8, Independents'.	Weavers, shoemakers, publicans, and carpenters.	Generally.
No.		Ditto ditto	Generally.
No.		Ditto ditto	Generally.
No.	4, Sunday-school Union.	Weavers and labourers; weavers, three-fourths.	Yes.
No.		Ditto ditto	Yes.
No.	No.	Weavers, carpenters, &c.; weavers, three-fourths.	Yes, generally.
No.	No.	Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	Too young.	Weavers and miners; weavers, five-sixths.	"Oh! bless ye, we just keep *'em out a the wee.*"
No.	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	12, Church and Wesleyans'.	Miners, weavers, and labourers; weavers, three-fourths.	They like them to improve.
No.		Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	6, General Baptists'.	Weavers mostly; weavers, six-sevenths.	Some do.
No.		Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	No.	Weavers principally; weavers, three-fourths.	Yes.
No.	No.	Ditto ditto	Yes.
Not	General Baptists'.	Weavers; seven-eighths.	Some of them.
Not.	Very few, about four.	Ditto ditto	Ditto
Not experienced it.		Weavers principally; four-fifths.	Yes, some of them.
Ditto		Ditto ditto	Ditto
Think not.	Very few.	Principally weavers; five-sixths.	"Pretty well."
Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
Ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	Too young.	Weavers.	They are too young to acquire it.
No.	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Believe not.	5, Dissenters'.	Weavers, shoemakers, and bricklayers; weavers, three-fourths.	Some do.
Ditto		Ditto ditto	Ditto
No.	6 Baptists.	Weavers principally; four-fifths.	Yes.
No.	. .	Ditto ditto	. .

Locality.	16. Are any Children kept away through the inability of their parents to continue their payments or to make good their arrears?	17. Is their a deficiency of the means of Instruction within the neighbourhood?
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City.		
110. Bedworth (*continued*) (Bennett's-court).	"I do not know: they say so, but they can spend more than that in drink:" some may be too poor.	Yes.
111. Ditto (Coal Pit-field).	Ditto ditto	Yes.
112. Bedworth.	Very few.	Think not.
113. Ditto	Considerable numbers.	Ditto
114. Ditto	Very few.	Ditto
115. Ditto	Some few. When bad on the books they generally leave and go to some other school.	No; very near the Free or National School.
116. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
117. Collycroft (Bedworth.)	"Some may be, but beer-shops are the ruin of the school, families, and children."	Yes.
118. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Yes.
119. Bulkington.	"Yes, some are, when the trade is bad. Public-houses and beer-shops ruin many and render them careless."	Think not.
120. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
121. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
122. Barnacle (Bulkington Parish).	Many.	Yes; great deficiency.
123. Ditto ditto	Many.	Ditto
124. Chilvers Coton.	Yes, many are, and will not either pay up their arrears nor send their children.	On the Coventry read near Mrs. Ensor's there is.
125. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
126. Ditto	"God knows, the people are poor enough mon. I only have a shilling from the parish, and what I get by minding children a'n't much. Some won't pay if they can help it at all."	Yes.
127. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Yes.
128. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Yes.
129. Ditto	"Yes, some are very poor; others waste part of their earnings at the beer-shops, so that we have much trouble to get our money."	"Quite as many schools as we can get children to pay."
130. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
131. Nuneaton.	Yes.	Yes.
132. Ditto	Yes.	Yes.
133. Ditto	Yes.	Yes, for the poorer classes.
134. Ditto	Yes.	Ditto
135. Ditto (Attlebro').	Some for want of a principle to pay and an interest for their children's welfare.	Yes.
136. Ditto	Ditto ditto	Yes.
137. Ditto (Wash-lane).	"Some few, but more on account of carelessness, or because there are so many *beer-shops* to entice the men, where they spend the money that should pay for education."	"Thinks there is, up the lane."
138. Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
139. Ditto (Back-lane) Dame Schools.	Yes, many are unconcerned also.	Yes.
140. Ditto (Bond-street) ditto	Ditto	Yes.
141. Ditto (Hincks'-buildings) ditto	Ditto	Yes.
142. Ditto (Abbey-street).	Yes, in this neighbourhood.	Yes.
143. Ditto ditto	Ditto	Yes.
144. Ditto ditto	"Some say they cannot afford to pay."	Yes, of a valuable kind.
145. Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
146. Ditto ditto	"Yes, which bad legislation has caused."	Yes, of a proper kind.
147. Ditto (Pye-corner).	Ditto ditto	Ditto

AY AND DAME SCHOOLS.

18. What is the probable proportion in the neighbourhood of Children who never go to School?	19. Are they generally in the Street, or at Work? What kind of Work?	20. During what hours might they be spared for instruction?
"Could not tell if you would give the world."	"Too many are. Some go to work when they ought to be sent to school."	Evening best.
Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	ditto
• •	Very seldom go out.	• •
• •	Ditto	• •
One-fourth, probably.	Many are; some work; hand-winding, nursing, &c.	If schools were free, many might go during the day; elder ones in the evening.
Very few; perhaps one-tenth.	Streets.	Day.
Ditto ditto	Ditto	Ditto
One-fifth.	Streets and coal-pit banks; some work at silk-throwing, and nursing.	Cannot say.
Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
Cannot say, although it is true many do not go to any.	Yes.	Any time almost..
Ditto ditto	Yes.	Any time, almost.
Ditto ditto	Ditto	Ditto
One-fifth.	Ditto	Ditto
Ditto	Yes; elder ones winding and filling.	• •
One-fourth of the very young ones.	Ditto ditto	• •
Ditto ditto	Yes; and playing at home.	All day.
One-fifth.	Ditto ditto	Ditto
		Ditto
Ditto	Play mostly.	
Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Very young; one-sixth.	Ditto	Ditto
Ditto ditto	Yes; and play at home.	Ditto
One-fourth.	Ditto ditto	Ditto
Ditto	Great many are; others wind, nurse, some fill for weavers.	Many all day, others in the evening.
One-sixth.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
Ditto	Too many are.	All, if their parents earned more money to pay for them.
One-fifth.	Ditto	Ditto ditto
Ditto	Mostly.	All hours.
		Ditto
One-sixth.	Ditto	
Ditto	"Playing about mostly."	• •
One-sixth, or more.	Ditto	• •
Ditto	Yes.	Any time.
Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Cannot say.	Ditto	Ditto
Ditto	Many; and many go to work too early.	Night, I think.
Perhaps 1 in 4.	Ditto ditto	Ditto
Ditto	Yes, and the fields.	Any time.
One-sixth.	Ditto	Ditto
Ditto	Yes; some work too early, through lowness of wages and oppression.	• •

1. Locality.	2. Name of the Master or Mistress.	3. How many children are there on the School Books?	4. How many generally attend?					
			Boys.		Girls.		Age & Sex undistinguished.	Total of Children.
			Above 7.	Under 7.	Above 7.	Under 7.		
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City (continued).								
148. Nuneaton (*continued*). (Market-place.)	Mrs. Wagstaff.	30	..	..	..	..	40	40
149. Ditto, Burgage-alley.	Miss Tingle.	17						
150. Ditto, Abbey-street.	Miss Parnell.	30	..	..	..	..	28	28
151. Ditto, Tuttle-hill.	Rev. J. Pacey.	55	18	6	23	8	..	55
152. Stockinford (Nuneaton Par.)	Mrs. Gravner.	20	..	..	..	..	24	24
153. Ditto ditto	Mrs. Radford.	10						
154. Whittleford ditto	Mrs. Brown.	12	..	..	..	..	10	10
155. Hartshill (Hamlet).	Mrs. Clements.	25	About equal				34	34
156. Ditto.	Mrs. S. Ward.	15						
157. Ditto, Holbery-lane.	Mrs. Aught.	28	..	..	..	..	26	26
158. Ditto, Chapel-end.	Mr. Jeffcott.	8	..	..	..	..	25	25
159. Ditto ditto	Miss Hales.	20						
160. Ditto	Joseph Collins.	Day 42 Sunday 50	..	..	..	..	40	40
		Total in Day and Dame Schools	120	172	185	253	2436	3166

Locality.	9. Do any of the Children leave the School before they can read fluently, or write? If so, what number?	10. Do the Parents belong to the Church of England, or are any of them Dissenters, or any Roman Catholics?	11. Is any religious instruction given? If so of what kind? Name of Catechism taught?
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City (continued).			
148. Nuneaton (*continued*). (Market-place.)	Some few certainly do.	Both.	Yes, of a general character. Church and Watts' Catechisms.
149. Ditto, Burgage-alley.	Ditto	Both.	Ditto ditto
150. Ditto, Abbey-street.	Very few.	Both Churchmen and Dissenters, professedly; three Roman Catholics.	Yes; from the Bible and Church Catechism.
151. Ditto, Tuttle-hill.	A few whose parents are unable to bear the expense.	All Dissenters but twelve.	Religious instruction is given.
152. Stockinford (Nuneaton Parish.)	Yes; most of them.	Both Churchmen and Dissenters; no Catholics.	Conversational.
153. Ditto ditto	Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto.
154. Whittleford ditto	Yes; three-fourths.	Very few attend any place of worship.	Children too young.
155. Hartshill (Hamlet).	Some few do for other schools, and to nurse their younger brothers and sisters.	Both; majority Dissenters.	As well as we are able, of a plain nature, from the New Testament, Church Catechism, and Little Child's Catechism.
156. Ditto.	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
157. Ditto, Holbery-lane.	Yes; one-fourth probably.	Both; no Roman Catholics.	Yes; in accordance with the Church of England; Church and Little Child's Catechisms in Rhyme.
158. Ditto, Chapel-end.	Yes; one-third.	..	..
159. Ditto ditto	Ditto	..	..
160. Ditto	..	Churchmen, Independents, and Wesleyan Methodists.	Wesleyan.

AY AND DAME SCHOOLS.

5. What Sums Weekly or Quarterly do the Parents who send their Children to the School pay for their Instruction?	6. Enumerate what is taught.	7. Enumerate the Books and Lessons used in the School.	8. Upon the average how long does a Child remain at the School?
Weekly, from 4*d.* to 1*s.*; quarterly, from 8*s.* to 15*s.*	Reading, writing, arithmetic, history, knitting, fancy needle-work of all kinds.	Bible, Testament, Pinnock's Catechisms, Goldsmith's History, Church and Watts', besides grammar and easy reading.	From 1 to 3 years.
Ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
3*d.* and 4*d.* each weekly.	Reading, spelling, writing, and needle-work of all kinds.	Testament, Pinnock's and Church Catechism, and easy reading.	From 1 to 4 years.
The greatest number 2*d.*, others 3*d.*, and the first class 4*d.* per week. Sunday-school maintained by an annual sermon.	Reading, writing, spelling, grammar, and geography.	Not any but what are in general use; lessons published by the British and Foreign Society.	Generally at the age of 10.
2*d.* each per week.	Easy reading and spelling.	Easy reading or spelling books.	Uncertain.
2*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
2*d.* each weekly.	Reading and spelling.	Little easy reading books and alphabets.	. .
3*d.* each per week.	Reading and spelling, writing, rudiments of arithmetic, and sewing.	Bible and Testament, spelling-books, Catechisms, and Union Reading-books.	From 1 to 3 or 4 years.
3*d.* ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto
From 3*d.* to 6*d.* each, weekly.	"Reading, spelling, writing, knitting, marking, and all kinds of needle-work."	Bibles, Testaments, spelling-books, and Catechisms.	One to 4 years.
Weekly pence.	Reading, spelling, and accounts.	Bible, Testament, spelling-books, and Watts' Catechisms.	Uncertain.
Ditto	Reading, spelling, and sewing.	Ditto ditto	Ditto
Weekly pence, with a Sunday-school annual collection.	. .	Easy lessons from Scripture, Bibles, and Testament.	Until 14 years of age.

12. Do Parents in any cases keep their Children from the School through religious scruples?	13. Do the Children attend any Sunday School? What? And in what number?	14. Of what Trades or Occupations are the Parents generally? What is the proportion of Weavers' Children?	15. Do they manifest much anxiety to have their Children properly educated?
No.	20; majority to Dissenters'.	Weavers, drapers, butchers, grocers, and tailors; weavers, one-third.	Yes.
No.		Ditto ditto	Yes.
No.	The children not being present, cannot say.	Weavers, publicans, shoemakers, and grocers; weavers, one-half.	Yes.
Not any.	. .	The bulk are weavers.	No.
No.	6, Dissenters' Sunday-school.	Brickmakers, labourers, colliers, and weavers; weavers about equal to all the rest.	Some.
No.		Ditto ditto	Some.
No.	3, Church School.	Weavers mostly.	Not generally.
No.	6, Wesleyans and other Dissenters'.	Labourers and weavers; about equal.	Yes.
No.	8 Wesleyans and other Dissenters'.	Ditto ditto	Yes.
No.	4 Dissenters, two Wesleyans.	Weavers, carpenters, labourers, and manganese-men; weavers, one-third.	Yes.
. .	8 Independents'.	. .	. .
. .		. .	. .
. .	3, Wesleyans', 6 Independents', 4 Establishment.	Chiefly ribbon-weavers.	Many desire so to do, but through extreme poverty cannot.

Locality.	16. Are any Children kept away through the inability of their parents to continue their payments or to make good their arrears?	17. Is there a deficiency of the means of Education within the neighbourhood?
Weaving Parishes beyond the County of the City (continued).		
148. Nuneaton (*continued*). (Market-place.)	Yes.	Think not.
149. Ditto (Burgage-alley).	Yes.	Ditto
150. Ditto (Abbey-street).	"Think not, for I will not have them."	No!!
151. Ditto (Tuttle-hill).	Yes, a few.	Yes.
152. Stockingford (Nuneaton Parish).	Some from inability, and others keep them at home because they are unconcerned.	Yes, a great deficiency.
153. Ditto ditto	Ditto	Ditto
154. Whittleford ditto	Think they are.	Yes.
155. Hartshill (Hamlet).	Troubled to get it sometimes, partly on account of poverty, and part through improvidence.	No, of the kind; a free-school would be very acceptable to the poor.
156. Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
157. Ditto (Holbery-lane).	Yes; when bad they generally leave.	Plenty of schools, except they could be free of charge.
158. Ditto (Chapel-end).	. .	Yes.
159. Ditto ditto	. .	Yes.
160. Ditto	Many are these cases.	More children might be educated had we room and teachers in the Sunday school.

Means of Moral Improvement.

Other influences upon the moral character besides those of school instruction.

The preceding analysis of the circumstances of the Coventry weavers, in regard to their systems of industry and instruction, imperfect as it is, evinces the fallacy of the assumption, based upon the statistics of M. Guerry and others, that an increase in the number of offences (with a decline in their ferocity) is the *effect* of extended instruction, because frequently *concomitant* with it. It is seen to be rather the *effect* of some other influences of which the augmented instruction itself may also be a result; and one great class of such influences consists assuredly of the *industrial* circumstances, and another, scarcely less powerful, of the *political* circumstances of a people; designating by this latter term the various positions in regard to rank, wealth, proximity, &c., which men hold towards each other as citizens and neighbours. How all-powerful, too, in the formation of character, are those *domestic* influences with which the term "education" is never popularly associated!

Districts of the same industrial character will be superior in morality with superiority of intelligence.

When agricultural and manufacturing states or provinces are compared, and it is found that instruction and crime are both more limited in the former than in the latter,—a difference which, as regards crime, would be found far less than it appears were the police in both of the same character,—it is assumed that the crime has been produced by the instruction; but, were there good data for the purpose, there can be little doubt that the result of any comparison of the crime of instructed and of rude provinces, *of the same industrial character*, would be highly in favour of the former; for the counter-proposition involves the absurdity that knowledge of truth is the way to error.

Different industrial and pecuniary circumstances requiring different degrees of moral development.

The few data here collected must, of themselves, lead to the conclusion that different industrial and political circumstances require in the population a different degree of moral development to resist the temptations and corruptions to which they may be exposed under each. So that, while a manufacturing population, dissociated from the higher grades of society, may equally exceed the agricultural in instruction and in crime, the instruction, so far from being responsible for the crime, is its great antagonist, is almost the sole obstacle to a general demoralization, and ought most sedulously to be strengthened until it achieve a victory.

Intelligence the handmaid of virtue, and not the pander to crime.

One glance ought to show how monstrous is the doctrine that intelligence is oftener the pander to crime than the handmaid of virtue. Who are the criminals amid a wealthy, and, to some extent, an intelligent people? Are they mostly the educated, who, as men, are still exposed to temptations and infected by frailties, or are they

DAY AND DAME SCHOOLS.

18. What is the probable proportion in the neighbourhood of Children who never go to School?	19. Are they generally in the Street, or at Work? What kind of Work?	20. During what Hours might they be spared for Instruction?
. .	Yes; some work too early, through lowness of wages and oppression.	. .
. .	Many are in the streets; cannot say the causes.	. .
"Never go out scarcely; cannot say."	Ditto ditto	. .
One-half.	. .	. .
One-third, week days.	Numbers are in the street, others wind.	Many could be spared at five o' clock, P.M.
One-sixth, Sundays.	Mostly, some go the brick-kiln; and coal-pits, and others wind silk, &c.	Young, all day; elder ones in the evening.
One-fourth.	Yes.	Ditto ditto
One-eighth.	Some work at the stone quarries and manganese works; others wind and warp.	All.
Ditto	Ditto ditto	Parents cannot spare them; wages are so low.
. .	. .	. .
One-fourth day-schools, some of whom go to Sunday-schools.	Yes, the youngest; eldest go to work at winding and nursing.	Young all day, others in the evenings.
Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto	Ditto ditto
More than 100, who are capable of tuition, whose parents cannot pay.	Mostly in the streets.	. .

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

MEANS OF MORAL IMPROVEMENT.

not chiefly the ignorant and the brutal, overcome by animal passions, by the facilities for the indulgence of vicious propensities, and by the glitter of base enjoyments, to which the advancing but imperfect civilization of those around them has exposed their senses? From what classes are they the off-casts; from the intelligent men of the scattered handicrafts, or the ignorant masses of unskilled labourers? In the Coventry district itself, are they chiefly from the class of first-hand city journeymen, or from the ignorant and dispersed single-hand weavers? Regarding only those duties, the enforcement of which does not come under the cognziance of law, but is part of the daily morality of life,—who most neglect their duties to themselves and to their families; the more intelligent men of the city, or the more ignorant men of the country? Whose conduct has improved but that of the city weavers, as they have increased in intelligence?—and whose has deteriorated but that of the country weavers, remaining in their primitive ignorance, while civilization has spread new temptations around in the augmented wealth of society at large?

The choice not between "education" and "no education," but between "good" and "bad" education.

The choice is not between "education" or "no education," for the labouring masses. It is between "good" and "bad" education. Even the savage is not uneducated, for he is influenced from his infancy upward by every class of circumstances that operates upon men in civil societies, however few may be the influences of which, in his case, each class consists. No sane being can escape these influences, whether *industrial*, *instructional*, *political*, or *domestic*. To one class alone of them—the second—is the term education vulgarly applied; and this it is commonly attempted to separate from the rest, and regard as the one great source, untinged from every other, to which almost every moral phenomenon of civil life is referrible.

The relative force of each great class of influences on the welfare of men unascertained.

But no one has yet unravelled the great mystery of human progress, and shown that instruction, political institutions, and domestic manners, do not follow inevitably the mode of livelihood marked out by the physical endowments of each land and of each race; or that political institutions may not bless with peace, plenty, wisdom, and happiness, or grind the human race to the verge of brute existence; or that domestic manners may not be the sole well-spring of industry, of intelligence, and of freedom, or the source of every corruption; or that instruction may not be the parent of every virtue and every enjoyment, or merely a riveting of the bonds of superstition and debasement. We know how much of learned labour and philosophical acumen has been expended in tracing the effects of some sets of these

influences upon successive ages, and yet how little progress has been made in their classification, in the comparison of their effects, in the detection of their mutual influences, and in the deduction of those principles, so vital to human happiness, without which the field of the moral sciences is yet comparatively barren. In the woods, the fields, or the city, are the same moral principles at work for human weal or human woe, according as we know and obey, or despise and rebel against them.

Their mutual influences little studied.

It is time we should recognise the mutual action of these influences on human character and human welfare, and cease to deal empirically with one class, unmindful of the counteraction of all our efforts in another. The ardent advocate of the improvement of our general condition would thus be guided in the direction of his philanthropy; the timid would learn how vain are their apprehensions from new phenomena in one department of human affairs, when these are but the inseparable companions of those which they hail with delight in another; and the prejudiced and wilful would be compelled to recognise the moral laws which they too often dare to neglect or to break, to their own ultimate injury or destruction.

Feelings and habits little influenced by present school instruction.

How much men's conduct is directed by their *feelings* and *habits*, in forming which every class of influences above enumerated has daily sway, and how feeble to the same end must be the few *ideas*, or rather *words*, which school instruction now conveys to them in the district under examination, need scarcely be pointed out. And yet it is to such instruction that the term "education" is commonly applied, though it leaves the main current of feelings and of habits almost untouched.

"Instruction" cannot be stopped.

"Instruction" at best is simply the *dissemination* of facts and principles already acknowledged; "popular instruction" should be the dissemination of those most essential, not less to future happiness than to guidance in those duties which civil life imposes. The discovery of new truths, by which the dominion of man over external nature or over himself is extended and secured, is the privilege of a few gifted minds in each age, sometimes almost unknown to that world whose destinies they are so greatly influencing. With the aid of the press, this increasing dominion seems now to be for ever secured, and a share in it offered to all who can command some little leisure. Ideas can no longer be chained; the stimulus of mental excitements is already being applied among the people; and the sole question is, whether these excitements shall be at once the harbingers of peace and prosperity, or for a time the lures to anarchy and ruin.

Industrial reorganization demanding advanced intelligence.

Consisting no longer of scattered peasants and walled-up burgesses, the population of Great Britain has recently been subjected to an industrial reorganization, which has classed it into masses, of which those engaged in manufacturing pursuits are brought into close neighbourhood, and subjected to temptations and mutual incitements demanding a far higher intelligence than they have ever yet possessed, but now essential to their own welfare and to the peace of society. They are assembled; they are capable of combination; they are ignorant and largely depraved; they are therefore disaffected to the whole framework of society, and political riots are rapidly becoming national instead of local. The iron arms of our steam-engines no one dreams of stopping; the iron wings of commerce no one proposes to break; the new organization of society into larger masses everyone recognises as inevitable; and yet are there those who suppose that society is to be secured by retarding as much as possible a commensurate development of intelligence among the people, sufficient to secure their individual happiness and the public peace, under circumstances demanding so much higher a rate of information. Even the change which has recently taken place in our political constitution has been insufficient to awaken many from this baleful infatuation, which contemplates strength wielded by ignorance and brutality as far preferable to strength rendered wisely obedient by intelligence. The accession of wealth which has accrued from the more economical organization of society, was received by the propertied classes without hesitation; but it is vain to imagine that this advantage is secure without a proportionate advance in the physical welfare and intelligence of the people at large. And when it is remembered that "socialism" is the rising political philosophy of the masses, it will surely be thought high time to substitute sound information for its seductive theories.

The people already under a new system of "education."

Already our population are under a new system of "*education*." How changed are their industrial circumstances,—those which, in a free community, lead all others in their train! How changed are their political relations, as servants, as neighbours, and as citizens; and how different are their domestic habits! At work or at home they are under new influences; and vain in the extreme is the supposition that the absence of that school instruction which might guide these influences

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to a good end, renders them inoperative. In the Coventry district, I have endeavoured to note some few of the moral phenomena, consequent on its industrial reorganizations, and which characterise the several systems of industry now in existence. The chief diversities from this source result apparently from employment on large or on small capitals; from employment being afforded to women and children, or to men only; and from the concentration or dispersion of the hands around or away from their employers. The undertaking system of the town, and the small-farm system of the country, are equally abolished; and there are now the agricultural labourers, dispersed over the country with their employers, rude, but comparatively moral; the single-hand weavers, dispersed over the country *without* their employers, rude and demoralized; the city first-hand journeymen, in the same community with their employers, superior to every other class in intelligence and conduct; and the factory journeymen, perhaps the worst. When it is remembered that the tendencies of society are all towards the two industrial systems which present the worst moral results, the more urgent necessity of superior intelligence to counteract the demoralizing effects of dissociation from superior grades in society by the larger industrial combinations will surely be recognised, If it be not, the result will be a lesson to posterity, of which Adam Smith has most eloquently described the first passages.* If it be, the public peace is secured, and our prosperity and advancement will probably be carried beyond all earthly precedent.

"Instruction" a neglected part of the "education" determining their moral character.

"Popular instruction" is a part of the education of the labouring classes which, in its present state, is here effecting but little good, and, through its want of better direction, is even opening the door to some evils. The soundness of its moral character is indeed exceedingly doubtful, for it can awaken but little healthy intelligence, without which it does not nearly attain its object. All instruction is in its purpose moral, for it is intended to have ultimate influence on the actions of those who receive it, whose conduct will be decided, in any given set of circumstances, by their moral character at the moment. This will be compounded of their *physical constitution*, their *intelligence*, or power of thought, and their previous *habits*, to denote which latter, the term morals is commonly limited. The physical constitution determines the character of the instinctive feelings, and intelligence elevates the feelings and points out the consequence of actions, in futurity as well as in their effects on immediate happiness; but it is the previous habits which have the most overwhelming influence, especially since, with the great mass of mankind, they are far in advance of their knowledge of the theories to which their conduct is ultimately referrible. And yet it is only through the *intellect* that any influence can be brought to bear *directly* upon the moral character, through public efforts. How far superior the man of good habits as well as high intelligence is to the man of high intelligence whose early habits have been unfavourable, the world can bear abundant evidence, disturbed as each comparison must be by varying physical character. But that the latter would be yet more defective morally without the light of intelligence, cannot for a moment be doubted; and with its aid he may change rapidly all his habits, and become what is commonly called *moral*. To suppose, however, that morality and intelligence, because sometimes separated, are enemies, is a fatal error, with regard to whatever class in society it may be made. And it is obvious that blind habits of morality are quite insufficient to withstand the assaults of new circumstances and unwonted temptations. Hence the demand for superior intelligence among aggregated populations, dissociated from their employers, compared to that which will suffice amid a peasantry whose knowledge of each other and whose relations with their master form a moral police of considerable strictness.

Necessity of higher intelligence where men are dissociated from their masters, and no longer domestics, but citizens.

It is not merely geographical dispersion that will suffice to render the sympathies of the household and of the neighbourhood a sufficient tie to the essentials of morality; for the labourers may be a class of dispersed artizans, like those of the single-hand ribbon-trade, strangers to their masters, unknown to any other superior class, and left to the corruption of their own ignorance and discontent, in lieu of being bound by ties of community to their employers and to the general weal. Whether dispersed or assembled, instruction is indispensable where the labourers are no longer in their former position almost of domestics; for the intelligence of the employer, which formerly influenced their moral habits, while they were in intimate relation with him, is no longer available to their guidance. By their dissociation they

* Wealth of Nations, b. v. c. 1.

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have become citizens; and for their guidance as such they require an improved intelligence, to give them a class morality, which they have never possessed. It is true that the intelligence which shows men the results of their own actions, likewise points out to them the tendency of those of others, giving them a political existence which forms an entirely new element in society. This is one of which the unwonted phenomena have recently spread alarm among the timid; but the sole cause of alarm is in the ignorance of society, and not in its intelligence. Our physical civilization is fast placing new forces at the command of the former; and fatal is the error of awaiting political storms, without securing for the foundation of society an intelligence and a morality equal to meet the new influences, and to wield the power which they have created.

Necessity of popular instruction to meet new circumstances.

It is by "instruction" alone that we can hope to redeem the unskilled masses of our manufacturing population from vice, with its attendant miseries, and from disaffection. "Instruction" alone can restore them to the *relative* position in regard to their employers and to society at large which they formerly held; for it will make them respectable and respected. Some supplementary aids may be granted, but it is to the development of superior intelligence, by means of a sound religious and secular instruction, that we can alone look for large and permanent influences on their condition. The term "education" I have heretofore employed in its widest sense, to describe the operation of all the influences bearing upon character; but it is more commonly used to designate every branch of "instruction" alone; and vulgarly is accepted as meaning only "school instruction." "Education," in the second of these senses, is a means of influencing the condition of the labouring classes, by which the higher, with the aid of Government, might give to society in its new form that moral foundation which is its real security and the root of its prosperity. The means at their disposal are unlimited, and their voice must sanction and second the measures of Government, before those means can be rendered available. But, just as individuals are slow to attribute their misfortunes to defects in their own character, so is society at large, for the most part, blind to its own moral deformities, how imminent soever the dangers to which they expose it.

Not less politic than charitable.

While moral and physical evils afflict large classes of our labourers, not without danger to all society from the ignorance and disaffection of combinable masses, Christian charity and enlightened policy will equally dictate the propriety of advancing the rising generation to a superior moral character; superior in intelligence, superior in habits, and superior in the purity of their religious sentiments. The object to be attained in regard to the great mass of men is to make them good labourers, good fathers, good subjects,—in short, good and happy men; and to this end no *general* development of their faculties can be too great; the *individual* instances of higher instruction, unfavourable to happiness, being only those of peculiar and unfortunate talent, which will occur in every state of society. It is a practice almost universal, to estimate the sufficiency of instruction among the labouring classes by the present relative intelligence of those above them; a most unfortunate test, and one wholly disregarding the changes in the education of the latter, which are not less needed than inevitable. The middle and higher classes are themselves advancing, and cannot avoid it. If they attempt to hold back, they will find the peace of society endangered by the insufficiency of the existing standard of feelings and intelligence among all classes to maintain in health the intricate relations of modern society, and results the most disastrous may ensue. On the other hand, that a higher intelligence, which shall develop the energies of all classes, and make them more fully conscious of their true relations, must increase the general wealth and happiness, we have abundant proofs.

Disproportionate intellectual development to be feared on account of its bad soical tendencies when in the upper, rather than when in the lower classes.

Disproportionate intellectual development in some one class might possibly be injurious rather than beneficial; but it is not by commencing with the lower that this danger will be incurred. Intelligence there sown will compel and aid a commensurate development above; while the comparative moral feebleness of a labouring population might lead to political institutions and private manners equally destructive to the whole of society. On the proportion of intelligence in the several classes of society, and its proportion throughout the whole of them to the exigencies of its industrial organization, will depend the internal peace and happiness of the community. For the happiness of all it is impossible for the general development to be too high, whatever may be the re-action upon the general organization of society; for necessity must always compel men to labour, and they will be the more industrious and economical the higher may be their appreciation of comforts. The measure which will most readily ensure this general development is the in-

struction of the labouring classes. Under all circumstances it is desirable to advance this education, but, in the extensive re-organization of society now in progress, and of which we have some little evidence in the instance of the Coventry district itself, the necessity of it is imperative.

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Popular instruction necessarily at first imperfect, and partial in its operation;

The physical, intellectual, and moral education of a people,—as the development of their corporeal and intellectual powers and the formation of their habits are commonly termed,—derives its character, to an extent beyond computation, from the influences of the workshop, the home, and the political community, as they already exist; but *instruction*, by awakening a general intelligence, may exercise a great influence even in improving the education of adults; and, by placing the children for a considerable portion of their time under a prepared system of influences, the whole character of society may rapidly be improved. But very imperfect must be the best system of popular instruction that society could now produce, and successive generations would be required to mature its fruits, since the school can but partially counteract the debasing influences to which the character of the children must still be exposed beyond its walls. In our present popular schools, physical and moral training are for the most part wholly unknown, and intellectual development is scarcely at all extended to the inculcation of ideas, or the use of them, but merely conveys the mechanical arts of reading and writing, with some little arithmetic. The Sunday schools generally attempt, and partly accomplish, this object, together with the inculcation of the first truths of religion; the national schools afford little more than Sunday-school instruction every day in the week; how little superior are any other of the popular schools, whether public or private, is too obvious; and little higher can be the relative character of education in the next ascending grade of society, if we may judge from the extensiveness of the conviction that even the ill-disseminated little arts of scholarship above enumerated are an "over-education" for the children of labourers. Instruction for the labourer goes no further; the cup is put empty into his hands; and either he knows not its use and lets it fall, or he eagerly quaffs the excitement offered by religious and political enthusiasts. Again, it is obvious, in the case of instruction, as of the more numerous influences which constitute education in its widest sense, the choice is not now between instruction and no instruction, but between good and bad instruction. The cup can no longer be withheld even by those who would most wish to do so; and, when draughts so stimulating are offered, the number who stupidly let it fall will rapidly diminish.

but it must progress; and the choice is not now between "instruction" and "no instruction," but between "good" and "bad" instruction.

Intellectual culture embraces both religious and secular instruction, and is a part of moral culture in its widest sense; its purpose being to influence the conduct, feelings, and habits of the pupils, which can be influenced by public efforts only through this means. So far from the cultivation of the intellect being inimical to religion and to virtue, it is through the intellect alone that either can be brought to influence the character or conduct, where a population, like that of the single-hand trade, is brought up to a great extent without habits derived from either. It is the extension of intellectual culture, in this wide sense, among the labouring classes, that should be sought, for its moral effects. But we have no preternatural agency in our hands to employ; we have merely the forces of the community itself, whether directed by the councils of the nation at large, by local municipalities, by voluntary associations, or by private benevolence; and it is only by enlightening public opinion on the direction of these forces that any effective progress can be made.

Intellectual culture the only method of influencing the character where habits already unfavourable.

Popular instruction must, it is obvious, be directed for the most part to the rising generation; for not only are the habits of adults already formed, but they are actively occupied in the duties and the enjoyments of civil life, to which it is the express purpose of instruction to train the young. Many, it is true, seek in public worship to cherish those feelings of adoration towards the Almighty, and good-will towards men, which are the light of our religion, and form a ground for knowledge, and for habits which, thus rooted, will bear the better fruit the higher their cultivation; and the most active of the labouring classes at Coventry, as elsewhere, still seek daily to extend the sphere of their worldly intelligence, but their habits and their destiny are for the most part fixed. It is the influences which can be brought to bear upon childhood that are the most important, because the least expensive, the most efficient, and the most readily applied.

Popular instruction must be mainly directed to the rising generation.

Hence we find the term "education" commonly employed to designate "the instruction of youth by an *academical* agency." And it is the great object of the

Existing Popular instruction chiefly *public*; and the

promoters of such "education" to awaken the public mind to its importance, to organize society for the provision of an academical agency, to prepare that agency, and to direct its operations. To the importance of its employment the public are gradually awakening; but the principles upon which it shall act are by no means popularly obvious. Instruction, such as it is, we see to be supplied in the district under examination, partly by public endowments, partly by voluntary association, and partly as a matter of private trade; but the great body of popular instruction is already *public*, or provided by other means than in the way of trade; and the questions of injury to private interests, or sufficiency of voluntary demand for instruction, are therefore already determined. Private interests are already interfered with, to the direct injury even of the public, should the voluntary subscriptions which supported the free schools prove, as they often do, insufficient; when the public school is closed, at the same time that a certain number of petty private schools which it superseded are abolished. The existing public instruction proves also that the higher classes of the community do not in the main consider the appreciation of instruction on the part of the poorer, and their means of procuring it, to be sufficient to give their faculties and feelings the development and rectitude which the general interests of an advancing society demand. So far, therefore, from private interests in schools being injured by a national system, where those interests have any just foundation, it is on the contrary certain that the complaints almost universally made by the best schoolmasters, that the voluntary payments are both insufficient and irregular, would be at once removed; for these are the very persons who would be required to serve in such a system, which would bring to the advancement of instruction a degree of public attention and an extent of resources which no private efforts could ever have called forth.

questions of interference with private school interests, and of the sufficiency of private demand for instruction, already therefore determined.

Under the voluntary system of public instruction which at present subsists, the schools are both insufficient and very partially distributed; and precisely those districts which most require instruction are those which are most neglected. It would almost appear indeed, from the accompanying returns of the unendowed public day-schools, as though voluntary aid, where it does step in, is less and less available where it is more and more needed. Thus, while the national school-fee in Coventry is only 1*d.* per week, at Sowe it is 2*d.*, and at Anstey and Shilton from 4*d.* to 8*d.*; which is a price as high as is charged by any of the ordinary day-schools in the district, and entirely abrogates all claim which the national school there can have to be considered a means of gratuitous instruction. To patronize such a school is little other than to maintain an inferior seminary at a high price, to the exclusion of any better instruction. Judging from the falling off produced in the Lancasterian school at Coventry by advancing the children's fees to 2*d.* per week, a national school at the high price of the Anstey school must be an obstacle in the way of instruction rather than any aid to its extension.

Insufficiency of the voluntary system of public instruction to accomplish its purposes.

Although public opinion has been extensively awakened to the necessity of some popular instruction, its appreciation of the purposes which it may serve, and of the quality of the instruction to be offered, are exceedingly defective. There is no centre to which to look for the best lights which the age can afford on the subject, and no educational literature worthy of the name; for the schoolmasters are too poor and uninformed, and the public too indifferent, to support it. The interest which is bestowed in many useless public contentions would be more usefully employed in the field of education; for, without this interest, which has to be enlightened as well as awakened, little can be hoped from the legislature, influenced by so many counteracting interests. The employment of a lecturing missionary by the Sunday-school Society of Coventry is well worthy of imitation by other associations. Every opportunity of public jubilee or general congregation should be seized, to render service to the same cause: the press will then lend its aid, and the desire of progress will soon dictate recourse to a central organization.

Want of an enlightened interest in the cause of popular instruction, which, if awakened, would quickly seek a central organization.

The existing voluntary associations and charitable trusts, it will generally be allowed, are ill adapted for carrying out so important an object as that which they propose to themselves. To form an opinion as to the organization of existing social elements which shall be the best adapted, it will be requisite to estimate the progress which has already been made, from the absence of all combined effort, through every variety of voluntary association, to that municipal organization to which voluntary associations for objects of common benefit constantly tend. For purposes of police, this progress is very rapid; and, for purposes of popular school instruc-

Organization of existing social elements which may be best adapted to the purpose of popular instruction.

tion, the progress would be equally rapid, but for differences in religious belief, that form in this empire the text of quarrels, which have for the most part far other than spiritual interests and passions for their basis. These are political in their nature, and wholly beyond the bounds of the present investigation.

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But for political differences on religious grounds, a municipal system of instruction, centrally organized, would be practicable.

Were it not for these differences, which bring all the strife of political party into the field of instruction (a pollution from which maturer reflection will some day free it), I could have no hesitation in concluding, from the extent to which voluntary efforts have been carried in the Coventry district, that the nation is prepared for the adoption of a general system of education, locally under a municipal and clerical superintendence, and centrally organized, so as to attain an uniform diffusion of the best lights, and to render extra aid to the most helpless localities. A municipal organization, supported by compulsory assessments, in lieu of voluntary association maintained by subscription, is the proper method to be resorted to, when the object to be attained is one of common benefit, for which the liberal and benevolent ought not alone to be burthened. And the extent of the local municipalities, and the amount of authority which shall be given to them or assigned to the central authority, ought to be determined by their respective adaptation to serve the ultimate purpose, with a sufficient responsibility to the public. Thus, in the case of popular instruction, the maintenance of the school, the appointment of teachers, and its moral superintendence, would properly devolve upon the local authorities, while the provision of books and implements, the perfection and enforcement of systems, the training and examining of masters, from whom the local committees should elect, and the general superintendence of instruction, would belong to a national department. The former duties are more than the school committees of the voluntary associations now *perform;* and some of the latter are functions which, for the most part, they totally neglect, abuse through ignorance, or are incapable of exercising.

A municipal system necessary to popular instruction; and extent to which, when practicable, it may first employ its efforts.

That any efficient system of popular education can subsist without such a municipal organization, is utterly impossible; that sooner or later we must have an efficient system, is inevitable; and that the local communities will ultimately agree to bring up the children in order, charity, and intelligence, without compromising any religious principle whatever, I do not doubt. The extent to which education should at any given time be municipalised, will be plainly indicated by the growing habits of society. The extent to which it could at first be carried out, would be to the provision of infant and primary instruction for children of the labouring classes up to 14 years of age; leaving private exertions free as at present, and the command of parents over their children equally free, whether to send them to school at all, and to what school. It is probable that the rigid assessment of a school rate would induce great numbers of those now indifferent, to send their children to school, in claim of their *right* to gratuitous or nearly gratuitous instruction in return for that rate. And if this proved insufficient, provision might be made for fining those who suffered their children to be both unemployed and absent from school; while the principle of the Factory Act, which asserts, on the part of the state, a moral superintendence of the children, might ultimately, if necessary, be *gradually* applied, to prevent even employment of children from detaining them from school, as some of the Sunday-school returns voluntarily suggest. The existing population has based its subsistence on the early labouring of the children, and too harsh an interference with private habits, however injurious these may be to the welfare of the people, would produce some unhappiness and discontent, which it is the constant duty of government to avoid. But the very consideration which prescribes but a slow interference, dictates the absolute necessity of it; for nothing can compensate the state for the moral decrepitude of its citizens.

Religion made by many the whole matter of popular instruction.

That all the advantages of an efficient system of popular instruction, which shall, for the first time, give to the rising generation the habit of thought, will for ever be sacrificed to doctrinal differences, I cannot believe. That religion is a necessary part of instruction, no member of a Christian community will dispute; but that it should form *the whole matter of it*, before the intellect is awakened to a comprehension of any of its principles, as the National School system seems to assume, I cannot but regard as a grievous error. The effect of this education of words, with dull children, is too often to deaden the faculties, and, with the lively, to make sacred subjects be regarded as a toy, and the Scriptures as a curious fiction,—of which I could adduce several remarkable instances. The one class, upon which the course pursued has these effects, may grow up superstitious, though ignorant, and the other hypocritical, though infidel; but both are equally without religion, which is never

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Difficulties arising from the almost exclusively religious character given to popular instruction.

dissociated from practical morality, while their intelligence has not been awakened to apply itself to their own circumstances, in which good works are to bear testimony to sound principles.

"The Bible, and the whole Bible," is the watchword of one large party, in regard to instruction, while the sacred volume positively is not the common lesson-book in the schools of either of the great educational societies in which the country places its chief confidence, but only selections—in the one, Mrs. Trimmer's, and, in the other, a volume entitled Scripture Lessons; but the precedent which is thus afforded for selections upon which all sects could agree, such as those adopted by the Irish Board of Education, does not meet the claim advanced by the same party, that the children in public schools shall not only read the Scriptures, but be instructed also in the interpretation of them conveyed in the catechism of an especial creed. This, it is seen, is the principle of the Church schools, while that of the Lancasterian is to leave catechetical instruction to the pastors of each religious denomination.

The whole Bible, without explanation, an improper lesson-book.

Though nothing can equal the beauty of many historical and moral lessons for children to be derived from the Bible, yet the indiscriminate use of the Scriptures, *without* doctrinal note or comment, as the *sole* school-lesson book, I sincerely believe to have little tendency either to awaken the reasoning powers of children, or to instil into their minds religious feelings; both being rather deadened by the constant repetition of words and reference to manners, the meaning of which they are incapable of conceiving. The British and Foreign Society direct their schoolmasters to give only verbal comment, so as to afford an intelligent reading of the Scriptures without reference to doctrine. To accomplish the one, without trenching upon the other, must indeed be a difficult task, with all the uprightness and discretion with which it may be generally carried out; but, if doctrinal explanation be not given, this attempt is the sole alternative, unless, as is generally found in the private schools of the middle classes, some other books were used for common lessons, and the reading of Scripture and the learning of catechisms were reduced to the business of classes, from which those parents who choose their children to withdraw, might be allowed to have them return home or proceed with other school occupations. While the lessons of those children whose parents agree in doctrine with the master are thus unfettered, the religious instruction of those who are withdrawn is no less attended to than it would have been without this system, the example of which will rather incite their guardians to improve its character, for which we have seen that there is abundant occasion. The difficulty is thus reduced to the choice of a master, so far as it is influenced by his religious tenets; a matter which is best left to the determination of the local community of ratepayers, as represented in the school committee by whom he would be elected. If this body were fairly constituted, dissensions on such grounds would not be frequent; means would be found within itself to accommodate them, and they would be local, and not national.

With explanation, it is difficult to avoid doctrinal peculiarities.

Religious instruction in public schools, should therefore, as in private ones, form only a part of the system from which dissentients might withdraw.

Religious scruples demanding the same freedom in public instruction as in private.

That public money can, in the present age, be long voted in aid of education on any less comprehensive system, it is difficult to conceive, for the Legislature will not disregard the conscientious scruples of any class of citizens. These scruples prevail variously in different localities, and among different populations; but everywhere they are entitled to perfect freedom, under whatever plan may be devised for combining the efforts of society to purposes of popular instruction. Those which are merely prejudices will ultimately expire, where opposition would have made them be cherished as vital principles. The asperity which recent events have attached to doctrinal differences, is happily not likely to check for ever the flow of mutual charity, and the course of general improvement. The proposal here made claims, in the public schools, merely the same liberty which all society is exercising, and will continue to exercise, in private schools of every class,—to the experience of which, and of various public schools also, I may appeal for the limited and rational use which would be made of it.

Schools in which they are not respected, have no claim to suppor from the public treasury.

Unless religious instruction be thus made a distinct section of the school duties, with liberty for dissentient parents to withdraw their children, or unless the British and Foreign School system be adopted, of Scripture reading alone, without denominational explanations (from which it should still be permissible for dissentient parents to withdraw their offspring), the grant of public money to schools is indefensible. While the National Schools are supported solely by the voluntary contributions of subscribers, their committees are fully justified in imposing whatever conditions they please upon admission into them, without assigning any reason whatever beyond their own will and pleasure; but, when they receive money from the public purse,

as they so extensively have through the Central Society, the exclusion of all children whose parents will not have them brought up in the doctrines of the Church of England requires an explanation; and the sole defence advanced is the injury which the *discipline* of the school would sustain from permitting children to be withdrawn from any of the classes—a plea which rather impugns the efficiency of the school, than answers the fearful charge of closing a school for secular instruction, deriving support from public funds, against a large portion of the inhabitants, probably in a locality, as in one near Coventry, quite incapable of maintaining a second on a different system. It is surely unworthy of our National Church thus to avail itself of a geographical accident to force its dominion, under the penalty of secular ignorance. At least the State cannot ultimately sanction the application to such a purpose of money voted chiefly for secular instruction, and contributed by the whole community.

The great purpose of any new system of "national education" must be *secular instruction*; a state provision being already made for religious instruction.

The great purpose of any system of so called "national education" now to be established in England would, in fact, be to provide efficient *secular instruction* for its youth. For the *religious instruction* of all ages and classes, a state provision is already made; and if this be insufficient, it should be augmented in the localities where it is so, in accordance with the framework of our ecclesiastical constitution, which has for its object to provide, together with religious consolations, all the religious instruction which it is the express duty of its clergy to control. And though the secular teacher, whose support it is now proposed to make a public object, may advantageously be employed in inculcating some of the first truths of religion, in which he must be under the direction of his pastor, yet the tendency of much warm advocacy to throw upon the incompetent secular teacher the whole of the too much neglected clerical duty of the religious instruction of youth, cannot be too much deprecated. No arguments can be advanced in favour of a public provision for religious worship and religious instruction which do not equally apply to secular instruction; and, however desirable it may be to combine the first rudiments of religious instruction with the duties of the secular teacher, yet, were unity or compromise on this subject hopeless, the instruction of children in secular knowledge alone by the master of the daily school, leaving religious instruction to the home and to the pastor, is a service to be rendered by the state, of the first magnitude, and one which is shown by the daily conduct of men, in regard to private instruction, to be so esteemed by society. To institute a good system of secular instruction alone, were it debarred from uniting with it religious instruction, would be worthy the efforts of any enlightened government; for religious instruction, so far from being injured, would be pursued still more actively by the clergy whose express duty it is, and by the voluntary associations and public institutions already devoted to its advancement.

A system of popular instruction, embodying freedom of religious instruction, would be generally embraced.

So great is the want of efficient popular instruction in the Coventry district, yet so extensive are the unaided efforts of voluntary associations to procure instruction of some kind for the labouring classes, that I must believe its inhabitants generally would gladly lend their support to any good system of national education embodying the principle of freedom of religious instruction. It is impossible to conceive of any method which shall not embody the freedom of religious instruction, by which the state can serve the cause of education, and at the same time respect the conscientious scruples of the subject. It will be the duty of the central authority to see that the secular instruction is good and the religious instruction not neglected; but whether the latter should be conducted on a system of doctrinal instruction for all the children, collectively or separately, or on a system of scripture reading alone, (so that individual parents had liberty to withdraw their children from it), might safely be left to the direction of the several local committees, in like manner as the choice of the master, in which this question would frequently be involved. If the *minority* of a school committee in favour of a different system were more than one-half or two-thirds the number of the majority, in a place which might support two or more schools, it should be in the power of that large minority to claim the adoption of their plan in the second school, or in alternate schools. Votes in electing the school committee should perhaps be valued according to the amount of each individual's assessment; and ministers of all persuasions should be ex-officio deliberative members of it, but without votes in its proceedings. The central authority ought to have the arrangement of school districts and the determination of the number of schools absolutely requisite in each. Any greater number upon which the school committee should determine might be created, but no fewer. And the central board might have the power still to extend assistance to the plans of private sub-

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

MEANS OF MORAL IMPROVEMENT.

Necessity and means of immediate improvement in school machinery under a national system.

scribers, in like manner as it is at present afforded though the two central voluntary societies.

If, on the principle of freedom of religious instruction, which would exempt every child whose parents should object to it on the grounds of conscience, from instruction in any catechism or creed to which they did not assent, an organization for efficient public schools can be attained, the preparation of a good agency for conveying instruction will become the immediate labour of the best talent in the empire. And though its perfection must be a work of time, especially in the education of schoolmasters, the progress towards a good system would be very rapid. Public day and infant schools would be the first instituted; the latter much rather as nurseries of the highest character for the manufacturing population, of which the playground is the most valuable portion, than as a means of intellectual instruction. The six infant schools which the philanthropy of a few individuals have established in the town and neighbourhood of Coventry, are by far the most efficient to their purpose of all the educational institutions which it possesses; for the inefficiency of most of its day-schools of every description can scarcely be overrated. Want of better means of instruction is, in fact, a general complaint, and various returns point out the want of additional infant schools, which should be free, one in the neighbourhood of Spon-street, another about Much Park-street, another towards Brick-kiln, another about Read's-row, and another at the top of New-street, besides others in the outlying parishes. The infants cannot be sent far; and carelessness and dishonesty in regard to the schooling of their children are complaints against the lowest class of the population, almost universal on the part of the dame-school keepers. Free day-schools are earnestly desired for every part of the district; and the teachers of existing schools, dependent wholly or partly upon payments by the parents, complain not only of the difficulty of subsisting by them, but of their entire subjection to the caprice and ignorance of the parents in the management of the children. In fine, the ignorance, depression, and vice which exist in the district, are alone evidence conclusive as to the low intelligence of the population bred in it.

Necessity of improving the position and character of schoolmasters.

The oblivion and almost contempt in which the instructors of childhood chiefly subsist, give them little encouragement to improve their management of the charge which is entrusted to them in utter ignorance of its importance. The institution of a system of public instruction, by giving the schoolmasters new principles of action, in rendering their profession more honourable, even if not more lucrative, would bring aids to the general intelligence and welfare, far beyond what thousands lavished on the present voluntary plans could purchase. Without teachers, the lever of system has no fulcrum; and teachers cannot be had until their profession shall be raised to such estimation that the pursuit of it may be worthy of those who have received the liberal education which is deemed the necessary introduction to other liberal occupations. The English universities are wholly unadapted to train schoolmasters for the people; and express training-schools, drawing their students from the lower schools, must necessarily become one of the first objects of solicitude. Without men of general intelligence, of good feeling, and of method, encouraged by a proper estimation of their functions, it is vain to expect that moral elevation of the little school community, which it is the heartfelt desire of every educationist to attain. And to raise and sustain such men, the exertions of Government, and a public character given to their office, are equally indispensable.

Necessity of improving the quality of popular instruction.

In the existing schools a majority of the children learn to read, many to write, and some to cast accounts; but they acquire neither ideas nor the habit of using them; their faculties being, on the contrary, rather injured by the habit of incessantly reading without comprehending. A well-conducted infant school does far more to cultivate the powers of thought, than most of the national schools; and it is to be hoped, that the principles which have been pursued in their institution will receive a much wider application, in lieu of the present exercises of mere memory upon words without ideas. Any one who is familiar with the drowsiness which prevails in a National School, whether that of Coventry or any other, cannot but recognize the justice of Professor Pillans's observation before the Commons' Committee of 1834, as regards the effects of the existing National School system, however much he have mistaken its purposes:—"I conceive," stated this gentleman, "that the great defect of the system which the Church has patronized particularly hitherto, lies in the extremely limited nature of the information communicated, and the object being almost entirely confined to making members of the Church of England, and inculcating a blind submission to her, instead of imparting,

along with religious instruction, that general information and intelligence which alone can make a school ultimately valuable to an individual who is to be in the lower walks of life. So narrow and unattractive is the instruction given in the schools which call themselves, by a misnomer, 'National,' that I think it by no means unlikely that a considerable proportion of the pupils, ten years after quitting them, will be found to have lost the power of reading. So little are their minds imbued with the love of books or of knowledge by the school business, that they have little temptation, in the ordinary circumstances of a life of labour, to keep up the acquirement. I conceive that by far the most important point to be considered in a national system of education, is the course of instruction that ought to be followed; and that, as long as the books perused, and the instructions delivered upon them, are of an exclusively religious cast, it is vain to expect that school training will contribute materially to form a moral, religious, and intelligent population."

Habits of mind more important than words or even ideas in the memory.

How extensively these observations apply not only to the National Schools, but to the whole system of popular instruction in the Coventry district, the preceding school returns bear abundant evidence. It would here be out of place to attempt any outline of the improved systems of instruction which might be adopted to train the children in health, intelligence, order, and religion; but the great object of every system should rather be to form good habits of mind, than to overload the mere memory with words, or even with ideas, though they might be of the kind usually called "useful." To this end, which the parents cannot appreciate, it will be essential that the teacher should not be wholly dependent for his daily bread upon their caprice; for their senses must commonly be addressed by some proof of mere scholarship in the children, to produce which far higher purposes would still be, as they now are, sacrificed. Parents would still have full liberty to remove their children, and to place them where they chose; but the schoolmaster would look for countenance from an efficient inspection by a central agency, affording him encouragement, assistance, and information that would make him the instrument almost of a moral regeneration.

Infant and elementary schools first requisite.

Infant schools on an improved system would be requisite for the children under seven years of age; and elementary schools for those from seven to fourteen; in which latter the incidental method of teaching should be largely employed, together with the monitorial system, under strict subordination to the master. A good play-ground should be attached to every school, with facilities for gymnastic exercise; and the use of tools in various kinds of manual labour might be taught to every boy, for ultimate purposes of domestic comfort or recreation. The education of boys at school in special trades is a project of far more dubious propriety, and one in which their natural guardians must have an unbiassed veto. The proper industrial training of the child of a ribbon weaver, which is to follow the trade of its parents, is at its father's home; and if a trade is to be pursued by children of tender age, as part of the system of their education, the control of it must be left wholly to the parent, though the attendance of the child at school for a limited number of hours daily, to receive other branches of instruction, ought to be claimed by society, and willingly granted by the parent. The existing evening instruction of children at a few private schools, exemplifies the voluntary adoption of this principle. Nor should the intelligence thus awakened be left without food. Small libraries of sound morality and useful and interesting information ought to be attached to the schools in each locality, to be equally accessible to adults and to the rising generation. The accompanying returns show the present utter absence of any such materials for mature thought, except at the Mechanics' Institutes, which are above the means of the lower classes of labourers, and wholly unadapted for rural districts. Various of the school returns describe this want of books; and many of the *vivâ voce* answers suggested, very rationally, the improvement which would result from making grammar and arithmetic more simple.

Together with school libraries.

Effects of the introduction of a national system on existing public schools.

The schools which would be superseded by a national system would be the public *unendowed* day schools; and it can scarcely be doubted that the funds of the *endowed* day schools for the labouring classes would, in most cases, be applied to the best advantage in support of such a system. The endowments devoted to the education of children of the higher classes ought to be exempted from interference until the education of those classes should, in the probable course of events, also become a subject of municipal co-operation, with a central authority. But whatever may be the plans ultimately available for the general extension of the higher branches of instruction, they are beyond the limits of my investigations into the influences which bear, or may be brought to bear, *immediately* on the labouring classes of the weaving trade. The fourth class of public schools,—the

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Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

MEANS OF MORAL IMPROVEMENT.

Importance of maintaining the voluntary system of Sunday schools, as a means of moral and religious training.

Sunday Schools,—it would be a grievous error to wrest from their voluntary basis, which alone gives life to the moral influences they chiefly exercise. However imperfect as schools, they are of great value, and capable of great improvement and extension, as the means of a kindly intercourse between different classes and different ages in the common field of religious duty; for the supporters of such institutions are themselves the teachers, and regard themselves to a considerable extent as the moral guardians of their pupils. These schools form a system of religious instruction, based on the most truly Christian principles; and their improvement and extension as such would render them important auxiliaries to the day schools of a national system. The latter would, in fact, relieve them from the labour of merely literary instruction, and leave all their energies to be applied to religious instruction, which would not be neglected with such means as they afford, and so active a spirit as pervades the religious youth of England. In the support of these schools there is at present a remarkable unanimity. The Sunday School Union extends its aid to those of every sect; and in some towns, as at Stockport, the children of all sects are instructed in the same Sunday school.

Assistance may be rendered to popular instruction by government, though a national system for the present should prove unattainable.

Should the contentions of party continue to occupy the field of education, so as to render the introduction of any national system for the present hopeless, the authority of government may still be beneficially exerted with the means placed at its disposal; and no locality can have greater claims to assistance, beyond the usual allowance that has been made in aid of subscriptions, than the rural portions of the Coventry weaving district, especially the parishes of Nuneaton, Coton, Bedworth, Foleshill, and Bulkington, the population of which consists chiefly of workpeople alone, without a class of masters. But models for popular education are wanted as much as the means of its extension; and without an enlightened and benevolent inspection, little good can be anticipated from voting money to irresponsible and inexperienced parties. Upon the local committees must always depend the superintendence of the daily working of the school; but to institute it and commence an efficient system, it would be difficult indeed to find in the places indicated a sufficient number of competent persons.

Supplementary instruction.

In supplementary instruction for youth and for adults, much might be done, by combined efforts, in offering for hours of leisure not devoted to active exercise or the affections of home, amusements of such a character as should aid in checking resort to the degrading habits of the pot-house. But this is a subject which must long be left to the voluntary exertions of active minds, of which Coventry possesses its full share. A gratis evening school, on an exciting system, for a short time maintained in this city by a Mr. Player, was an instance of such exertion.

Deficiency of religious instruction, which is essential to a complete system of *education*, though not inseparable from secular instruction.

There is yet one other branch of instruction in which I have already noticed that the Coventry weaving district is lamentably deficient: this is religious instruction, the vital importance of which, as the well-spring of our national morality, the Board will not suppose, from any previous remarks, that I undervalue. I have endeavoured only to express an opinion, which I submit with great humility, that though religion is the necessary basis of education, secular instruction is another portion of that education which, and not religious instruction, it is the main purpose of a *day* school to convey, whether that school be public or private. Were the schools of a national system *boarding* schools, in which the domestic and all other branches of education were combined (as they would be in training schools), not only general principles of religion, but particular doctrines and the holiest sympathies, must necessarily be inculcated and awakened at the expense of the state; in which case, conscientious scruples would still be entitled to the respect which is embodied in the 19th section of the Poor-law Amendment Act. In a public day school, also, it is highly desirable that instruction in the first principles of religion should form part of the school system; but in this case the state has not assumed the entire guardianship of the pupils, whose parents and pastors continue under their former responsibility to find religious instruction for them. The state, in respecting conscientious scruples, has no choice but to leave this responsibility where it now rests, so far as concerns the *day* schools; and the parental and pastoral guardians of the children will equally discharge their duties, whether they avail themselves of the instruction offered by these schools, or withdraw them for special teaching. It is the secular instruction of children alone for which it becomes fully *responsible*, in the institution of a national system, upon which it enters as upon any other civil duty.

Religious instruction is another branch of education, and one far higher than can be entrusted to the care of a village schoolmaster. It is this of which I wish to point out the deficiency; but the means by which it may be supplied in

the present age are a subject much too difficult for me to discuss. I can only lay before you the suggestion of the Rev. Henry Bellairs, rector of Bedworth, whose observations are as follows:—"Where manufactories are, the population is generally large, and what can *one* clergyman do amongst thousands? I would suggest that *facilities* should be given to incumbents to have curates and *sub-curates*, catechists or readers, in proportion to the population. I am of opinion that no man can look over more than a thousand people. Taking, then, a parish of 4000 souls, I would have three under the incumbent; and I think that herein a very valuable school, as preparatory to the ministry, would be established. A *moral* influence would be gained, and a very useful check be opposed to the wild and extravagant schemes of wicked demagogues. I am aware that it may be argued that this plan would throw too much power into the hands of the clergy, but I would argue that it would only be moral power; and so long as that is governed and controlled by that Word which directs men to fear God and honour the Queen, and to obey them that are set over the people, no *harm* but much good must arise." With wide questions of ecclesiastical polity, which I am wholly incapable of discussing, are here involved the principles of religious liberty, upon which my own feelings have already incidentally become manifest.

Proposal for supplying the deficiency of religious instruction.

I have ventured thus far on the subject of education, since, to the absence of any proper moral and intellectual training, must be attributed the prevailing vice and ignorance, in which so large a portion of the weaving population remain poor and hopeless; a condition liable to aggravation by their increasing social distance from the capitalist, which requires a higher intelligence to maintain their relative position. Benevolence and policy equally demand that they shall be rescued by improved public instruction from this state of moral degradation, equally destructive to themselves and dangerous to all society. A few suggestions have therefore been ventured as to the method in which a good system might be introduced amid a mixed population, such as this small section of South Britain presents. To originality they can have little claim; but I have felt it a duty to urge, in its local application, the course which I believe to be the only one available for producing beneficial results in the moral condition of the ribbon weavers. We have no means of influencing their habits but through their intelligence. To implant good habits of mind therefore by instruction, will gradually overcome even the present baleful influences of the workshop and the home, and give elevation to the whole moral character, without which all other improvements would be baseless and transitory, if even for a moment attainable.

Instruction urged, because any other improvement baseless, if momentarily attainable, without it.

There are, it is true, three other sources of moral influence, the *industrial*, the *political*, and the *domestic*. It might be urged, for instance, that women and children should at once be excluded by law from working in the trade, because this practice encourages the moral depression of an ignorant people; but freedom of industry is the great practical object of political liberty and of civilization. The fault is not in the temptation, but in the inability to resist it, and the State cannot interfere with the industrial occupations of adults; but it has surely as much claim to the time and the means for training the children, so as to fit them for encountering the destructive agencies of an intricate society, as to require the military services of all, in case of invasion by an enemy. We shall not make good citizens and good subjects by tampering with the industrial arrangements of adults; but, by having good citizens and good subjects, we shall secure the healthy and beneficial direction of that industry. Had there existed among the single-hand weavers a superior intelligence and morality, they would never have sacrificed the comforts of home and the welfare of their offspring to the undue working of their wives and children. A higher price would have been paid for the labour executed, though less of it would have been performed, and the population depending on it would have been more limited. But the present weaving population has based itself on the labour of women and children; and any restriction, except in demanding that the latter shall be sent to school for certain hours of each day, must be left wholly to the progress of moral habits, availing themselves of temporary improvements in trade. In the ribbon weaving the increase of engine looms is effecting a rapid change, by raising the whole body of mere journeyhands in means and in character.

The Legislature cannot interfere with the industrial arrangements of adults, whatever may be their moral effects.

The Factory Acts have commenced a system of moral police over manufactures, the main principles of which appear to be perfectly sound as those of a temporary expedient, so far as that the children shall not be prevented by labour from becoming qualified to discharge the duties of citizenship. But such enactments would be wholly unnecessary were the moral character of their natural guardians at all equal to meet the influences of their industrial position; and the same observation applies

The Factory Acts a temporary expedient in the place of moral development among the labourers, which ought alone to attain the same objects.

equally to enactments for the regulation of apprenticeships. The readoption of the provisions of the 5th of Elizabeth, c. 4, was strongly urged upon Parliament by the Coventry weavers in 1818, and is still much coveted. A passage in Mr. Hale's examination before the Lords' Committee, in the Spitalfields Act, in 1823, explains, in brief, the whole of the arguments of the Coventry men on the subject of apprenticeships :—

Arguments of the Coventry men on the apprenticeship system, so far as concerns its moral influences better summed up by Mr. Hale before the Lords' Committee on the Spitalfields Act.

"As compared with the journeymen in other trades, the silk-weaver is not so burdensome to the rate?—No, not by a great deal; and the system of carrying on the trade has operated to improve the morals of the lower classes; for all the journeymen weavers, a few years after they are married and have an increase of family, think of taking an apprentice boy or two: they will get work for them, and it is their interest to teach their appentices to be good weavers, because in proportion as they learn their trade, will they get better work for them. Those apprentice boys live with their master and mistress, take their meals with them, sleep in their house, and are not suffered to go out in the night with bad company; and they go with them on the Sunday to church or to chapel, to some place of worship; they remain with them until they are of age, and then they save a little money, and then marry; but where they are not regulated in this way, they will rush into the married state too soon, or get into bad connexions, and the population will increase in an inverse ratio to what it ought."*

Analogy between the factory Acts and the apprenticeship laws, in regard to their moral tendencies, for which the re-enactment of the latter so strongly urged.

The proportion which was established by the apprenticeship statutes, now repealed, between the number of apprentices and the number of journeymen who should be employed by any one master, is a subject of industrial organization separate from the moral influences of the apprenticeship system, which are chiefly urged as grounds for its legislative readoption. Its importance to our national well-being for successive ages cannot be doubted, but the laws by which it was regulated merely gave voice to social habits already established; and to pass laws opposed to the genius of the time would be a vain effort. The old apprenticeship system has necessarily declined with the social organization of which it formed part. The industrial reorganization of society it is as impossible, as it would be unwise, for the state to oppose in a free country. But mutual interests will dictate to masters, to men, and to parents, the adoption of such new arrangements as shall meet the modern systems, and secure the welfare of the young. If the guardians of the latter, in the unfettered arrangements of society, are unable to succeed in this object, the state cannot help them directly. But it may, by instruction, so augment the moral strength of the labouring classes, as to protect them from the debasing effects of their relative weakness under the system of enlarged industrial combinations. Until this is accomplished, the Factory Acts, or some better-framed direct interferences with industry, will be perfectly justifiable as palliatives for the moment.

Improved political institutions would have a beneficial moral influence.

An improved *police* would have a beneficial effect upon morals, by preventing the commission of mutual petty depredations; and the restriction of the sale of intoxicating liquors to a more limited number of licensed houses, as under the old system, and the suppression of the new beer-houses, as sequestered haunts of depravity, were strongly urged by all classes of witnesses. But having little faith in the morality which is not habitual to the thoughts of the people, I regard these measures much in the same light that I should any attempt at compulsion to public worship. That important moral results are derivable from political liberties as well as from administrative efficiency, the section of my investigations next ensuing will aid in demonstrating; but both are vain without intelligence.

Education the sole means of reaching the morality of domestic life.

Yet further, it is only by instruction that we can reach the morality of *domestic* life, in those actions which regard neither the trade nor the community, the church nor the school. Order, frugality, foresight, and kind feelings, if here they exist, can spring only from the hearts and minds of the people themselves. The only influences which could be applied directly, would be in the provision of rational public amusements, or places for active and healthy sports, which should withdraw the young men from the contemptible sotting of the pot-house; but, again, were their moral character elevated by education, they would provide these for themselves at one-half the cost of their present poorer pleasures. Marriage itself, no longer mingled with these, would become respected, and be the prize of creditable exertion for a civilised existence, in lieu of the heedless gratification of propensities common to the brutes. Where morality has sway, population will never be in that inordinate excess in proportion to the means of subsistence which economists justly fear will prevail in its absence.

* Evidence, p. 11.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

IV.—POLITICAL CONDITION OF THE RIBBON-WEAVERS.

Former and Present Political Condition.

Parliamentary franchise possessed by the city weavers.

The political constitution of a nation is merely the outline of its moral elements, modified by an industrial character, varying with the physical position and endowments of each country and each race. But, once consolidated, it is capable of exerting a most powerful influence on the subject population; and varied institutions, created in successive ages, are original causes affecting the welfare of one portion of it as compared with another. The weavers of this district are not below the operation of its systems of representation, taxation, and administration. The parliamentary franchise is possessed by nearly the whole body of the city weavers, in right of their seven years' apprenticeship; a claim which is reserved by the Reform Act. And though the parliamentary history of few represented towns in the kingdom can present instances of fiercer party contention, or more rude and unscrupulous methods of conducting it, I cannot doubt that the possession of the franchise, its habitual exercise, and the *prospect* of its exercise, have given to the men a feeling of independence, and to the masters one of respect for them, which low-skilled labourers generally neither possess nor command. Some such long-standing influence can alone account for the different habits in the giving out and taking in of the goods, exhibited by the warehouses of Coventry, as compared with those of the North. The total number of first-hand journeymen in the city and suburbs, is 1501 on comparison of the census of weavers with the freemen's list, 1370 of them are found to be freemen, and I believe the rest, whether first-hands or journeymen's journeymen, are mostly either possessed of the franchise, or may take it up at any moment. A great many of the undertakers in the rural districts possess votes for the northern division of the county of Warwick, as owners of their houses, although many are said to be mortgaged. They are not, however, in the same electoral community with their employers; they feel their influence as a class but feeble; and those who court their unanimity for any particular candidate, are frequently not their trade superiors, but a few gentlemen of the neighbourhood, who sometimes render them assistance in their appeals to Parliament, however mistaken the object of them.

Partially also by the country weavers.

In the local institutions the weavers, in the city, have rather less direct influence. Out of 161 of the census names examined, only 35, or rather more than *one-fifth*, appeared on the *Burgess List*, which is that of the municipal franchise. In the parochial constituencies, the first-hand journeymen in the city, and the undertakers in the country, exercise the usual rights of rate-payers. The city taxes are the county rate, the poor's rate, the street rate, the highway rate, and the church rate; those of the rural parishes,—the poor's rate, highway rate, and church rate. A curious record of the parish expenditure of Foleshill has been collected by Mr. George Eld, in his "Statistical Annals of Foleshill," from the repeated items in which, for yearly making a passable road for the Judge coming to Coventry,—as, "for pulling down a gap for the Judge, and making it up again,"—&c.,—the rudeness of the district generally, during the last century, may readily be gathered.

Municipal institutions.

The city weavers, as freemen, possess a right of pasture, which obviously but a limited number can exercise, over some Lammas and Michaelmas grounds, and some open commons, which is thus described by the Corporation Commissioners:—

Lammas lands of freemen.

"The commons extend over above 300 acres; the Lammas and Michaelmas lands over about 2000 acres. The right of pasture over the commons continues all the year round. The Lammas lands are inclosed, and are occupied by the proprietors exclusively during six months of the year; during the remaining six months the freemen exercise their right. The land is for the most part of very excellent quality; but it is rendered very unprofitable to the owners, partly because their enjoyment of it is limited to half the year, partly on account of the damage done to the fences, which it becomes necessary every season, after the termination of the Lammas right, to repair at considerable cost. On the other hand, it appears that a corresponding benefit does not accrue to the freemen. [illegible] owners being compelled to use the land as pasture only, the herbage is usually exhausted before the Lammas right commences; and the lands lying very much dispersed, some as far as two miles and a half from the city, the owner is often put to trouble and loss of time to find his cattle and the latter frequently stray and are impounded; so that between loss of time and wasting of the cattle, the benefit arising from the right is reduced to little or nothing. The effect of this right on the prosperity of the town, will be noticed in another place."

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Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

POLITICAL CONDITION.

Old city administration of justice.

The administration of justice under the old corporate system, 40 years ago, in Coventry, is thus described by Abraham Herbert, Esq., the present mayor:—

"There was great honesty between the employer and the employed. Embezzlement of materials was scarcely known. The whole of the magisterial business of the city was performed by one magistrate and his clerk, at the magistrate's house. Believes he lived by it, and that he was a man in debt, who dare not venture beyond the room in which he transacted business. His agents were two active little fellows, whom he called his runners; and he made all the commitments that were made in the city for a long period. For small offences, justice, or often injustice, was summarily inflicted among the people themselves, without the resort to the magistrate which is now customary."*

Dispute between city and county justices as to the limits of their jurisdiction under the Corporation Act.

The local administration of justice in this district is at present under two separate Commissions of the Peace, one for the city and county of the city, and the other for the county of Warwick. Between the two a suit is now pending, as to the effect of a recent Act of Parliament in severing rural portions of municipal counties from the old connexion with their respective cities, and adding them to the contiguous counties at large. Both are now exercising jurisdiction in the rural parishes of the old county of the city.

Police of the City.

This dispute has by no means a favourable influence on the police of the outlying districts, already wholly inadequate to its purpose. In the city, in place of the old constables, whom the Town Clerk admitted to the Corporation Commissioners to be "rather exciteable on political occasions," and whose inefficiency the trade riot in 1831 strongly evinced, there has been organised, under the Corporation Reform Act, a very respectable police under Mr. Prosser, formerly in the London force, and now high constable for the county of the city, and inspector of weights and measures. These offices he received previous to the passing of the Reform Act, about six years ago; and subsequent to it, he was made also superintendent of police by the Watch Committee. His salary as high constable being paid out of the county rate, the inhabitants of the outlying parishes of the county of the city have a claim on his services, but not on those of the police under him, who are paid out of the street rate. The outlying parishes have their own parish constables, like those of the parishes in the county at large, only that they are sworn before the Coventry magistrates, and not before those of the county of Warwick, as the constables are beyond the bounds of the municipal county. The police under the Watch Committee are likewise sworn in for the *county* of the city, but they *watch* only the city parishes, although, if application be specially made from within any outlying parish, for assistance to watch or to detect, it is given by the city magistrates out of the town police, under the superintendent's management; and by this police their warrants in those parishes are executed. The city police consists of one inspector, or watch-house keeper, one serjeant, and fifteen constables, who have most of them been weavers or watchmakers, and serve for day police as well as night watch, although their pay has only just been raised from 14*s.* to 16*s.* per week. Their chief duties are in suppressing street brawls; and there are from 180 to 200 housekeepers annually sworn in as special constables, to be called out on the warrant of two magistrates, if requisite.†

Want of police in the rural parishes.

But in the outlying parishes there is a lamentable want of some proper means of repressing the depredations of the "outlaws," as one of the witnesses not improperly describes the lower classes of their population; and here, "the beer-shops are great nests of iniquity; for the magistrates, when they have to license a place, will require some test of character; but the keepers of these are of a very low class, through not being required to take out an expensive spirit licence, as well as a cheap beer licence."‡

"The constables," says Richard Cantrill, a respectable Foleshill undertaker, "would undoubtedly be more active, go into more dangers, and take more trouble, were they remunerated for their services. But there is now no pecuniary encouragement to them, except the rewards for apprehending offenders offered by associations, or the petty allowances for conveyance of offenders out of the county-rates. The constables, at this winter time of year, when people want their premises watched (and the whole road out of Coventry wants watching), may spend an evening to [illegible] of trouble, and never take an offender, and therefore have not a [illegible] remuneration. * * * At present the constables are dispersed over the p[illegible] though to be able to detect, or even to arrest, when detected, a notorious

* Herbert. † Prosser. ‡ Ib.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Political Condition.

thief, it would be requisite that two or three should be living near together and acting in concert. There was not any one in this or in Exhall parish last year, keeping fowls or ducks, that was not robbed of them, and sheep-stealing is not unfrequent. There have been instances of assistance sent from Coventry, to look after the beer-houses; but never knew the city policemen, except in solitary instances, come to watch in the parish of Foleshill, to prevent depredations. Believes that if a police officer of Coventry were wanted to assist, his aid would be granted by the magistrates."* In Bulkington, where there is only a constable and two headboroughs, the former, who is a very zealous and respectable man, is obliged sometimes to treat the headboroughs to keep them to their unpaid duty; but he has no source of repayment.†

Silk Manufacturers' Association.

There is a "Silk Manufacturers' Association, instituted in 1830, for the protection of the manufacturers of ribbons against all felony, embezzlements, misdemeanors, and penal offences connected with the trade," which confines its exertions chiefly to paying the expenses of the few legal proceedings to which it is found necessary to resort.

Political influences, or their absence, regarded as a cause of distress.

The weavers of Coventry and its neighbourhood are not only aware that political institutions must have some effect on their welfare, but, like the labouring classes of England generally, regard the defects which may exist in those of their own, as of every other country, as the direct cause of evils, in the production of which they have scarcely any, if the remotest, influence. Though possessing a far larger share of political privileges than most labourers of their class, they complain that their class generally is insufficiently represented in the legislature; that they are depressed in mass by taxation; that justice is not equal; and that wealth is not equitably distributed; the latter evil being a consequence of the preceding political defects, to remedy which they propose the adoption of *universal suffrage*, with supplementary measures which shall keep the Commons' house of parliament constantly subject to the votes of the people.

Richard Holmes, an undertaker, speaking for the Foleshill weavers, says:—

Desire for universal suffrage, as a means of carrying out visionary schemes of administration.

"If the labourers had the elective franchise, there would be a legislature which would be more likely to promote their interests than the present. The franchise should therefore be extended to the limit of *universal suffrage*.

"The corn-laws themselves are evidence of this.

"The general feeling throughout the working men of this, as of other manufacturing districts, is a total want of confidence in the legislature; and many have come to the full determination never again to address the legislature with petitions.

"Were the legislature such as would do equal justice, it should make laws that *would give to the working men the position in society that they ought to hold.*

"Measures should be passed *which will secure a more equitable division of the wealth created by them.* Knows of no law extant directed to such a purpose; but society has advanced to a new state, which demands new laws.

"Cannot suggest any measures for the more equitable distribution of wealth, because the opinions entertained by himself on that subject are only private opinions, not entertained by the weavers generally, and he is only expressing their opinion. Needless to express his own, *for society is not prepared for the adoption of them.*"

Value of political franchises to the labourer, indirect far more than direct.

These were obviously of a socialist character, which unfortunately pervades the notions of those among the weavers of either town or country who think at all on political subjects. But, however unclear their ideas of administration may be, the desire for universal suffrage, with the supplementary contrivances for giving it full effect, has strong hold of the popular feelings in this district. Disregarding for the moment the visionary schemes to which men like the witness above quoted vainly suppose that the franchise might be applicable (schemes, the propagation of which is as hurtful to the immediate purpose of their entertainers, as they would ultimately be destructive to civil society), I cannot but express my warm concurrence in the views of Malthus on this subject, who justly regards the value of political privileges to the labouring classes as consisting in their indirect moral influence, far more than in their direct legislative efficacy. Their possession is assuredly the only *political* guarantee which a population can have for equal justice; but an enlightened public opinion is a *moral* security far more effective; one which governments of every form must respect; and one of which the labouring classes of England ought to appreciate the value in their own country; for without it the mere political forms of liberty can neither be acquired, usefully exercised, nor even maintained:—

* Cantrill. † Cuthbert. ‡ Holmes.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

POLITICAL CONDITION.

Opinion of Malthus on political influences.

"It has been sometimes asserted that the only reason why it is advantageous that the people should have some share in the government is, that a representation of the people tends to secure the framing of good and equal laws; but that, if the same object could be attained under a despotism, the same advantage would accrue to the community. If, however, the representative system, by securing to the lower classes of society a more equal and liberal mode of treatment from their superiors, gives to each individual a greater personal respectability, and a greater fear of personal degradation, it is evident that it will powerfully co-operate with the security of property in animating the exertions of industry, and in generating habits of prudence; and thus more powerfully tend to increase the riches and prosperity of the lower classes of the community than if the same laws had existed under a despotism."*

Ignorance of the real value of political franchises, and of the means of acquiring them.

And were it possible that the truths contained in the following passage could be known and felt by the labourers of this district, I should not have received from some of the most violent those intimations of a desire to resort to violence to attain objects wholly undefined to themselves, which equally betrayed their ignorance, their feebleness, and, in the case of some, their dishonesty:—

"But though the tendency of a free constitution and a good government to diminish poverty be certain, yet their effect in this way must necessarily be indirect and slow, and very different from the direct and immediate relief which the lower classes of people are too frequently in the habit of looking forward to as the consequence of a revolution. This habit of expecting too much, and the irritation occasioned by disappointment, continually give a wrong direction to their efforts in favour of liberty, and constantly tend to defeat the accomplishment of those gradual reforms in government, and that slow melioration of the lower classes of society, which are really attainable.†

Uselessness of violence to any who should attempt to employ it.

Political institutions, which issue the mandates of legislation, hold the scales of justice, use the arm of police, give external security, and perform a few public services which private associations cannot well discharge, are based where the moral strength of society lies; and, in so closely compacted and civilized a community as that of England, where mutual forces are instinctively known and calculated upon, the resort to violence to attain a political object is certain proof of the feebleness of the cause. It may be attempted, but must miserably fail; for, wherever solid power exists, its violent exercise is needless. Men who are grossly ignorant, improvident, drunken, and almost without domestic virtues, like many of the unfortunate people engaged in the single-hand ribbon trade, can no more assert a claim to political privileges than they could rationally exercise them if granted. But their want of moral strength, which makes such populations feeble for any purpose of good to themselves, can never deprive them of the power of mischief to others; and the ultimate ruin of society would be as surely accomplished by the quiet abasement of the whole body of our unskilled labourers, as it would by the shocks of revolution. Whether it receive the legal recognition of a right to vote or not, every body of labourers has a political existence in this power of mischief, which intelligence alone can convert into a power of good; and it is vain in those who have strengthened this political power of mischief by enlarged industrial combinations, and in all the classes who have benefited by it, to suppose that they can securely enjoy the augmented power and profit which these have brought to them, without advancing the moral, and, consequently, the physical condition of the labouring masses. Happily, this is a law of nature which will assert its supremacy wherever a country is inhabited but by one free race. Only by a system of instruction which shall awaken the labourer to his true position and duties as a citizen, since no longer a domestic, can the peace of society be sufficiently preserved for agriculture, manufactures, or commerce to prosper.

Necessity of instruction to prevent the perpetration of mischief.

Political uneasinesses resulting from industrial reorganizations demanding a corresponding moral development.

Disaffection and the wildest theories prevail among the labouring classes not here only, but throughout large portions of England; and the modern industrial changes have unfortunately produced an alienation of classes, which various witnesses endeavoured to describe; but they were themselves too much involved in the local passions to take a fair view of their position. Their evidence pointed to the altered social relations in the agriculture as well as the manufactures of the district, consequent on the change from the small farm and undertaking systems, under resident landlords and manufacturers, to large farming and agency, growing and manufacturing for distant proprietors and capitalists. And that important moral and political phenomena result from these industrial changes cannot be doubted, however little they may generally be perceived and understood, even by the parties most immediately

* Malthus, Principles of Population, vol. iii. p. 162, 3. † Ib., vol. iii. 163, 4.

MEANS OF IMPROVING POLITICAL CONDITION.

interested. To tamper with the industrial organization of society, or restrain its recourse to more economical arrangements, never belonged to political power in a free country; but it may avert consequent dangers of the gravest character by giving to its moral elements a development commensurate with its material progress.

Importance to the men in low-skilled occupations of being in the same community with their capitalist employers.

Neighbourhood to propertied classes, especially if these be their employers, is an important element in the well-being of a low-skilled population. This neighbourhood alone is a political element; and when, as in the case of the Coventry city weavers, it has the full voice of the political franchise, it places the men in a position for being as liberally treated by their masters as the competition of other places, or the fear of it, can possibly permit; and, were the same influences elsewhere in operation, I cannot doubt that the men would everywhere be gradually raised in character and in comforts; for the demoralization of bribery at elections results chiefly from the possession of the parliamentary franchise by the labouring classes being *peculiar* to a few cities. The extension of the franchise must, however, be attendant on an extension of instruction, which might possibly be made the passport to its enjoyment.

Importance of the political relations of neighbourhood and community between masters and men to the general welfare.

So strongly am I impressed with the importance of the influences upon the condition of unskilled labourers, arising from the union of masters and men in the same local communities, that, were it possible to organize society politically according to their industrial occupations, I should most earnestly wish it. The representation of towns and counties respectively had in its origin much of the character which would be sought in such an expedient: in the boroughs themselves, which comprised all the manufacturing populations, the municipal organization was very commonly based upon trades; and the assessment of the community of employers to the burthens of poor's-rates arising from the families of their men, in lieu of the accidental locality of their residence, would be an object worthy of employing the best administrative talents in its attainment. So great, indeed, are the evils resulting from the municipal dissociation of large bodies of our manufacturing population from their employers, that laws, calling upon the latter to bear whatever burthens of poor's-rates might arise from their workpeople, or any other laws that could be devised with a tendency to congregate them around their premises, would be of enormous benefit to the whole community, whatever might be the slight check which the discharge of moral duties might impose upon a few branches of trade. Any such injury would be far more than compensated by the saving to the whole community, from the check given to a thriftless and demoralized population. The misery, abandonment, and demoralization which prevail in the single-hand ribbon-trade, I believe to be the natural and necessary result of this dissociation, and the dispersion of the workpeople. Their sole connexion with the great community around them is their weekly resort to the master's warehouse, which is assuredly no powerful means of civilization; and beyond this they are almost alienated from all society. The influences which reach them are those only of a religious character; and the feebleness of these has been already shown. The great body of the weaving and framework-knitting populations are similarly dispersed, and similarly depressed; and the *absenteeism* of so many of the employers, except agents, who are not the real capitalists, will, I doubt not, be found everywhere to have a great, though not always an obvious, effect on the condition of the labouring people; working their depression, not actively, but through the want of the moral bonds which should attach them to society at large. Neighbourhood and a poors'-rate would afford to employers admonitions which would ultimately have the effect of limiting the number of their people to that which could subsist by the trade in order and decency. The contrary system makes discontent national instead of local; and, as in Ireland, turns upon the government tumults which ought to have assailed only the municipality or the masters.

Merit of the individual exertions which have changed the face of society.

In making these observations, I should, however, be deeply grieved by the supposition that directly or indirectly I sought to express regret at the industrial changes which have taken place, or to slight the talent and the perseverance which have given unexampled development to the useful forces of society, and changed the whole face of human existence. I hail this progress as one of endless promise; and have merely sought to point out some of the least observed, but not least important, of the phenomena attendant on it. These were not foreseen by those who were engaged in making it; and, even had they, would have been subjects for the consideration of the state, and not of individuals. But assuredly it is not upon mere presumption that I express an opinion thus decisive as to the effects (political

in their nature) of the men's neighbourhood with, or dissociation from, the capitalist employer. The case of many silk-weavers for Macclesfield masters is analogous to that of the rural weavers of the Coventry district; and a case at Banbury will exemplify more obviously than that of the Coventry City weavers the effects of mere community. A social analysis of other portions of the empire would show the daily operation of the same principles. In fine, from the political relation in which the unskilled masses stand to their employers, as citizens and neighbours, result influences of the last importance to the social economy; but, were geographical alienation obviated, and the political bonds of community fully established, it would be impossible, under modern industrial systems, to secure the peace and welfare of the whole, without improved instruction, which the general happiness alone would demand, were there no danger of disorder. A subsequent section will show the immediate operation, in some degree, of political influences on the contract for labour; at least, in the mode of making it, if not extensively in its terms.

Political influences on the condition of low-skilled labourers may elsewhere be traced; but instruction wanted to give security.

That in improving the relations of the men with their employers, and increasing their self-respect, political influences have indirectly important effects on the well-being of the labouring classes, I cannot for a moment doubt; but that any legislature or administration can, by direct measures, largely and permanently affect the condition of the labouring classes, it is vain to hope. Their ultimate fate depends upon their moral character and the moral constitution of society, which make rather than are made by the government. The latter, however, in a somewhat civilized age, besides maintaining internal peace and external security, becomes the agent of society in effecting its own moral advancement, and as such it is the duty of modern governments to advance the cause of instruction.

Lasting improvements in the condition of the labouring classes from political influences can accrue only indirectly and gradually.

Some local administrative amendments might also be made, especially in the police of the rural parishes. "There must always be great difficulty," states Mr. Prosser, the head of the Coventry city police, "in watching a dispersed population like that of Foleshill, but some rural police is absolutely requisite. Any new rural police must have the town police for its centre. But there is great difficulty in regard to the different magisterial jurisdictions. A patrol on horseback would be the best. But *detection* is the best *preventive* applicable to a dispersed population. The country police officers, under the Municipal Reform Act, can execute warrants of their magistrates anywhere within seven miles of their city limits; but, to apprehend for misdemeanors elsewhere, they must have their warrants backed by the county magistrates, and this sometimes loses or delays an arrest. A great want felt by the heads of all local police is free communication by post. Having to pay for all letters, he never takes in those of higher postage. Sometimes the parties writing on police matters pay their letters, and then, of course, he takes them. Mentioned this subject once to the magistrates, suggesting that such police postages should be paid out of the public funds, but did not press it lest it should be thought an individual meanness on his part."* That the whole of the rural weaving parishes should be formed into two police districts, having their centres respectively at Coventry and at Nuneaton, seems to be highly desirable; or Coventry might be the centre for the whole, since there is a constant resort to that city for work. The existing lawlessness must be suppressed; and, to complete the civil protection of the people, some express magisterial arrangements ought to be made to second the efforts of the police, and to give a fair and ever ready hearing to disputes arising out of the trade. On this subject the French Conseils des Prud'hommes afford some valuable hints, as is hereafter shown, in examining the contract for labour. Any trade government must of course have a popular basis on the general principles already stated.

Necessity of improved local government in regard to police.

The Lammas lands contiguous to the town are about to be enclosed under an act which is being prosecuted through Parliament. This will not only have good economical results, but it will permit the erection of agreeable suburbs, in which parties retired from trade would very gladly pass the evening of life in the resorts of their youth. This would assuredly be beneficial to the place, as encouraging the residence of more of the wealthier classes; and it is also to be hoped that the design of providing out of these lands a place for public walks and active exercise will not be relinquished.

Enclosure of the Lammas lands.

* Prosser.

V.—CONTRACT FOR LABOUR IN THE TRADE OF RIBBON WEAVING.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Distribution of Wealth.

Every social influence felt in the contract for labour.

Almost every social influence bearing upon the labouring classes ultimately affects the amount of their *real wages*, or, in other words, the amount and quality of the physical comforts which fall to their lot. Having described the character of these influences in the case of the ribbon-weavers, every circumstance attendant upon the contract for labour, and the disputes respecting its terms, will be readily understood, without the danger, which besets the labourers themselves, of hastily assuming that these terms can be fixed and maintained at some particular standard without reference to the moral elements which surround them. This mistake, which gives rise to many vain efforts, is, however, by no means peculiar to the labouring classes. Men of property have been seen exerting themselves to produce some empirical effect upon rents or profits, with as much ardour and as little wisdom as labourers have often shown in endeavours to raise their wages.

Want of diffused information as to the character of this contract, and of wages, which are its terms.

So various and so wild, indeed, are the popular views on the subject of wages; so difficult of elucidation are some portions of it even to the first economists; and so immediately do the remedies of depression most commonly proposed to me bear upon the contract for labour, of which they are the terms, that the Commissioners will, I am sure, readily pardon some diffuseness in this part of my Report. I will briefly show the relative position which the ribbon-weavers and other labourers hold, in the great interchange of services of which civil society consists, towards each other, towards their employers, and towards the consumers; and then trace, for a succession of years, the movements in the ribbon-trade, on the subject of wages, which exhibit the exact mutual bearings of the different classes engaged in it, and the circumstances under which a lowly-skilled population make their bargain for employment. The apparent intricacy of these details may be somewhat painful, but they will be found by no means useless; since the principles which they elucidate, pervade every branch of weaving or other industry, employing large classes of lowly-skilled labourers.

Labour requiring the protection of peace as much as property.

Property and industry alike exist only within the bonds of peace, to sever which would be to plunge all society into misery, the greater, the higher may have been the civilization within their circle. These bonds may be weakened or broken by political vices; but whatever may have been the *original* position of property and industry within them, their maintenance to protect both is the first duty of every citizen, and the prime object of all law. Property is now only the storehouse of industry; and to attack its foundations, in order to remove some of the rubbish at its base, would be an insanity to which there is no danger of any healthy community being subject. Englishmen especially, even of the poorest classes, have happily moral habits and sound sagacity, that alienate from their minds any such suicidal attempt as to benefit those who practise industry by destroying all security for the enjoyment of its rewards.

All income of individuals the price of services rendered by property or by personal abilities.

Every individual, in his personal abilities, the exercise of which I have described under the general term *industry*, and in his *property* of every description, for the *use* of which we have no general term, possesses a fund of *services*, rendered either immediately to himself, or to society at large, in exchange for others to himself. The services, either personal or of property, which he gives to society in exchange, are always in some peculiar channel of trade, profession, or ownership, to which he or his property is peculiarly adapted by nature or by cultivation, in obedience to the laws of the endless subdivision of these services. Money is merely the medium of exchange between each individual and society at large; and it is obvious that he will have the largest revenue who offers the largest *amount* and *value* of appreciated services.

Revenue from property the inducement to exercise industry and talent in its acquisition and improvement; which exercise is the life of civilization.

The revenue which a man receives for the services of his land, and for those of the buildings, machinery, &c., which have been accumulated by industry to particular purposes of production, traffic, or residence, are respectively called *rent* and *interest;* the limits between which, though theoretically very distinct, are practically often exceedingly difficult to mark. Those who merely employ labour are proprietors of the articles required for the daily subsistence of the labourer, or of the means of purchasing them, for providing which they must likewise receive the

reward of *interest*. It is, in fact, this fund of articles for the use of labourers, accumulated by the providence of individuals, from which fixed capital takes its origin, according to their several views; some expending it in the employment of labour for an immediate return; others, for a distant return from fixed capital in machinery, &c.; and all, some portion of it, in the purchase of services rendered to themselves personally by domestics, &c. And it is obvious that but for such rewards, no man would bestow talent, industry, and frugality in improving the land, in constructing machinery and buildings, or in husbanding capital of any kind. Society would remain in barbarism.

Wages the immediate reward of personal Abilities, and the first step in the acquisition of Property.

The revenue which a man receives for the services rendered by his personal abilities are commonly called *wages*, though by various other designations in the higher departments of skill, as in the liberal arts and professions. Wages are the first step towards the attainment of any other source of revenue by those whose opportunities, used with sagacity, industry, and parsimony, enable them to rise in society, as, with these qualifications, they ought; and they are practically so much blended with interest, and even with rent, as often to be confounded with them. But the sources of service to society, though variously intermingled, are reducible to three great classes, viz., *natural* agencies, usually described by economists, simply as "*land*;" —*artificial and brute* agencies, and provision for the maintenance of labourers usually described as "*capital*;"—and *human abilities*, commonly designated as "*labour*," though they may not be in exercise. It is the capacity and the will to work to which economy applies the name of "labour."

"Land," "Capital," and "Labour."

Various distribution of the sources of income.

These sources of service are possessed in various proportion and quality by the individuals of whom society is composed; and to these they command a proportionate revenue directly, by their application to their own personal service, or indirectly by the sale of the services for money. Many larger proprietors give to society simply the use of their land and their capital, receiving in return the *rent* and *interest*. Others unite to those services their own abilities, and receive in return a mixed income which they call *profits*; consisting of the wages of their own labour, the interest of their capital, and sometimes also the rent of their land. But the great mass of Englishmen, have little source of revenue but their personal abilities, which they give in exchange for the *wages* which purchase all those necessaries, conveniences, or luxuries, which form the standard of comfort in each class, varying, with these wages, according to the skill and trust of the labourers.

Value of services dependent *immediately* on the relative demand and supply.

The circulating medium of any country, whatever may be the inflictions upon industry through its fluctuations from time to time, serves for an accurate measure, at any one time and place, of the relative *value* of the three great classes of services above described to the community, and of the several sub-sections of each class to the whole and to each other. The value of services in the general competition consists of two elements,—their necessity, advantage, or pleasureableness, commonly called their *utility*, and their proportionate *abundance* or *scarcity*; or, in other words, of *demand* and *supply*. Taxation for the purposes of the State, when newly imposed, may have a peculiar influence on a particular branch of trade or class society; but it gradually adjusts itself through prices so as to be simply a deduction from the gross revenue of society at large.

Tendency, therefore, of the real price of personal services in England, as regulated merely by competition, to be low, hastened by the existing corn-laws.

Where land is limited in proportion to labour and capital, as in England, rents will be high; where capital is scarce in proportion to natural agencies and to labour, interest will be high; where labour is scarcer than land or capital, as in America, wages will be high. Where land and capital are superabundant, high wages gradually supply labourers; where land and labour only are abundant, high interest or profits bring capital, if there be security and freedom from political fetters; where labour and capital are superabundant, they will, if not checked by political agencies, virtually supply themselves with land by bartering their manufactures for its products, to the extremes of the world, if they can so far make the traffic profitable to its owners. Approaching the extremity at which they can do so, prices of agricultural produce must, in the manufacturing country, be higher than they could possibly have attained, had manufactures been cramped by political limits, rejecting foreign agricultural produce; while the general augmentation of wealth and industry would enormously increase the real value of old estates, by lessening their share of the public burthens. If they be restrained from this, the capitalists will send or take their capital to augment the wealth and strength of other communities, before those of their own have attained their full development. It is obvious that capital will seek every expedient before it loses all profit, or resorts to this expatriation, which leaves the labourers, as being less transferable, behind.

And hence the danger, which corn-laws unnecessarily hasten, of unusual efforts to lower wages, to bolster up the failure of profits resulting from excess of competition. The prices of agricultural produce cannot rise beyond a certain limit, or the consumption of the same quality of produce must cease in gradually increasing classes. It is the most lowly skilled labourers, that, as the base of the industrial fabric, from whose condition that of all other classes of workmen is measured, first feel any tendency to depression. The ribbon-weavers of the Coventry district, as compared with labourers in some other countries, are, therefore, by the general circumstances of Great Britain, exposed to the danger of suffering from low wages and dear provisions, from which a superiority of moral development, which we shall in vain seek, could alone save them.

Various direction given to industry by the necessary inequality of fortunes.

One important source of moral influences upon the character of the labourers, and their relations with the employer, consists in the various *direction* given to industry, not only by the proportions in which the three great classes of services are supplied to *society at large*, but also by the proportions in which the sources of them are held by individuals. The countries in which land and capital are held by *individuals* in very large portions, and where superior skill in professions and arts is very highly rewarded, will differ considerably, in the direction given to their industry, from those where land and capital are more equally distributed, and labour more equally paid. There is a large application of labour in such countries to the providing of commodities, and the rendering of personal services, of a character which would not be provided or rendered at all were property in smaller proportions, when the same labour would be employed in the supply of humbler wants among a larger number of families. But it must not hence be supposed that equalization of fortunes is either attainable or desirable. For, were the labour, which is now applied to the production of luxuries, such as ribbons, devoted wholly to obtaining necessaries, the sole effect would be an increase of *numbers* to the community, but by no means an improvement of *condition*, which depends upon the habits derived by each class from the one above it; by their capability of maintaining which habits the generality of individuals regulate their conduct as to marriage in all societies which are not demoralized. A due gradation of classes, without any marked line of separation, is therefore necessary to civilization, and as beneficent in its influences as an undue separation is destructive. So that the gradation be uninterrupted, the height of the pinnacles of wealth may be taken as an exact measure of the secure advancement of a community in arts and industry. The higher classes in all ages make the first steps in every refinement; such, at least, is their duty; and happy is a nation when so constituted that there is no gulf of separation which makes this duty be forgotten, or which prohibits the advancement of the lower classes. Not only is inequality of fortunes, while men are imperfect beings, necessary to bring out their talents and to refine their enjoyments, but it is equally necessary to give to society intellectual strength and political security, since we cannot have scholars without leisure, nor a community of talent and leisure, nor patriotic leaders, without scholars and gentlemen.

Inequality of fortunes inevitable, and beneficial even to the lowest classes in a healthy community.

Inequality of fortunes is therefore beneficial as well as inevitable; and although it diverts labour from making the last struggle, under the pressure of numbers, to extract another potatoe from the barrenness of a mountain-side, it gives, or ought to give, even to the poorest classes, limited in number but raised in habits, a comfort and a security which they might in vain seek in a military despotism amid the ruin produced by convulsion. This degree of comfort may be infinitely superior to that enjoyed in a lower state of civilization, even though the relative condition of the higher, the middle, and the lower classes be far more widely separated. As intelligence and virtue increase, so will fortunes, by their efforts, become gradually more equalized. And although the industry of the world, especially of England, is gradually forming itself into larger and larger associations of capitalists and labourers, yet the character of the great body of the latter is itself advancing with such strides, that it is to be hoped they will shortly be competent to show *instances* (and few only can they be) of raising themselves by joint-stock associations into the rank of capitalists, in those very branches of industry in which the journeyman seemed henceforward forbidden for ever to become a master. This is, in fact, a career for the few more active minds of the operative classes, which the Legislature would do well to favour by a revision of the law of partnerships, rather than regard with any feeling of jealousy. The trade of Coventry yet affords opportunities for the employment of small capitals by individuals, which few large branches of industry now present.

Capability of labourers to advance themselves in the ribbon weaving and other trades.

All income expended in channels varying with the constitution and habits of society.

The whole income of society, arising out of its existing means of production, is immediately expended. It purchases for the use of each individual, when used as revenue, either personal services, expiring so soon as rendered, or the various products of land, capital, and labour; or it is invested as capital in employing labour to construct useful works, and to produce and exchange a variety of commodities, with a view to future income. Even the most ignorant of misers gives his share of services to society, in return for the labour which produced him the gold and jewels which he prefers to wear in a box, rather than about his house and person, as may some of his spendthrift successors. His hoarding, so far as society is concerned, is simply unproductive expenditure, though on articles that are not consumed, but remain with exchangeable value to his heirs. It is through various and intricate channels that the *employment* of labour is effected; but in its employment alone can an income give any pleasure or advantage to its possessor; and into one of the two great channels of productive or unproductive expenditure must it find its way; the latter merely employing personal services, or consuming the produce of land, capital, and labour, while the former creates new wealth and new sources of subsistence. If produce be not destroyed, it is obvious that it must be consumed; the character of that produce is modified to meet the known wants of society, with its existing distribution of property and its existing habits; and these habits are led by the more wealthy, on whose part the exercise of wisdom in their expenditure, whether as revenue or as capital, is equally deserving of the common approbation.

Productive powers variously directed to the service of different classes, according to the distribution of this income, in the relative proportions of land, capital, and labour, and the quantity and quality in which they are possessed by individuals.

We thus find the whole productive powers of society variously directed, so far as they pass freely through the focus of competition, to the service of its different classes; first, according to the supply of land, capital, and labour, respectively; and secondly, according to the *quantity* and *quality* in which these are possessed by individuals, who hence arrange themselves into the classes which are familiar to every apprehension. It is the portion of these productive powers, devoted to the use of labourers, and purchased by their anticipated *wages*, of which I have now to examine the share allotted to the weavers of Coventry, and the circumstances under which such share is determined in this particular section of the labour market.

Prevailing theory of wages does not explain how productive powers are variously directed.

The preceding observations are directed to an extension of the prevailing theory of wages, which supposes that "the quantity andquality of the commodities obtained by each labouring family during a year must *depend* on the quantity and quality of the commodities directly or indirectly appropriated during the year to the use of the labouring population, compared with the number of labouring families."* The "quantity and quality of the commodities directly or indirectly appropriated during the year to the use of the labouring population," *are* the wages, or that which the wages purchase; and "the number of labouring families" *are* those who receive them; but the proposition does not state the *cause* why no more or no less commodities, or means of purchasing commodities, were appropriated to the use of this number of labourers, why this number is not greater or less, and why, therefore, their wages *should not* be higher or lower: it states simply the effect, and does not describe the causes, as its terms seem to undertake. The proposition has been carried one step further, in the statement that, "the productiveness of labour being given, the extent of the fund for the maintenance of labour will depend on the proportion which the number of labourers employed in producing things for the use of capitalists bears to that of those employed in producing things for the use of labourers; or, to use a more common expression, on the proportions in which the produce of labour is shared between the capitalist and the labourer."† But the circumstances which decide the proportion of labour directed to producing things for the use of labourers, or of capitalists, are still left undescribed, except as "depending partly on the rate of profit, and partly on the time for which the capital employed in the production of wages must be advanced."‡

Productive powers directed by *anticipation* of the wants of society, grounded on its known constitution and habits.

The ordinary material wants of society are, in fact, *anticipated* by its capitalists, who are as absolutely the leaders of its productive industry, as its generals are of its arms. They produce various commodities against the times when they know or expect that they will be wanted in certain proportion. The prices which the capitalists actually *get* for their goods, depend on the demand and supply at the moment of sale, so nearly as it is known to the contracting parties; and the labour which they employed in producing them does *not* measure their *value*, except through *anticipation*. The supply of each kind of commodities is meted out by the

* Senior—Article on Political Economy, 'Encyclopædia Metropolitana,' p. 193.
† Ibid., p. 206. ‡ Ibid. p. 212.

capitalist according to the demand, at a remunerating price; his anticipation of which price repeatedly failing, he ceases further supply, or narrows it. It is known by the capitalist that there will be a demand for such and such goods, which can be produced only by a certain expenditure in raw material, machinery, and labour; which he makes, knowing that any rival must make the same, or nearly the same expenditure. And though he sometimes miscalculates, or is disappointed by fluctuations in the markets, over which he had no control, his estimate is generally correct. Where goods are supplied in excess, some seek other classes of production; and the average relative value of commodities will therefore be that of the relative expenditure in producing them, whatever may be the temporary variations produced by mistakes in the *anticipation of the state of the markets.*

Operation by which the anticipation of the wants of society is to the labourer the immediate demand for his services.

This anticipation of demand is, to all purposes that concern the mere labourer, the demand itself. The capitalist wants his services immediately, to produce a result to be marketable at a future time. The wants of society at that future time have, through the anticipations of the capitalist, employed the labourer at the present moment. The wants of society at that future time have thus given direction to the industry of the present moment. All this industry is actively employed in anticipation of the exchanges to be made of its produce by the commercial capitals; and the experience of these exchanges daily modifies its application. In fine, the experience of the merchant and dealer, as to the wants of society, are transferred to the manufacturing capitalist, who determines the amount of labour to be employed in each class of services.

Wants of labourers anticipated with the rest, to meet the purchasing power of their wages, which is predetermined by the proportion of labour to land and capital, and by the relative qualities of labour required in each department of industry.

In the general supply, are included the articles for the labourers, which are also furnished by anticipation. The proportion of labour devoted to the service of labourers, or to producing the commodities consumed by the labourers, is in anticipation of the wages which they will be receiving in exchange for their services. And the circumstances which decide the amount of those wages, following only the great commercial principle of competition, which is merely the voice of demand and supply, will depend on the proportion which labour bears to *land and capital*, and upon the relative qualities of labour required by each department of industry. In other words, on this proportion depends "the quantity and quality of the commodities directly or indirectly appropriated during the year to the use of the labouring population."

Tendency of the excessive supply of labour, as of land or capital, to reduce its price.

Wages, or the price of labour, *as left to competition,* depend for their amount, as measured by their purchasing power, on the balance between the demand on the part of society at large for each particular class of labour, as felt through the capitalist, and its supply by the labourers themselves. Wages measure the value of each man's services to society, under its existing constitution, with its actual wants, and with its present resources; and where there is a limited supply of labour of any class which is in demand, wages will be the higher the richer is the community; or, in other words, the greater is the amount of land and capital, and the more active its industry, in proportion to its numbers. But in like manner as, through a proportionate excess of land, rent may be almost unknown; and of capital, profits may be annihilated; so in the case of labourers, excess of numbers has a *tendency* to reduce their wages to the borders of famine; the other classes in either case gaining by the loss of one, so long as industry is uncorrupted by hopelessness, and security maintained without excessive cost.

Impossibility of labourers keeping their labour from the market, when once they are in it, on their individual resources.

A witness before the committee of the House of Commons on the condition of the hand-loom weavers (John Scott, of Manchester) well describes, in regard to the contract for labour, "two distinctions between labour and capital, viz. that labour is always sold by the poor, and always bought by the rich; and that labour cannot by any possibility be stored, but must be every instant sold or every instant lost."* To suppose that it would not be lost if unsold, is to suppose the labourer a capitalist with his own tools, materials, and workshop. And if unsold, the hardship entailed by the want of the only means of daily support, which wages constitute, is obviously more grievous and intolerable than is the postponement of a bargain, or even the temporary unproductiveness of land or capital to a proprietor, to whom the portions of his land or capital which are still employed supply some means of subsistence. The proprietor may refrain at any moment from purchasing any class of labour, or the services of any individual, but the mere labourer cannot refrain from offering his services in the market.

Position of the proprietors of personal abilities only in re-

The command of the men of property,—who are expected by the labourers themselves to exercise nearly all the parsimony and forethought of society,—over the

* Abstract of Evidence.

gard to the proprietor also of land or capital.

labourers,—whose habit it is to live up to their daily income,—is therefore an essential part of civilized life. The long habit of society has made it familiar to all; and in a free community, men are left fully to the choice of their occupations and of their masters, whatever may be the individual circumstances which determine that choice. The labourer's industrial allegiance is due only in return for his wages, and he is free to terminate it whenever he chooses, though compelled by necessity immediately to seek new bonds for his own subsistence and to the common benefit of all society. The only mode by which the labourer can become his own master is by becoming a proprietor, which he can accomplish only by talent, industry, and parsimony.

Excess of labourers usually seeking employment in an "old" country, must have a *tendency* to reduce the wages of the unskilled to the verge of animal subsistence.

In an "old" country like our own, where all the fertile land is already cultivated, notwithstanding the extension of our means of subsistence by the investment of savings in new fixed or floating capitals, the number of rising competitors for employment is, in all ordinary time of peace, more than can immediately find it. The new hands are brought up in various occupations, most of which are overstocked with labourers, and the whole body are exposed to depression by the competition for employment, which we have described as the fiercest of all competitions. So unable is the labourer, especially in the lower occupations of life, to refrain from pressing his services into the market, that, *individually*, he is frequently tempted to offer them at any price, rather than have them rejected. The employer, dealing with the hands individually, may thus, by taking in those who are successively thrown out, reduce wages, it may be 50 per cent., while the excess of hands at the previous wages was only 5 per cent., or less, sometimes without increasing the extent of his sales. By this process,—in which, if only one or two masters adopt it, they must be followed by the whole trade,—the sum yielded by society for a given amount of a certain class of industrial services is reduced one half; for the employer does not retain the amount reduced from wages, which the competition of other capitalists throws into the hands of the consumer. The number of hands employed, in some cases, will not be at all increased by the reduction; in most, not nearly in the same proportion. And could an increased number be employed, it would, if the reduction were excessive, be merely a multiplication of misery. This principle is felt very forcibly by the professions, and is not less strongly urged by the trades, who found upon it the whole of their proceedings in combination.

Importance of appreciating the gradations in the quality of labour, in different departments of industry, in estimating the effects of competition.

The relative qualities of labour required by each department of industry are a subject on which it is important to have a clear understanding, before the position of any one class of labourers under this competition can be clearly appreciated. It is by this means alone that we can perceive the operation of a general pressure for employment, which positively lessens "the quantity and quality of the commodities directly or indirectly appropriated during the year to the use of the labouring population," *in its total amount* as well as in its distribution to individuals. To such decrease must inevitably tend the master principle of competition, where there is an excess of labourers, while men will buy as cheaply and sell as dearly as they can, whether it be commodities or personal services; and the history of the Coventry trade presents instances of labour being, at different times, both bought cheaply and sold dearly.

Variation of wages in the various classes of employment, with the strength and skill required in each, through the action of competition.

It is the character of the services, in requiring more or less strength and skill, or, as the distinction is usually less nicely made, in being "skilled" or "unskilled," which forms the great distinction among the several classes of labourers, and between the individuals in each class, in regard to their remuneration by wages. In like manner as the usual demand of the public induces the manufacturing capitalist to anticipate its wants, so does the prospect of employment by the capitalist draw into the several branches of industry the labourers in each. And as the average relative price of goods, although determined actually by the supply and demand in the market, is measured (through the justness of the calculations in supplying it) ultimately by the cost of their production, so is the reward of the labourer by the cost of his education to the trade he proposes to follow. A glut of any particular class of articles, or of any particular class of labourers, has a tendency to produce similar effects on prices and on wages. Some articles, from the easiness and abundance of their supply, are almost valueless; and such also, on the ground merely of competition, are some of the lowest classes of industrial services. But in the reward of the lower classes of labourers are commonly introduced disturbing influences, which may readily be traced in approaching them from the higher occupations.

For personal abilities, marked by the highest knowledge and dexterity, the

demands of society are always greater than the supply; and the number qualified to render the services is often so limited as to raise the remuneration for them to the varying point at which it is met by the disinclination of society to purchase more at such a price. This price the labourer then fixes according to his own feelings and abilities, so as to produce the most convenience to himself; very high, if he wants leisure; and lower, if he wants fuller employment for a larger aggregate amount of reward.

The highest departments of skill never overstocked.

In occupations where the number of labourers of the requisite skill is so limited, in proportion to the demand for their services, that they easily earn as much or more than they know how to spend within the habits of their class, the men either become capitalists and masters, or form the remarkable class of talented and dissolute workmen too well known in such towns as Birmingham; and the great mass of all workmen, it should be borne in mind, have not an ambition to rise *out* of their class, but only *in* it; therefore, where the moral standard of the class is low, excess of earnings can find application only in debauchery; the fault being not in the amount of wages, to which the man is as well entitled as any master to his profits, but to his want of moral development, sometimes aggravated by the practices of masters on such men to obtain their services. Here the competition among the employers for the workmen's services is such, that they feel need of no combination to raise their wages.

Secondary departments where workmen earn more than they know how to spend profitably within the habits of their class.

Descending in the scale of skill, the number of competitors for employment, in proportion to the demand for their services, rapidly increases, until, in the ranks of agricultural labourers, and still more of hand-loom weavers, we find a constant excess of hands born and brought up within these occupations, besides many seeking one of them as a last resource from others; while from them there is no lower resort whatever for subsistence.

Excess of competition in the lowest-skilled occupations.

Whatever may be the wages of labour in the lowest-skilled occupations, those in every other must successively rise higher, or there would be no inducement to enter into the more difficult fields of employment; while, on the other hand, if, through whatever influence, the wages of labour are raised higher in any occupation than is demanded by the rate of skill required, or the disadvantages to be encountered in it, as compared with others, an excess of hands flowing into it, *while labour is free*, must soon reduce them, not only to their average standard, but probably somewhat lower. It is from the wages of the great body of labourers which constitute the lowly-skilled classes, whether employed in producing food or clothing, that there is a constant tendency to measure all others. When the unskilled labourer is well paid, the workman in every higher occupation must also be well paid, proportionately; and when the unskilled labourer is not well paid, the condition of the next higher workman is in great danger of deterioration, from the inevitable desire of some masters, who must be followed by others, to avail themselves of cheaper labour, though at some temporary inconvenience. It is obviously, therefore, within very narrow limits, that, in the middle rank of trades, combinations among either masters or men, *except in so far as they illegally interfere with the free circulation of labour*, can materially affect the wages in those trades, the amount of which can be rendered secure only by the good remuneration of the several classes of labourers beneath them.

Tendency of wages, in trades of medium skill, to vary with the price of unskilled labour, though successively rising higher.

Limited influence on wages of combinations which do not illegally interfere with the free circulation of Labour.

One of these lower classes is formed by the great body of the ribbon-weavers of the city and neighbourhood of Coventry, among whom the usual supply of labour is shown to be in excess, from the numbers born and brought up in the trade. This trade is a fair example of the circumstances of all lowly-skilled manufacturing occupations in respect to the competition for employment. The mode in which the depression of the single-hand trade acts in reducing the engine-trade also is an instance of the influence of a lowly-paid body of labourers upon the next superior class. It is true that the engine-loom, as a more powerful machine, has gradually encroached on the single-hand trade; but the condition of the people engaged in the latter is that to which their own social elements limit them, and that which appears to have been usually prevalent. The sending of apprentices from the weavers' families to the iron trades is another instance of labour seeking its level. But such is the constant increase of hands in such lowly-skilled occupations, that they thereby obtain little relief from competition. In a trade where the increase of numbers takes its full course, and where an excess of hands is brought up, the competition for employment is evidently excessive; and the following outline of the trade movements at Coventry, during the present century, is little more than the history of successive efforts to restrain its activity or avert its effects. It is given in some detail, since the feelings and interests involved in the disputes about wages have

Exhibition, in the movements occuring in the Coventry trade, of the position, interests, and feelings of lowly-skilled manufacturing labourers, in making their bargain for employment.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher, Esq.*

METHODS OF CONTRACT FOR LABOUR.

Early reward of labour by unchanging lists of the prices paid to the undertakers, and shared by them with their journey-hands.

generally permitted only partial, garbled, and incoherent statements respecting them to be made public, even before Parliament.

Early in the present century the constitution of the trade was analogous to that of an old agricultural population; the manufacturer holding the place of the landlord, the undertaker that of the small farmer, and the journey-hand that of the labourer; the silk being as the land; the manufacturer's profits, by the sale-list, his rental; the undertaker's share of the price for working it, his profits; and the journey-hand's share, his wages. In circumstances, in intelligence, in habits, and in position, the latter much resembled the agricultural labourers; and any reduction of the prices of weaving, which had remained unaltered for many years, would have been, of all measures, that last contemplated by the manufacturer.* The old relations between the employer and the employed had apparently established a public opinion as to their relative position and comforts, which kept the prices of labour unaffected by the excess of hands. For though the larger portion of the trade was generally without employment for several months in each year, no reduction was attempted in the *prices* paid for weaving, the excess of hands being felt only in the *want of work*. The effect of this system was, apparently, that the population regulated itself to the extent of employment under it; and though there was probably always an excess of hands, as is generally the case in the agricultural districts in time of peace, that excess was restrained by the standard of enjoyment, rude as it might be, which was maintained, and at which only a certain number, with the limited virtues they possessed, could be supported by the revenue which society would devote to the purchase of their services. The middle class of undertakers, capable of combination, were in some measure a guarantee for the maintenance of this state of things; and the same rate of payment per piece of 36 yards for any given breadth of ribbon, was long strictly adhered to by all the manufacturers; and two-thirds of that price was as duly paid by the undertaker to his journey-hands.† Where wages are regulated on this kind of guild system, it is probable that the police of society is lax, and its condition rude; but, though little advanced, such a state of things can by no means be regarded as vicious, for it is founded on principles, the practical adherence to which had become habitual, and any deviation from them disgraceful.

Change from this system in later years.

The great change produced in the constitution, feelings, and habits of society by the industrial excitements of late years, has, however, had its effect in the ribbon trade of Coventry, the changes in the position of the hands engaged in which have been traced; and those in their feelings and conduct are no less remarkable.

New lists of prices in the single-hand trade *granted* by the masters on *petition* of the undertakers.

The first departure from the old system was at the "big purl time," which commenced in 1812, when, in the excess of demand, with a deficient supply of hands (many of the men being in the army), the masters paid one above another, in their competition to get work done, without any regard to the customary list. The first printed list of prices in existence is one for the single-hand trade, made by the masters on the petition of the weavers for an advance at this time. It is headed, "The undersigned manufacturers in the ribbon-trade, having considered the petition of the single-hand weavers, dated the 8th of February, praying a further advance on the making of plain sarsenets, do agree to advance that article to the undermentioned prices, to take place on the day stated in the last list, viz. February 15th, 1813." And then follow the signatures of forty-nine manufacturers, or of managers of their establishments in their absence; being, in fact, the whole body of the trade; and beneath them is a complete list of prices, not only for plain sarsenets, but for all other goods made in the single-hand loom. The provisions of this list will be found in the subsequent comparative table of prices. The principles of *petition* on the part of the weavers, and *grant* on the part of the masters, are found to prevail in all proceedings of the kind, and are singularly analogous to those of early legislative enactment by *petition* of the Commons and *grant* by the King and Council.

Anarchy in the trade at the peace, and depression of prices.

When, at the peace, a great number of hands returned from the army, at the same time that, even for the previous number of weavers, employment was deficient, such was the general depression in the ribbon trade, that the prices of labour rapidly declined; nor was there found to be any check, as formerly there had been, in the habitual bearings of society, now that its arrangements were so violently shaken as ultimately to abolish the middle class of undertakers in the engine trade, many of whom now became manufacturers in rivalry with the old houses, under the encouragement of the great central capitals of the warehousemen. The number wanting work was too great to remain without it, if it were possible to get employ-

* Herbert. † Ibid.

ment on any terms; the new little manufacturers were exempt from the habits and feelings of the old school, who sought in vain to impose a moral limit to the competition in the labour-market, in lieu of allowing it to proceed to one of the last physical depression; and the larger manufacturers being dragged on by the competition, depressions were rapidly taking place.

The immemorial habits of association which the freemen weavers had acquired in their clubs or benefit societies, they now extended to the general interests of the trade; and uniting with them one of the earliest purposes of the ancient guilds, formed the "City of Coventry Weavers' Provident Union for Trade and Burial," of which the following is the programme :—

Weavers' Union, under the name of the "City of Coventry Weavers' Provident Union for Trade and Burial."

"Painful experience of the distress occasioned by low wages, is of itself sufficient reason why every weaver should exert himself to prevent it; and as, in a numerous body, great good may be derived from union, in aim and design; and it being desirable the weavers should have a fund of their own, to assist those who may be compelled to put up with half-work, at full price, rather than have full-work at a reduced price: We do agree to the following articles:—

"1. That every weaver, male or female, employed as a journeyhand in the trade, is eligible to be a member of the Union. The sum of *one penny* per week to be paid by every member, to form a fund applicable to any emergency.

"2. That every member's name shall be enrolled in a book prepared for the purpose; and that every male member shall take his turn in acting as steward or committee-man, in the same manner as in benefit societies.

"3. That a collector shall be appointed, who shall call on each member for his subscription; and he shall be allowed a compensation for his trouble.

"4. That two stewards, and a committee of five members, taken in rotation, shall attend at a time and place appointed to receive the money collected, and enter the same in a book provided for that purpose.

"5. That once in three months a general meeting shall be held of all the male-members, when the books shall be cleared and audited, and the new stewards and committee shall enter upon their functions.

"6. That all the benefit arising from this Union shall be confined to its members. That in case any emergency arise that may demand a use of the funds, the stewards and committee shall appoint a general meeting, and order the collector to acquaint every member of the time and place, in which meeting it shall be determined in what manner, and to what extent, the funds shall be applied.

"7. That, as soon as the money amounts to a sum sufficient, it shall be put out to interest, on securities, approved at a general meeting.

"8. That, on decease of any member, the whole of the money he or she may have subscribed, shall be paid back in aid of their funeral expenses.

"9. That every member of the Union claiming the benefit of the funds on account of having but half-work, shall produce from his employer a note to the stewards, that such is really the case; and such relief shall then be afforded as at the general meeting had been agreed to.

"10. That it being inconvenient for the whole trade to meet in any one place, the Union shall have its different sections in each ward, according to the number who may join in the plan. That no section do contain more than 100 members; and that, in case of emergency, the stewards of each section do unite, and form a central point to act for the whole.

"11. That any member changing his residence to another ward, he is at liberty to transfer his stock to the section he may join in the ward where he resides, on application at the first Quarterly meeting.

"12. That any member refusing to act in his turn, as steward or committeeman, shall forfeit *one shilling*. All forfeits to be applied towards paying the collector.

"13. That no person convicted of embezzling his master's property, shall be a member of the Union.

"14. That a public meeting of all the members in Union shall be held every Easter-Monday; when a statement of the funds shall be made public, and every member receive *one shilling*, with a ticket, on which shall be stated, his or her share in the general stock.

"15. That, if any alteration in any article appear necessary, it shall be specified in writing to the stewards, who shall present it before the first general meeting, and at the next general meeting it shall be adopted or rejected. The same rule to be observed respecting any new article."

The purpose of this union was, to all appearance, simply to make some allowance out of a joint fund to the individuals who were put upon a reduced amount of work, in lieu of submitting to a reduction in the price paid to them for it; but the endeavour to force such incohesive materials into a structure sufficiently compact, did not succeed. The attempt, however, shows the feelings and position of the men.

Agreement between manufacturers and undertakers to abide by a list framed by a mutual committee.

Any uniform price of labour being yet undetermined, and successive reductions experienced, meetings of the weavers were held in their great arena, "The Hill-and-hollow Close," and the master manufacturers, to the number of 78 in Coventry, 6 in Nuneaton, and 2 at Bedworth, signed an agreement couched in the following words, viz.:—

"We, the undersigned ribbon-manufacturers, do hereby agree to nominate and appoint three respectable persons from our own body to meet three respectable undertakers, and do hereby promise and agree to pay such prices as they shall mutually fix upon at such meeting."

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher, Esq.*

Methods of Contract for Labour.

The mutual deputations accordingly met at the Castle Inn, and formed the lists for both the engine and single-hand trades contained in the comparative table of prices hereafter given, which they duly certified as follows:—

"*Coventry, September 26th,* 1816.

"We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, having been deputed by the masters and undertakers in the ribbon trade to regulate the price of making thereof, have agreed to the following list, to commence the 1st of October next, 1816.

(Signed) "Thomas Cope, "C. Adams, "W. Clark, } For the Masters. | "James Harris, "Peter Gregory,* "John Dalby, } For the Undertakers.

"John James, *Secretary,*

The following note was appended to the printed lists:—

"The undertakers' deputation beg leave, in justice to the masters, to say, that amid the gloom of the present hour, in the multitude of calamities that weigh down our spirits, they feel consolation from the result of the above conference, in having it in their power to state the very honourable desire of the masters' deputation to meet the same persons at a more favourable period, and affix prices more beneficial both to the employer and the employed."

These details show the complete recognition of the list system—a legislation as to the price of labour by petition of the men and grant of the masters—by the whole body of masters; a minority of whom, it can scarcely be doubted, were overawed by the general opinion of the town and of the trade (as well as by apprehensions for their safety) into an acquiescence. To most of the manufacturers, especially those of larger capital, it was a subject rather of gratulation to have a fixed list of prices, as was the old habit of the trade, without fear of an advantage being gained by another who should under-pay them. "But this list was not maintained inviolate more than a fortnight; when a meeting of the deputations which had framed it was held, to know what steps could be taken for maintaining it. The deed was sent up to London to be stamped, or enrolled in the Court of Chancery; the opinion of counsel was obtained, that it was binding on those who had signed it, until a new agreement was made; and meetings were called to stimulate both masters and men to maintain the lists."†

Difficulty of enforcing the adherence of every individual master to the common lists of prices; and concurrence of the masters generally in the desire to procure an act, under which, when framed, the lists should receive the sanction of the magistrates.

The difficulty of enforcing, to a voluntary agreement of this kind, the adherence of every individual who was a party to it, was, however, immediately felt. The prices, in fact, were not paid with exactness by all for a single week; and in November ensuing, the following address to the trade generally was issued by two of the master manufacturers, with a view to obtain co-operation in procuring a magisterial sanction to this, and to any similar regulation of prices which should hereafter be resolved upon; in like manner as had been practised in the silk manufacture of London for nearly fifty years.

To the Ribbon Manufacturers.

"Gentlemen,

"Under an impression of the great evil which results to the trade from a want of adherence to a standard price of labour, we are constrained to lay aside that diffidence which we naturally feel in thus publicly addressing you.

"We have long lamented the want of confidence in maintaining former regulations, the increasing deviations from a standard price, and the growing disposition to obtain a paltry profit, at the expense of truth, justice, and humanity. To give such a price to your workmen as will not enable them to procure the common necessaries of life is evidently cruel and impolitic, inasmuch as it has a tendency to increase pauperism, and depress industry; and it is to be feared the badness of trade, the alarming price of provisions, and the extreme distress which prevails among the workmen, will increase the principle which we deprecate, as it is generally found that the disposition to oppress keeps pace with the inability of the sufferer to make a becoming resistance. We rejoice that honourable exceptions may be found among individuals, who have invariably conformed to the last regulation; but the competition in trade is too great to admit of those who are disposed to be the friends of the weavers conforming to the prices, while others are daily making a profit of their distresses.

"We had made these remarks prior to seeing an address to the trade from the Weavers' Committee, suggesting the desirableness and necessity of obtaining an Act of Parliament to regulate the price of labour, and to render those prices binding.

"The object appears to us desirable, and the only effectual remedy which can be applied. We are therefore induced to solicit the gentlemen of long standing and influence in the trade, to form a meeting for the purpose of discussing the propriety of such an arrangement, and setting on foot a subscription for defraying the expenses incidental to its accomplishment.

"We are, &c.

(Signed) "J. Robinson. "J. Sarjeant.‡

"*Coventry, 27th November,* 1816."

* The witness examined by me as to these proceedings. † Gregory.

‡ Evidence before Committee of 1818, on Coventry Petitions, pp. 34, 35.

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The former of these gentlemen then handed rounh to the several manufacturers the following declaration, to which he obtained the signatures of about a fifth of their number. More, he stated, would have added theirs had they been waited upon; and the whole body of the trade, subscribers to the list of 1816, sanctioned and supported its object.* This declaration is as follows :—

"The importance of procuring a general regulation of price in the manufacture of ribbons has long been felt and acknowledged; but every attempt hitherto made to attain that desirable object has proved abortive, and left no hope on the mind of success in its accomplishment short of an Act of Parliament. We, the undersigned, being desirous to promote and secure the best interests of the trade, do hereby signify our hearty concurrence in such measures as a Committee (chosen from the trade) may deem prudent to adopt towards obtaining an Act, in which the welfare of the master and the hand will be alike considered and promoted†."

Application to Parliament determined upon.

The departures from the list at length determined the weavers, after much discussion, on applying to Parliament for, in fact, an extension of the Spitalfields Act, although their petition, presented to Parliament early in 1818, expresses only in general terms their desire to have some law by which apprenticeships should be restricted to the old domestic system, terminating only at 21 years of age, and "that a certain rule for adequate wages be established, as well for the redress of their grievances, as for giving a chance to the fair manufacturer to meet his competitor at the market‡." A number of the master ribbon manufacturers and principal inhabitants of the City likewise sent a petition to the House of Commons, "for leave that a Bill may be brought in to remedy or limit the present apprentice system in the ribbon trade, and to enable both employers and employed in the said trade to regulate and make uniform, from time to time, by mutual consent or otherwise, the prices or wages for labour in the said trade for the city and county of the city of Coventry, and the county of Warwick, in such effectual way as to the House should appear most meet."§

Appointment of a Weavers' Committee to obtain an Act of Parliament, and appointment of a Committee of the House of Commons on the subject of the ribbon-weavers' petitions.

A Committee was formed among the weavers (undertakers) to conduct this application, and to leave no means untried to bring it to a successful issue. It applied the subscriptions extensively made in the whole trade, of which Mr. C. Adams, a manufacturer, and the acknowledged head of the trade, was treasurer; it communicated not only with the weavers of Nuneaton, Bedworth, Bulkington, and Foleshill, in its own vicinity, where it had to calm the jealousy then, as now, existing among the single-hand weavers in contemplating the progress of the engine-loom; but it incited those also of Macclesfield, Leake, Reading, &c., who sent similar petitions; it made application to every person whose influence it deemed might be obtained; it got up petitions and statements, and marshalled the witnesses; and it conducted all its labours with a tact, system, and perseverance which did its members infinite credit. A Committee of the House of Commons was obtained on the motion of the representatives of the city, to inquire into the subject of these petitions. The feverish excitement which continued through the trade during the progress of this inquiry may readily be imagined. The corporation subscribed to the funds of the Committee; and the town-clerk was made their principal agent in London. Some of Coventry masters gave evidence in favour of the weavers' petitions, in which they generally concurred; but the Macclesfield masters, who deemed that their existence depended on the lower rate of wages which they paid, as compared with those paid in London under the Spitalfields Act, presented a formidable opposition. Fraternization with the Spitalfields weavers was sought and obtained by the Committee; and some of the Spitalfields masters gave evidence before the Committee in favour of the operation of the Spitalfields Act, and in advocacy of its principle generally; but several others declared themselves opposed both to its principle and operation.

Tenor of the evidence before the committee on the Coventry petitions.

The witnesses before the Committee represented the depressed condition of the weavers at that time; the poor's rate in the preceding year (1817) having been 19*s.* and 15*s.* in the pound in the two city parishes respectively; producing a sum of 18,500*l.*, levied from only one-third of the houses, and aided by charities to the value of 3000*l.* per annum. Whenever a man's earnings, though in full work, were deemed insufficient for the maintenance of his family, he received assistance from the parish; his claim for which was a certificate of his limited earnings from his master. Under such a system it cannot be surprising that the poor's rates increased; and yet the feelings which could sanction such a system, however absurd it may be are not to be disregarded: they show a habitual conviction of the propriety of

* Robinson, Evidence of 1818, p. 35. † Ibid.
‡ Letter Book of the Weavers' Committee. § Ibid.

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the labourer enjoying a certain proportionate standard of comforts, as compared with those of the other classes of society. The witnesses further showed that the rural parishes were equally depressed; that the new system of apprenticeships had greatly tended to overburthen the trade with hands, and the parish with the unemployed; that it demoralized the town, upon which it left abandoned the women who ought to have been servants; that the list prices of 1816 had not been uniformly paid for a single week, and were wholly departed from in 1817;* that less than a farthing per yard advance on the wages would content all parties and not be felt by the customer; that so far from obtaining this advance, prices were constantly being lowered; that nine-tenths of the principal masters were in favour of the proposed Act, provided it could be made to extend to the kingdom generally; that the trade was one dependent not on the prices of its articles so much as on fashion, and that therefore the fluctuations should be in the amount of employment and not the price of labour, which they were as willing to restrict from excessive advance as from decline; and that the same feeling in favour of the interference of the magistrates in regard to wages existed, not only among the weavers, but among the inhabitants generally, of whom 500 had, only a few months previously, signed a petition to the master manufacturers, and an address, beseeching the directors of the poor, and all others that had any power or influence, to exert it in every legal manner possible, to mitigate the burthen of the poor's rate, out of which the weavers were in part supported.

Desire that lists, framed by the masters and men, from time to time, should be sanctioned by the magistrates, and enforced by them.

Mr. Carter, the town-clerk, and one of the directors of the poor, being finally asked by the Committee,—"Would it in your judgment and belief be attended with advantage were the justices in quarter sessions to regulate the prices of labour in the silk trade, in the same way as in London and in Dublin?" Answered,—"I have no doubt of it; and I have been assured also that that will be the effect by most of the principal manufacturers in Coventry, provided it could be done as a general measure for the whole of the silk manufacturers throughout the kingdom."†

In answer to the question, "Can you point out a remedy applicable to these great evils which you have described as prevailing in Coventry, and its vicinity?" Mr. Robinson, a master-manufacturer, answered,—"I believe an Act of the Legislature to empower the magistrates to enforce a regular price to be paid would remedy it, and I believe nine-tenths of the masters think the same; I have waited on the greater part of them.

"Do you think there would be any material objection in the trade to such an Act being passed?—I believe to the bulk of the masters it is a very desirable object, and they would be very glad to have it, especially if it could be made general for Great Britain; however, they would rather have it for the county than not at all, I believe.

"If the agreement which the Committee have before them between the weavers and the manufacturers were adhered to and carried into effect, would not that answer the great purpose of the relief in view?—Yes, every purpose."‡

Mr. William Pears, and Mr. J. W. Makin, two of the largest and oldest manufacturers in the trade, gave evidence to precisely the same effect, as to their own opinions and those of the manufacturers generally; more particularly specifying the desirable extension of the Spitalfields and Dublin Acts to the trade throughout the kingdom. The corporation of Coventry presented to the Committee of the House an address, praying for such a measure to be extended to Coventry.§

Discussion of the principles and operation of the Spitalfields Act involved in the proceedings.

The Committee received evidence very similar in character from Leek and Macclesfield; the old list system had been there broken through under the like circumstances as at Coventry; but the application from those places was opposed, in lieu of being supported, by their master manufacturers. Witnesses were also summoned as to the operation of the Spitalfields Act, and this petition from Coventry appears to have hastened the discussion of the merits of this statute, which terminated in its repeal in 1824, by the 5th of George IV., c. 66, after counsel and witnesses had been heard, both for and against its maintenance, before a Committee of the whole House of Lords in the year preceding. The principal evidence on both occasions was given by the same parties; and since it is essential here to state the results of a trial of those very measures which the Coventry men then sought, and still seek, I have subjoined a summary of the results of both examinations.

The Spitalfields Act is the 13th of George III., c. 68, and is entitled "An Act

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* Gregory. † Minutes of Evidence, p. 4.
‡ Evidence of 1818, pp. 36, 37. § Ibid.

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Provisions of the Spitalfields Act, 13 Geo. III. c. 68.

to impower the Magistrates therein mentioned to settle and regulate the wages of persons employed in the Silk Manufacture within their respective jurisdictions." It simply provides that after the 1st day of July, 1773, "The wages of journeymen weavers, within the city of London, shall be settled, regulated, and declared by the Lord Mayor, Recorder, and Aldermen of the said city; and in all places in the county of Middlesex, by the Justices of the Peace for the said county; and in all places within the City and Liberties of Westminster, at the General Quarter Sessions of the Peace, holden in and for the said Liberty; and in all places within the Liberty of the Tower of London, at the General Quarter Sessions of the Peace holden in and for the said Liberty, at their General Quarter Sessions of the Peace respectively . . . . upon application made to them for that purpose." Their order "to be printed and published, at the reasonable expense of the person or persons applying for the same, three times in any two daily newspapers published in London or Westminster; which publication shall be deemed and allowed to be sufficient notice and publication;" . . . after which "all weavers and their journeymen are hereby strictly required to observe the same." Master weavers giving *more or less* wages, or paying larger or less prices for work, are hereby subjected, on conviction before any two Justices of the Peace, to a penalty of 50*l.*, to be paid to the Master of the Weavers' Company, for distribution among distressed journeymen weavers or their families. Journeymen weavers who shall ask or take greater or less wages or prices, or enter into combinations to raise them, or assemble to petition on the subject of them, in numbers more than ten, except when going to the Magistrates, are subjected in like manner to a penalty of 40*s.*, to be similarly applied, or, in default of payment, to imprisonment in the House of Correction for not more than three months. Justices, on suspicion of offences committed, may summon witnesses from among servants or others, and persons refusing to attend, or attending and refusing to be examined, are made liable to committal to the House of Correction for a month. Master weavers within the limits specified, employing journeymen beyond those limits, with design to elude this Act, were made liable to a penalty of 50*l.*, one half to the King and one half to whosoever should sue the party. This Act was not to apply to the wages of foremen. It was further provided that no silk weaver within the limits specified, should have more than two apprentices at one time, under a penalty of 20*l.*, to be applied by the Master of the Weavers Company, as before stated. Persons convicted before two Justices to be allowed an appeal to the Quarter Sessions, on giving proper security. This statute—(which was imitated by the Irish Parliament in the case of the Silk Manufacturers of Dublin, by the 19th and 20th of George III. (I.), amended by the 36th of George III. (I.), and by the 40th of George III., c. 27, (passed since the Union),—was extended in its application, within the same limits, by the 32nd of George III., c. 44, to all manufacturers of silk mixed with other materials; and by the 51st of George III., c. 7, its provisions were made to apply to journeywomen as well as journeymen.

Passed to terminate disturbances arising out of departures from a conventional list of prices, such as at Coventry.

Previous to its enactment there had existed in Spitalfields, as in Coventry before the "big purl time," a regular "(printed) book of prices, by which all the manufacturers were bound in honour to pay their men."* But this being departed from by some masters, their example was presently followed by others, and the journeymen weavers broke into open riot. "The district became the scene of the greatest tumult. Spitalfields had the appearance of a besieged city. The church and many large houses were converted into temporary barracks for the soldiers, who were unable to suppress the outrages of a starving and infuriated mob. Some murders were committed, and many were executed during that period of distress, confusion, and misery. The passing of the Spitalfields Act, *at the request of all the manufacturers*, restored order."† During the half-century which elapsed from the passing of this Act to its repeal in 1824, to relieve the master manufacturers from any embarrassment in meeting foreign competition, the weavers have, says the same writer, "in common with all other classes, been called to experience seasons of distress, during many periods of the late war, but no tumultuous proceedings have ever taken place among them." I know that at one time deputies were sent from the North to sound their dispositions and to excite them to call popular meetings for Radical Reform, &c.;—but their answer was, "that they were well employed and fairly paid for their labour, and were therefore satisfied."‡

* Hale's 'Defence of the Spitalfields Act, p. 13. (1824.) † Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

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Wages not settled by the magistrates, but the bargain, made *collectively* by masters and men, enforced on all *individually*.

Practically, the Magistrates did not regulate the wages, but left the masters and men to make their own bargain *collectively*, and these terms they enforced, under the penalties stated in the Act, upon all *individually*.—

"A committee of masters," states Mr. Hale, in his evidence before the Lords' Committee of 1823, "generally meet a committee of journeymen, perhaps three or four, or five on each side, and after they have argued the matter they come to an agreement what they think should be the fair price for labour. It is then taken before a magistrate, who ratifies it, and it becomes by law a fixed price, until altered by a subsequent agreement. If we cannot come to an agreement, in that case we go before the magistrates at quarter-sessions; we each of us take witnesses on each side, and after mature deliberation, and viewing the measure with all its consequences, on both sides, the magistrates determine it. There were instances, in which I was engaged, in which we could not agree, and we went before the magistrates; one was given on the side of the journeymen, and the last time we appealed to the magistrates they were with us. The period I allude to was just at the conclusion of the war, at the time of the peace of Amiens. Provisions had been kept up for a considerable time, and the journeymen, who had never had a rise in proportion to the rapid advances in the necessaries of life, finding that the prices of provisions kept up for so long a time, appealed to have a higher rate of wages. The ground on which we (the masters) opposed the petition of the journeymen was this, although we admitted that the average price of labour was not equal in proportion to what it ought to be, considering the price of provisions, yet, as the period of time had arrived, at which we anticipated the fall of provisions, it would be premature at that period to fix a higher rate of wages; but it was proper to await the event of six or twelve months. The magistrates thought with us, and dismissed the case."*

Evidence that the rule in making the lists of prices was the possibility of earning thereby an amount of comforts proportionate to their class position as lowly-skilled labourers.

Operation of the Spitalfields Act, as to mutual committees, the settlement of disputes between masters and men, &c.

The examination of Mr. Buckeridge, a Spitalfields manufacturer, before the Committee on the Coventry petitions, presents a brief statement of the operation of the Act. His evidence is confirmed by that of other witnesses, though sometimes in terms expressing a much less favourable opinion of the measure.—

"State to the Committee such information as occurs to you upon the subject of this present inquiry?—I have been in the trade of a silk manufacturer upwards of 50 years; I was brought up as an operative weaver; I employed my own family, and several apprentices, from time to time, when I was an operative weaver. I have been a master for the last six years, having been part of the time in partnership with Mr. Thomas Cole; I then employed upwards of a hundred looms, partly in the plain, and partly in the fancy work, and also in the making of silk velvets. I have been for the last 26 years employed as a warrant-officer under His Majesty's Commissioners of Customs, for the seizing of foreign silk, and deciding questions with regard to silk articles, whether Foreign or British. I have assisted in forming all the list-prices that have been made since 1784; a general one in 1795; another in 1800; another in 1802; another in 1804; an explanatory one in 1805; and the last in 1806, a general one; and then, by the desire of the masters and men (the masters in particular), compiled the present book of prices. I can produce the subscription of the masters on that occasion. I am well acquainted with the operation and effect of the Spitalfields Acts, as they are called; I think they have been productive of convenience to the master, and comfort to the men; they have prevented disputes, and have also prevented the weaver from taking advantage of the master, by an exorbitant demand when trade is in a flourishing state, and the master from taking advantage of the operative weaver, in the event of a temporary depression of the trade. I think that these Acts have operated to the encouragement of skill and industry, inasmuch as many operative weavers have become masters. The average earnings of a weaver do not exceed 16*s*., subject to the deduction, upon an average, of 4*s*. 6*d*. per week. I think the Acts have repressed pauperism. There are many societies of weavers, called Benefit Societies, for the purpose of supporting each other in the event of sickness, and other misfortunes. The magistrates have, in all cases referred to them under the Spitalfields Acts, decided in an able and satisfactory manner; and I feel myself competent to speak to this, as I have generally attended when questions have been referred to them.

"Is there a committee of operative weavers in Spitalfields?—The Committees that have been always made use of by the journeymen and the masters exist; but when any complaints come before the trade, they assemble to take the matter into consideration; but no notice is taken, unless there are several complaints, and then circular letters are written to the manufacturers to inform them of the complaints; but the masters and the men have generally chosen a person on each side to settle their desputes.

"Are you a member of that committee of operative weavers in Spitalfields?—No, I am not; I have been, but I did not leave it for any reason of this sort. I am not a member, for after I became a master I continued a member of the journeymen's committee, and some of them got jealous, supposing that I was not in their interest.

"But you have been called upon as a referee on both sides?—Yes.

"You have been called upon by the masters and the men to settle disputes between them in an amicable manner?—Yes.

"And have you done so to the satisfaction of all of them?—In general.

"Can you inform the Committee whether the committee of the silk weavers in London kept up a regular correspondence with the committee of operative weavers in Macclesfield,

* Minutes of Evidence, p. 7.

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for several years?—I do not think they ever did; I do not mean to say that an individual might not have written, but not as a committee.

"But do you know, in point of fact, that even an individual did write?—No.

"Did not your committee hold a correspondence with the committee in Macclesfield, in the latter part of the year 1815?—As far as regards the India business it might be so, but I was not of the number; I do not know that I was, I was a master.

"You were not a member of the committee?—No; for such a thing as a standing committee there is no such thing, nor has there been one for thirty-four years; they are made choice of for a temporary time, and as soon as the business is over for which they are called upon to deliberate, they are discharged and a new set of people are chosen. I must, however, say, with respect to myself, that I have taken upon myself, at the express desire of the magistrates, to decide upon disputes between the master and the man; I have been before the magistrates about a weaver's work, work that has been spoilt, and divers other things, for many years.

"How much are you allowed per day by the committee for your attention to their business?—I am glad that question is put to me, I wished it; because it affords me an opportunity of repelling such an insinuation. If I were put to my oath I could positively say, that though I have been attending to the business of the committee, I may say for thirty years, I never received a farthing of their money for my own advantage; so far from receiving any of their money I have never been remunerated for the expenses I have incurred on their account, and there has never been any return made to me for my trouble.

"You have received money from them?—Yes, but it has cost me more, which has never been repaid, and that I can prove by letters from the magistrates, and from Mr. Colquhoun in particular."*

Opinion of some Spitalfields masters in favour of the Act, as preventing mutual under-paying.

Mr. John Ballance being asked, What reason have you to think that the Spitalfields Act is, upon the whole, an advantageous Act?—alleges the operation of its main operating principle:—

"There is one provision of the Act which has always struck me, in contemplating it, as being materially to the comfort both of masters and men, and that is the rendering the price, whatever that price was, as agreed upon between the parties, uniform for the time being, so that one manufacturer pays the same as his next-door neighbour. That circumstance prevents a collision of interests, and much irritation, which would otherwise take place. * * * *

"You think that the system is advantageous to the masters in the employment of their capital, and the journeymen by the constant wages they get, and the way in which it affects their moral character also?—Yes."†

Operation of the Spitalfields Act when the masters, shortly before its repeal, were beginning to be disinclined to make terms with the men.

Subsequent to the Coventry petitions, in 1818, the weavers of figured goods and their masters had a meeting for the revision of their lists, but did not agree. A few months before the repeal of the Act, the prices for weaving narrow silks were, however, brought for the first time under regulation. The circumstances under which this was accomplished describe all the workings of the Act, supplementary to such proceedings as have already been discussed. The men gave notice to the masters, and were not met by them: they applied to the magistrates, and, the masters not appearing, they got a list of their own framing sanctioned by the magistrates; but this was afterwards revised.—

"You are quite satisfied—the Committee ask one of the weavers, William Webb—with the last adjustment that was made?—Yes, I am; for when I put in work I shall know what I shall have for it.

"But the former adjustment, which was not founded on the mutual consent of the masters and journeymen, but the magistrates alone, gave great dissatisfaction?—The list was signed by a number of masters; but after the order was made some of the masters complained, that it was too high, and we then met the masters to arrange; for instance, in the article called trimmings, to suit different masters we have different degrees of work, which they regulate by shutes—that so many shutes to the inch should have so much for the yard; and if we put in more shutes—some of the masters wanting a better kind of work for different customers—we have a better price for that work.

"Before your wages were regulated under the Act, did it ever strike you that, if a Committee of journeymen were to meet a Committee of the masters, they might have come to an agreement themselves?—Yes; they might have come to an agreement, but that would have been no staple thing, unless sanctioned by the magistrates.

"Why should it not have been a staple thing unless sanctioned by the magistrates;—have you no confidence in your masters?—I have heard of instances where it has been the case, but it has never been kept to.

"In Spitalfields?—Not in Spitalfields, but in Coventry. I am a native of Coventry myself.

Compared by a witness with the voluntary lists at Coventry.

"But you have never heard of an instance in Spitalfields where the masters and servants agreed but it was not kept?—*I never heard that there was an instance, unless sanctioned by the magistrates, when it was kept to.* * * *

"Was your work as good when you worked eight hours and got a shilling as when you worked a shorter time and got more?—It was."‡

* Evidence before the Commons' Committee on the Coventry Petitions, pp. 188, 189.
† Evidence before the Lords' Committee in 1823, pp. 104, 105.
‡ Ibid., pp. 100, 101.—William Webb.

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Organization among weavers, under the Spitalfields Act, to make and maintain the contract for labour.

Inferior articles, it should be observed, were always priced low, that little could be made at them, because it is expected they will be worked by boys and inferior hands.

To defray the expenses necessarily incurred by these Committees, subscriptions were made among the weavers; and these not proving sufficient, the cane-spreaders, who make a business of turning-on the warps for the weavers, were employed to levy a penny on every warp coming through their hands, to which they attached a receipt ticket; and though the purchase of this ticket was not, it is maintained, forced upon the weavers, yet the practice brought them individually to an ordeal of observation which must have been in the main effectual.

James Baker, a weaver, is asked—

"What is the nature of the penny ticket as it relates to the trade generally?—The penny ticket is put on by those persons that choose to have them, to defray incidental expenses that occur to the trade. Many businesses we have frequently to take up become very expensive, and we have no other mode of collecting money but by the penny per cane; but it is entirely optional,—a great many never take the ticket at all.

"Are there infringements of what are called the Spitalfields Acts?—There are many infringements.

"And unless the men had some voluntary subscription of this kind, they could not obtain the enforcement of that Act?—They could not, for the want of money†."

Nor was this practice without the sanction of the magistrates‡.

Organization among manufacturers, under the Spitalfields Act, to make and maintain the lists of prices, &c.

The masters, on the other hand, had their association, the Committee of which not only pursued the objects indicated by its title, but acted generally in communications with the men. The limited number and better resources of the masters made unnecessary to them any such means of collecting funds as the weavers adopted; and the masters' association, by public hand-bill, denounced the conduct of the cane-spreaders as illegal, but took no farther steps. The following is the statement of the relative character and position of the Committees, and of the magisterial authority, by Mr. Ambrose Moore, the greatest opponent of the Spitalfields Acts, before the Committee on the Coventry petitions.—

"Is there any Committee within your knowledge composed of masters and manufacturers?—Not for the purpose of counteracting any designs of the journeymen weavers in particular. There is a society in the silk-trade to which the greater part of the manufacturers subscribe, which is entitled "An Association for preventing and punishing Embezzlement and other offences in the Silk Manufacture." Its operations are chiefly directed to punish Embezzlements of silk, and it has been very useful in that respect. *This society has also negotiated with the Committee of journeymen on the subject of prices, and has also defended its members when prosecuted by the journeymen.*

"Are either you or the members of your firm members of that Committee?—I am.

"Then you can speak to the objects of that Committee?—I have given the title of it; and I assure the Committee its object is in conformity to it.

"Can you speak with equal certainty as to the Committee of journeymen?—For this reason I cannot; I have attended the one, and, of course, have not the other.

"May not the objects of the Committee of journeymen have as laudable purposes in view as the Committee of masters?—They might possibly have; but the fact is, I believe otherwise; their objects are to promote an increase of price as much as possible, and to endeavour to detect any slight deviations in price which the master is subject to from the great intricacy of the works. If there is any doubt existing as to the price of a work, and the master and man making it are perfectly satisfied, and it is in its nature obscure, it is not laudable, I think, to take it before a bench of magistrates, who cannot understand the question, which is often so intricate that I have heard the Counsel employed say that they had rather give a fee to be excused than receive one for their services. Another part of their practice is, that of raising money; and they do it by compulsion. I do not know that that can be called laudable. When they promoted an information against us for making the checked silk I have produced, the man expressed himself perfectly satisfied with the price we were paying him, yet we were obliged to discontinue it. That object, I think, cannot be considered laudable.

"Do you mean by that an individual contribution which is made?—I mean they levy money by what they call penny tickets, forcing a weaver to take a penny ticket at the commencement of a cane, and pay for it.

"Is there no contribution of any kind to support the Committee of masters?—A voluntary one, not compulsory.

"Do you undertake to say that the penny-ticket contribution has not been voluntary?—I do. One of my weavers told me so yesterday or the day before.

"Can there be any alteration in prices, whether higher or lower, without meetings of the journeymen?—I do not see very well how there are to be. I do not think the journeymen could do without meetings on such occasions.

"Do not the masters meet when any alterations are in contemplation, either higher or lower, in like manner?—Yes; and there was a meeting of a considerable number of the masters about

* Hale, Evidence of 1823, p. 23.

† Minutes of Evidence on the Coventry Petitions, p. 194. ‡ Ibid. p. 54.

two years since, as I have already stated, when provisions were low and trade indifferent, and it was thought a reduction of wages might be allowed by the journeymen. In consequence, a special meeting was called of the masters, to consider of a proposal of a reduction of price to the journeymen, but the journeymen would not listen to it; and if a meeting of journeymen were to take place in a similar manner, whenever there was an occasion for it, nobody could object to it. The meeting I speak of was not a regular society of masters, but a meeting on the occasion.

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"Is it not perfectly legal to have committees of this description, to prevent illegal acts both of the master and of the men?—I am not lawyer enough to be able to say how legal it may be; I am sure it is not legal to raise money as they do.

"You have read the Act over?—I have; possibly I may not recollect every part of it.

"Have not the masters the same power as the weavers, to go before a magistrate to settle the prices?—Yes; I believe the powers are perfectly equal that are given by the Act.

"The jurisdiction is open alike, then, to both parties?—It is."*

Mr. Hale, a Spitalfields manufacturer, advocating the measure, writes:—

The Spitalfields Act practically little more than a magisterial sanction to such lists of prices for labour as are common in all extensive unskilled trades.

"I may here, in passing, observe, that the *spirit* and *principle* of this law is acted upon in almost every manufacturing town throughout the kingdom. The manufacturers have, in general, a written or printed book of prices, according to which they have professed and agreed to pay their workmen. The only difference of the case is, that if any of those who employ the weavers in Spitalfields are so dishonourable as to break their agreement, and secretly oppress the poor, the Act presents a barrier to their so doing; while, on the other hand, in the manufacturing towns to which I have alluded, there being no tie upon the parties beyond their own veracity and honour, such mutual agreements scarcely ever subsist more than a few weeks; some of the masters, in order to undersell their neighbours, or to gain an inequitable profit, insist upon their helpless workmen labouring below the agreed prices. This cannot long remain concealed. The example is rapidly, and indeed necessarily followed; and a whole class of valuable supporters of the community is robbed of its bread, and is sacrificed to the dishonest and cruel cupidity of a worthless and probably half-bankrupt handful."†

Contracts for labour between masters and men, collectively, a usual self-formed system in manufacturing communities; the magisterial sanction to them the sole vital principle of the Spitalfields Act.

This, though expressed with warmth, is a very accurate statement of the circumstances which are seen to have had existence in Coventry, and which were taking the same course in the other towns of the silk manufacture that I have visited; the excess of competing hands at the peace being so far beyond any ordinary circumstances as to make the longer maintenance of a merely voluntary system of list-prices impossible. And it is important to bear in mind what is here represented, that the whole system of the Spitalfields Act was, in fact, one of self-formation,—a growth out of the spirit of a manufacturing community,—for the details of which the law was not responsible, but only for the enforcement on individuals of the collective contract.

Circumstances rendering the application of the Coventry weavers to have its provisions extended to their trade by no means extravagant.

Mr. William Hale, the writer from whom I have quoted, a manufacturer of great respectability and intelligence, and for many years treasurer of the parish of Christchurch, Spitalfields, was the principal witness in favour of the Spitalfields Act, and of its extension, before the Coventry Petitions' Committee of 1818; and it is chiefly as a summary of his evidence before that Committee that the preceding extracts from his pamphlet have been made. When to the same principles a majority of the manufacturers of Spitalfields solemnly subscribed their approval, and when they had for 50 years been embodied in Acts of the Legislature affecting the leading silk manufactures in the kingdom, all surprise at the application for an extension of these Statutes by the Coventry men will cease. The examination of Mr. Hale, on the 8th of May, 1818, thus concludes:—

"Since you last attended the Committee, have any steps been taken to ascertain the general opinion of the master manufacturers in Spitalfields with regard to the Acts which are to regulate the silk trade?—Several meetings of the manufacturers have taken place, and the result of their deliberation has been drawn up in a declaration, which I beg to give as a part of my evidence; it contains the unqualified opinion of by far the greatest majority of the silk manufacturers, both in number and respectability; the greatest part of them are practical weavers; many of them have been a great many years in the trade, and have, from long experience, seen the good effect of a book of prices. Some of them can recollect the period of the riotous proceedings that have been alluded to, and the circumstances that led to the enactment of those Statutes which have formed the foundation of the book of prices. Some of the gentlemen have annexed, at the end of their names, the number of years they have been employed as silk manufacturers, many of them above 40 and some above 50 years.

Declaration of a majority in number of the Spitalfields masters in favour of the Act.

"Are not gentlemen who have signed that declaration manufacturers in Spitalfields?—A great part of them, and many in the city; if it be wished the persons who have signed it will attend to state the same personally, but it was considered their opinions might be brought together in this shape, to save the time of the Committee.

"When was this declaration drawn up and signed?—It was drawn up about five days back.

* Minutes of Evidence, p. 146.

† Hale's 'Defence of the Spitalfields Act,' pp. 7, 8.

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[*It was delivered in and read as follows:*]

"We, the undersigned silk-manufacturers of London, are decidedly of opinion that the Acts relating to the silk-trade of London, Middlesex, and Westminster, called the Spitalfields Acts, have been productive of the following most important results, viz. they prevent differences and disputes between the silk-manufacturer and the journeyman; put it out of the power of the journeyman to exact from the manufacturer a high rate of wages when the trade happens to be in a flourishing state; secure to the workman a fair and equitable price for his labour, and consequently prevent the manufacturer from taking advantage of his weaver, under a temporary depression of the trade; give encouragement to ingenuity, the weaver knowing that in proportion as he is skilful his earnings increase, the skilful weaver working with greater facility than the ordinary hand, and consequently is rewarded according to his skill; prevent an exorbitant increase of the poor-rates; keep the districts in which the silk-trade is the staple manufacture in a state of quietude and repose; and have effectually arrested the progress of pauperism.

"We beg to state the fatal effects which, in our judgment, result from pauperism; it produces moral degradation in every point of view, represses industry, engenders negligence in the management and economy of a family, increases disaffection, has a tendency to riot and outrage, greatly injures the landed interest, produces a general demoralization of principle, and endangers the state itself.

"We are of opinion, that a fair price given to the weaver for his labour has not the effect of preventing a consumption of the article he weaves, and that a reduction of wages, below a fair standard, would at no time produce a greater sale of goods in the silk-line; nor would such reduction of wages be attended with any advantage to the master generally, or to the journeyman, were the manufacturers, in the event of a temporary depression of the trade, to manufacture silk goods (if they could do so at a low rate of wages), because the quantity of goods in the market is increased during such depression, and consequently then affects the profit of the manufacturer, and prevents, when trade revives, so many goods being made as otherwise there would, at fair prices; and, therefore, when considered in all its relative bearings, is injurious both to the manufacturer and the weaver.

"We cannot but observe, that, in our judgment, the weavers in London and the vicinity are not overpaid by the list-price now existing for their labour.

"We are of an opinion that an extension of the Silk Acts to the country at large would be attended with the same advantages as we have above imputed to the operation of those in London, Middlesex, and Westminster."

	No. of Years in Trade.
William Hale	34
Josh. Vane	40
Barbet and Benzeville	38
George and John Jourdan	45
Thomas Ballance and Son	54
John Ham	50
John Holmes and Son	52
Jones and Son	48
John Josh. Buttress	18
J. Parsons	25
Tharp and Bradley	34
William Hyde	32
Broom and Taylor	20
N. I. Delamare and Son	40
J. Clark and Homewood	30
John Kincaid	52
Robert Graham	27
A. Graham	20
Louis Dehayes	28
John Edwards	21
John Samson	40
Joseph Moody	39
N. Racane	19
Joshua le Mare	35
J. Vemell	18
John Edger	20
David Gough	20
John Mason	20
Robert le Villain	40
George Sumings	20
Thomas Cole	18
Robert Louvel	38
Richard Horsley	42
Peter Levesque	20
John Bloom	29
Thomas Reynolds	38
Charles Franks	40
Edward Turner	28
Jeremiah Hare	44
William Willson	30

	No. of Years in Trade.
John Chester	52
Cliffe Homewood	36
George Harriss	25
Devine and Wiggs	40
Stevens and Elks	50
John Malivoire	30
William Comber	30
Peter Guillemand	32
R. H. and R. Bennett	28
L. Prevost	47
Ames and Atkinson	
Cook and Hammond	36
W. J. Briand and Tayler	14
John Peile	13
John Heaver	11
John Dansy	
William Sabine, Jun.	
G. Foot	14
J. Smart	34
G. and J. Lawrence	9
F. P. Michel	40
Thomas Cole	28
John Jones and Co.	50
Richard Newbery	50
Francis Lea	7
William Barton	3
John Timmings	38
—— Ballard	20
Thomas Fitch	62
Hawkes and Bateman	50
Cobb Hawkes	34
T. W. Smart	50
William Field	12
J. Spiers	16
W. Streets	4
Thomas Thorp	12
Williams and Simpson	24
J. C. Cato	
T. Harvey	14
J. Haywood	19

	No. of Years in Trade.		No. of Years in Trade.
William Hind		John Babbett	40
William Moore	18	James Barton	10
Thomas Coventry	24	Thomas Ward	23
Jasper Harrison	30	Richard Parker	45*

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From fifteen to twenty Spitalfields masters, examined before the Committee on the Coventry petitions, declared their belief not only in the beneficial tendency of the Spitalfields Acts locally, but in the benefits which would be conferred on the whole manufacture, and the people engaged in it, by their extension to the branches carried on elsewhere; and, being asked collectively the question, "Are you of opinion that the men are not at all overpaid in London, under the Spitalfields Acts?" they jointly answered, "Certainly not; and, for the sake of humanity, we could wish them better paid; but the times are such that we cannot afford it."† Coventry manufacturers living in London, and intimately acquainted with the working of the Spitalfields Acts, gave evidence of the like tendency.‡

Opinions of manufacturers in favour also of its extension.

Mr. Gibson, one of the opposers of the Act, says, "I think the advantages have been overrated in the evidence of Mr. William Hale, a gentleman who, nevertheless, has great advantage for observation, and is very capable to give an opinion upon that subject."§

It was contended, on the other hand, by several of the principal manufacturers of London, who were examined before the same Committee, that wages must depend, like the price of any other commodity, on supply and demand; to which it was replied, that the constant excess of hands in a closely-peopled country, especially at any depression in the amount of employment, destroyed the merely mercantile balance upon which must be struck the price of labour, which the workmen cannot afford to sacrifice for a single day, but must sell at some price, which should be such as would maintain him in a civilized condition; and that other considerations of a moral nature must therefore enter into the contract.‖

Arguments against the operation of the Spitalfields Act, and the answers.

That wages must take the same course as any other prices.

Again, it was objected, that the price of the articles manufactured was enhanced by the system of the Spitalfields Act, and the introduction of improved machinery discouraged by it; but it was argued that the price must be what would fairly remunerate the producers, or the manufacture and the producers altogether it were better not to call into existence; that the wages paid under the Act were too little rather than too much; that every known improvement in machinery had been introduced, including a new loom just brought from France (the Jacquard); and that any burdens on the trade generally were rather the result of the prohibitory system than of the Spitalfields Act, although the magistrates had omitted to make provision in the lists for improvements in machinery, for which it was open to the manufacturers at any time to apply.¶

That the Act raised wages, and through wages the price of the goods.

The Spitalfields Act, it was urged, encouraged rival manufactures at Macclesfield, Manchester, and other places, where no such restrictions were enforced; but it was maintained that the number of looms in Spitalfields was also rapidly increasing; that, "the expense of house-rent being so much less than in London, and the necessaries of life cheaper, the weaver, at a reduction of one-fourth or one-third, will stand in nearly as good a condition as the London weaver;"** and that the removal of the manufacture, were it to take place, would not therefore be brought about by the Spitalfields Act; and certainly, since the repeal of the Act, the proportion between the London and country prices is little changed, and is therefore shown to depend on other circumstances. In return for this higher price of labour, the London manufacturer has "constant and easy communication between the purchaser of the goods and his warehouse, and between the latter and his workmen;"†† and these it is, equivalent to 10 or 15 per cent. on the wages, which retain so much of the manufacture at its original seat. It was also stated that, of the articles of which the manufacture had left London, much the greater proportion were figured goods, of which the greater part had never been subjected to the lists, but had been made in Spitalfields while new, at prices agreed on by the masters and men individually, as all new patterns and fabrics constantly were. The figured articles were commonly the highest-paid branches of the trade, including all the new articles introduced subsequent to the war, and they were soon withdrawn into the country by the cheapness at which the country labour could be offered, the figured

That it therefore encouraged the rivalry of other places.

* Minutes of Evidence before Committee on Coventry Petitions, pp. 196-198.
† Minutes of Evidence, p. 183. ‡ Ibid. 184.
§ Mr. Thomas Gibson, before the Committee on the Coventry Petitions, p. 142.
‖ Hale's Defence of the Spitalfields Act.
¶ Minutes of Evidence before the Lords' Committee in 1823—James Baker—p. 70.
** Ibid, p. 46.—Edward Jones. †† Ibid., p. 151.—Ambrose Moore.

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goods being the articles in which labour formed the greatest proportion of the cost, and therefore the branch most exposed to rivalry,* as is seen in he ribbon-trade, in the rivalry of Bedworth with the city of Coventry.

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"You do not attribute their having left London solely to the operation of the Spitalfields Act, but partly to the greater facility in working up those articles in the factories?—I submit that the operation of the Spitalfields Act would have been a perfect nullity, abstractedly speaking, if this book of prices had been, which it might have been, revised by both masters and men; so that the schedules adopted at Manchester and Macclesfield might have been a foundation upon which that revision might have proceeded—the Act authorising such a revision. I have never found any unwillingness in the men to meet the masters, but the reverse."†

Further, it was maintained, that, though wages were reduced at other places to a wretched standard, not the manufacturer but the consumer alone derived a profit thereby, and that this unavailing depression was to be avoided by maintaining and extending the Act.‡

A pamphlet published against the Spitalfields Act again argues:—

That it aggravated periods of distress by preventing the manufacturer from employing hands at reduced prices.

"The Act, which prevents the master from giving his workmen *less* than the given sums, does not compel him to give even *that*. He is at liberty to stop his manufactory altogether, and is, in fact, on such occasions, frequently under the necessity of so doing. The master must, of course, forego manufacturing when it ceases to be profitable. This is the true secret of that wide and general distress which has overspread Spitalfields when the trade has for a while been slack. The masters would have been willing to keep their hands employed at a reduced rate, but, the law forbidding this, they were obliged to dismiss them. The moment the fixed price of the law becomes, in consequence of the fluctuation of trade, materially above what the master can afford to give, and when, consequently, it becomes the true interest of the labourer for a time to reduce the price of his work, the law interferes, and says—'*No;* you cannot have all, and therefore you shall not have any.' The trade becomes therefore either stagnant, or is transferred to the country, and the looms of Spitalfields are stopped; and if trade *did not subsequently revive* from causes quite distinct from the law, they would be stopped for ever, and the whole population become chargeable upon the public. Here we see, at a glance, the absurdity of a statement made by those who profess to be friendly to this Act, that it prevents the growth of pauperism by insuring to the weaver a fair price for his labour."§

"Several periods of distress have, indeed, taken place since the establishment of the restrictions—distress which this boasted law not only failed to prevent, but aggravated when it came; and the weavers, to their praise be it spoken, behaved in an orderly and tranquil manner. *These periods were, however, short;* and during their continuance mitigated, in one instance by the aid of Parliament, and in others by the spontaneous benevolence of the public."‖

To this Mr. Hale answers:—

Answer that the distress in Spitalfields has been always less that of weavers than of the other labouring classes congregating there;

"I was deeply engaged in procuring the relief alluded to at those periods; and, were this the place and time for the details, I could soon convince the reader, that the distress referred to was not occasioned by the want of employ in the silk-trade nearly so much as by the distinguishing peculiarity of our *local* situation, arising from the circumstance of the parish of Spitalfields being the general receptacle for the working classes of all descriptions, from almost every parish in London, on account of the comparative cheapness of lodgings. Thousands of mechanics and labourers, whose employment lies in other parts of the Metropolis, and who are in no respect connected with the Spitalfields manufacture, have their lodgings in our parish; and those are the persons who, in difficult times, swell so disproportionately the list of our poor. However, I will furnish one instance of *real distress in the silk-trade*, which will give my opponent all the advantage he can wish for, and will supply also some other important data for this discussion. The time I refer to was from the autumn of 1792 to the spring of 1793. There was then a universal depression in the silk-trade, and greater distress by far than has been known at any subsequent period. It was most severely felt by the manufacturers, the journeymen, and all connected with them. Work could not be found for half the people during nearly six months. But at that melancholy time the book-prices, or Spitalfield's Act, preserved the poor weavers from utter ruin; and then it was that its operation was put to the test, and its advantages were proved to be far beyond all calculation. The stock of manufactured goods was *already much too great;* or, in other words, the supply was greater than the demand. Now, had these poor men been compelled to work for half, or less than half, of their accustomed wages, they would have toiled from 15 to 18 hours out of every 24, to procure bread for their families. Their labour would have been necessarily increased, and their daily subsistence considerably diminished. Men of weak and infirm constitutions would have struggled for a time under the pressure, and would then have prematurely sunk into their graves: whilst the *increased* exertions of the great body would have added such an enormous quantity of goods to the hoards in the warehouses, already frightfully great, *that we could never more have returned to the fair and full*

but, when it has really occurred among the silk-weavers, it has been met by giving them only half-work at the customary prices until trade revived, in lieu of overloading a market already glutted.

* Minutes of Evidence before Lords' Committee of 1823, pp. 151, &c.—John Ballance, Thomas Gibson, and Ambrose Moore.

† Ibid. pp. 109, 106.—John Ballance. ‡ Ibid., p. 77.—Isaac Gruglen.

§ Observations on the Ruinous Tendency of the Spitalfields Act to the Silk Manufacture of London, pp. 20, 21. ‖ Ibid., pp. 22, 23.

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prices for weaving. But the Committee of Manufacturers acted on different principles; they came to the judicious resolution of putting their journeymen on half-work; and their recommendation to this effect was, with a very trifling exception, adopted throughout the whole trade. Thus, the poor weavers obtained as much money for *six hours'* labour per day, as they would have earned in *sixteen hours* under the plan of the opposers of our local Act. Many of them employed their leisure time in various methods of honest ingenuity or economical arts, which exercised their minds, kept them from temptation, and made a little, but valuable addition to their weekly income. There was no attempt to *reduce the price of labour.* The workmen felt equally obliged to their masters as if they were in full employ; and the peaceful becoming behaviour which they manifested during the whole of this trying time excited both the admiration and the sympathy of a generous public. In the beginning of March, 1793, the demand for manufactured goods began to increase; the proper diminution of stock necessarily and immediately followed, for there were no unnatural accumulations to be got off. In the month of April trade ascended to its former level; and again all the weavers were put into full employ. From that period to the present time (1824) the workmen of Spitalfields have been more constantly employed, and better paid, than in any one of the manufacturing districts throughout the kingdom. I speak from long and accurate observation when I say, that we seldom meet with a pauper *amongst the weavers,* unless he has been brought into distress by illness or depravity. Our poor-rates are only 4*s.* in the pound for the whole year; and, at no period since I have been treasurer of the parish, have they exceeded 6*s.**

The men were peaceable and contented; when trade revived, they returned to full work;

and the parish-rates never exceeded 6*s.* in the pound.

It was urged, with justice, that any restriction on advance of wages individually, was assuredly unjust to the workman, although it was truly retorted that the weavers would willingly surrender their claims to any individual advance, if they might continue to oppose collectively a fall of prices.†

Indefensible restriction from raising, as well as from lowering wages individually.

It was urged, also, that silk-manufacturers were no more oppressive to their workmen than other employers, that they alone should be subjected to such a statute.‡ Instances were given of the incompetency of the magistracy to *fix* wages, especially in their refusal to allow the bombazin-weavers to work for less, because the weavers generally opposed their making the reduction;§ and others, of men improperly classing new articles under the existing imperfect nomenclature of the list.‖ One manufacturer, Mr. Thomas Gibson, was in favour of a modification, but not a repeal, of the Act; and supplies an answer to an objection raised against it, that the fixed list did not allow the manufacturer to reward the weaver according to the merit of his work.

Further objections to the Spitalfields Act.

That of inability to reward superior workmen answered by other masters.¶

"Does the state of the trade in Spitalfields afford any adequate remuneration for any extraordinary skill which the weaver may put into his work?—Certainly; but only by giving to the weaver a work by which he can earn more money. On the same work no means of remuneration is allowed in proportion to the skill of the workman. I have looked into the price of labour in my own manufactory for the whole of last year. I can state to the committee, as an extreme case, that I have paid a weaver 5*l.* a week in the year 1816. I mention this as a very extreme case; but the average of what I paid for plain work throughout the last year was 16*s.* each loom per week; that the average price of labour on figured work during that time was from 30*s.* to 35*s.* or 40*s.*, and that the average of the whole number of weavers was, in the first half of the year, 1*l.* 3*s.*; and of the latter half, 1*l.* per week: I speak of weavers only.

"Was the weaver subject to any deduction in any way from the sum which you have stated?—Yes; in some instances they have to pay for labour to assist them in their work."¶

The mode of giving such reward in Spitalfields also practised where there is no statutory regulation.

This, in fact, is the usual mode of attaching superior workmen. In other branches of the silk manufacture, and in other places, such as Coventry, which have always been exempt from any statutory regulations, it is required that all goods be saleable, or the hand would be dismissed, unless at times of remarkable briskness. The shades of good workmanship are not distinguished in the prices paid to the workman, as that would be an endless difficulty, but in the general favour shown in giving superior silk, or affording his supplementary looms employment more than usually profitable.** Mr. Ambrose Moore was asked also—

"Are you aware that, generally speaking, good workmen can make a much larger quantity of goods in the same time than bad hands?—I think not; a good workman very often does make more, because the same disposition that induces him to make good work, makes him industrious."††

Complaint that a master, under the Spitalfields Act, could deduct from wages only for positive damage, and not for less perfect work, also one merely against a system voluntarily adopted throughout the kingdom.

The same objection was made in a form scarcely distinguishable, in the complaint that the master could not deduct from the price established for less perfect work, though he could dismiss the man, or make any deduction for positive damage. Mr.

* Hale's Defence of the Spitalfield's Act, pp. 17–19.
† Observations on the Ruinous Tendency of the Spitalfields Act. Hale's Defence of the Spitalfield's Act, pp. 23, 24.
‡ Stephen Wilson, before the Committee on the Coventry Petitions, p. 52.
§ Ibid. p. 53. ‖ Ibid., p. 60.
¶ Minutes of Evidence on the Coventry Petitions, p. 148.
** Hale: Minutes of Evidence before the Lords' Committee in 1823, pp. 9, 11, &c.
†† Evidence on Coventry Petitions, p. 161.

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Stephen Wilson, strongly opposed to the maintenance of the Act, answers to the question—

"Is it not usual to make a deduction in the wages, if the work be damaged or unskilfully made, whether the article be one of which the price is regulated or not?—The custom that I have already stated is the one that we have lately adopted, viz. that we dismiss the workman whenever he makes any bad work; we pay him, and have done with him, and have no further trouble.

"But have you no practice of stopping part of the wages for damage or inefficiency of work?—Sometimes, for an accident. If there is a hole made, which is a serious accident, we put up with a little loss; we charge a shilling for the hole to the weaver, which he voluntarily pays; but if it is bad work we dare not act in any other way than that which I have mentioned. *In case of an accident, the weaver has rather wished than otherwise to make some compensation for it, knowing the loss that would ensue to us; but in cases of bad work no other course can be pursued than that which I have mentioned.*"*

And the same course would be pursued whether under such an Act or not; cases at Coventry being now unavoidably brought before the magistrates to decide whether the workmanship be so inferior as to be classed as a positive damage.

Absence of strikes and disturbances under the Spitalfields Act;

James Baker, whose evidence has already been quoted, is asked with regard to strikes—

"Since the passing of the Spitalfields Act, has there been any refusal to work, or turn-out among the weavers in that district, to your knowledge?—None at all; they have been all peaceable and orderly; and I have no doubt that the order that prevails among the journeymen may be ascribed to that Act keeping them so. * * *

"Have you ever known in Spitalfields what is called a strike amongst the men, generally, for an advance of wages?—I do not recollect such a thing in my lifetime; *we have no necessity to act in that way, seeing we have an Act that protects us, and so prevents a conduct of that kind.*"†

Mr. Ambrose Moore gave to the district the same character, but did not attribute it to the same cause.—

but neither do disturbances occur in other places, not under such an Act. (?)

"Previously to the 13th of George III. were there not frequent disturbances in Spitalfields?—I have understood there were; but from the knowledge I have of the Spitalfields weavers (and I have had a great deal of intercourse with them), I declare that they are, generally speaking, so peaceable, orderly, and submissive, that I think no large body of manufacturing labourers less likely to be inclined to riot and insubordination.

"Do not you think that the repeal of the Spitalfields Act would be attended with dangerous consequences?—I think not, for the reasons stated in my last answer; I cannot consider them to be more likely to be riotous and disorderly than their fellow-subjects in other districts where the prices are not regulated by law; or more so than in Coventry, or Macclesfield, or Reading, or any other place; *and we never hear of riots there.*"‡

Evidence of masters opposed to the Act, that the prices of labour, under its operation, were only fair "on an average;" but that they were unequally arranged.

The tenor of the evidence given to me at Coventry disagrees with the last statement. It was asked of Mr. Thos. Gibson—

"Do you think that, under the restrictions and regulations of the Act, the labourer is paid more than he would be justly entitled to, if there were no Act, to regulate the price of labour?—On an average, I do not think they are."§

But it was generally maintained by the manufacturers opposed to the Act, in agreeing to this proposition, that the prices might be more fairly apportioned to the several fabrics.

Determination of the leading masters in the London silk manufacture not to meet the men any more, since they hoped to relieve themselves from the Spitalfields Act altogether.

The reason why no revision of the lists was latterly attempted, under the Spitalfields Act, is fully explained by Mr. Hale, one of the witnesses before the Lords' Committee in 1823.

"Have you communicated or expressed to any masters in the figure trade, that wish which you have now mentioned, that there should be a meeting for the reduction of wages?—I have, more than once; I made a personal application myself, and, from most of them, the answers were—'we will never meet the journeymen again; *we think that we should do away the Bill entirely; we think that the disposition of the Government is with us, and that the eyes of the country are open to better principles of political economy; and that we shall be able to accomplish the repeal of the Spitalfields Acts altogether.*'

Did those masters give you no other reason than that?—One or two of them gave me no other; one or two said they had found the Committee troublesome when they did meet them some years back, that they never wished to have any other meetings with them.

"Did the journeymen show a fair disposition to meet the masters?—I think they would; I have never met the journeymen but I have found them, after a little talking to, very tractable."‖ * * * *

Decline of good understanding, and dislike of the magistrates' interference.

The decline of the good understanding between the masters and the men is well described by Mr. Ambrose Moore, the most active of the manufacturers advocating the repeal of the Act.—

* Minutes of Evidence on Coventry petitions, p. 190. † Ibid., pp. 194, 195. ‡ Ibid., 160.
§ Ibid., p. 149. ‖ Minutes of Evidence before Lords' Committee in 1823, p. 29—Hall.

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"Have the applications to the magistrates been by amicable arrangement, or otherwise?—Since the time of my acquaintance with the trade they have generally not been amicable. I believe that, in former times, the masters and the men seldom disputed any points before the magistrates; they generally agreed before they went there.

"Of late years that has not been the case?—Not generally; a small concession has been in those cases made by the men, and a great concession by the masters; and the masters have been induced to concur, from a conviction that they should make worse terms if they went before the magistrates."*

Mr. Ballance says, before the Lords' Committee of 1833—

"Another cause of articles of manufacture leaving London, I submit, is the indisposition of *those masters to whom, for a number of years, has been conceded by the trade the arrangement and regulation of the prices*, to meet the journeymen upon a reduction of the Book of Prices."†

Although a majority in numbers of the Spitalfields Manufacturers signed the declaration in favour of the Spitalfields Act, already given, the majority of capital was greatly on the other side. Mr. Hale was asked—

The great capitalists of the trade, necessarily its leaders, opposed to the Act.

"Can you state the amount of capital in the trade represented by the petitioners whose names appear to the petition you have signed?—No, I have no means of ascertaining that; *the amount of capital is undoubtedly far greater of those who wish to have the Acts repealed, than of those who wish to have them continued.*

"Can you state in what proportion it is greater?—I suppose I can name one individual who has signed that petition whose fortune would amount to the whole of those who wish to have the Spitalfields Acts continued."‡

Mr. Hale being asked—

Opinions of the advocates of the Spitalfields Act, as to the depression, morally and physically, which must result from its repeal.

"Would it meet your views to have a repeal of those statutes?"—Answered, "No; I should, in all probability, leave the trade if they were repealed, and for this reason: I allude to no individual, but I have sufficient experience of human nature to know that there are many people who would so oppress the poor to get goods manufactured very cheap, that I should not have a disposition to enter into competition with them, and I should, in all probability retire from the trade. At the same time I think it would tend, in a great measure, to the deterioration of the morals of the lower class, because they could not get half a living, in consequence of which they must have recourse to parochial relief, and when once an individual partakes of that relief, the little hedge of his independence is broken down, and his usefulness is lost to society."§

"Thus the hard-working and industrious man is made a pauper;—thus he is insulted and degraded, and driven to beg at the hand of an overseer, that, as an alms, which, in justice, he has a right to demand as the lawful price of his labour. Thus he sinks in the scale of society, in spirit, in worth, and in exertion. If he is a religious man he suffers with pious resignation, but not without feelings of the injustice of his fellow men. But, if religious principle has not a strong hold upon his mind, hunger and sorrow, debt and distress, goad him on to purposes of wrath and revenge; he execrates his oppressors, he becomes alienated from his country, and disaffected to its government, under which he feels that honest industry will not enable him to live; he is ripe for schemes of destruction, and he yields himself a wretched victim to profligacy, impiety, and infidelity! This is no overcharged description. In thousands of instances, yea, in tens of thousands, it has been literally exemplified.

"From all the observations which I have made, I have almost invariably found, that when a man from such oppression becomes a pauper, he is a lost character to society; his children are brought up in ignorance, and this ignorance produces depravity to an awful extent, far beyond what is generally known. This has been the principal cause of that wide-spread disaffection of the manufacturing and labouring poor throughout the kingdom."‖

Summary of the results deducible from the evidence relating to the Spitalfields Act.

It would certainly appear from the evidence adduced in 1823, as well as in 1818, on the subject of the Spitalfields Act,—

1. That the main operative principle of the Act was, to enforce upon individuals, by a penal law, the varying contracts for labour made by the masters and the men in mass; such contracts being liable to readjustment at the wish of either party, *with an appeal, in case of difference, to the Magistrates in Quarter-Sessions*, who, to the nearest of their judgment, *without any commercial considerations whatever*, fixed the prices, so as to afford the journeyman, *if he could get full work*, the income of other low-skilled handicraftsmen, calculating by the price of bread.

2. That this interference of the Magistrates in *making* the contract for employment, was evidently unjust in principle; being an interference, with circumstances and interests, of which he could not be master.

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* Evidence before Lords' Committee of 1823, p. 147. † Ibid., p. 109. ‡ Ibid., p. 31.
§ Minutes of Evidence on Coventry Petitions, p. 43.
‖ Defence of the Spitalfields Act, pp. 28, 29.

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3. That, throughout the evidence (which is most remarkable) the principle of *penally* enforcing upon individuals the common contract in the ordinary branches of the trade, is attacked by none of the witnesses, but only *the propriety of framing and maintaining* common contracts *altogether*, which it has been the incessant endeavour of both masters and men in Coventry, voluntarily to accomplish, though *without any statute*.

4. That, on the contrary, after 50 years' experience, a large body of the masters —being those of smaller capital, and resident in or near Spitalfields—volunteered a declaration in its favour.

5. That the arguments of those desirous of the repeal of this Act, were directed partly against common contracts altogether (which are seen to exist very largely without Act of Parliament), because of the machinery necessary to make them, and partly against the interference of the Magistrates in *making* them; faults, the effects of which they were desirous rather to see augmented than removed, in the near prospect of thereby obtaining the total repeal of a measure so objectionable to them.

6. That, with obvious faults, the Spitalfields Act, if only by making the wages of labour a public contract, in which the general feeling of society as to the relative condition of the labourer had an influence, and by providing for the observance of that contract, was calculated to maintain a standard of remuneration for the lowly-skilled labour of the weavers in the more common branches of the trade above that to which mere individual competition in the labour-market would severally have reduced them, and one at which it was better that the increase of their numbers should cease, rather than that it should advance at a lower comparative condition.

7. That the more skilled branches of the trade, which must always be paid higher than the lower, or there would be no inducement to enter them, for the most part did not seek the protection of the list prices, though it is probable they were affected by them, as all superior trades are by the lower ones being well paid.

8. That the fixed price was as well the maximum as the minimum, an absurd arrangement, but one which, when the highly-skilled and fancy branches were exempted, was less unjust and anomalous than would at first appear, since the price, like that of agricultural, or other unskilled labour, might be raised or lowered in mass without injustice, as, in fact, is often practically the case without lists.

9. That the manufacturers had an immediate interest in freeing themselves from the trammels of such an institution, which restrained them from a last resource in their competition with other manufacturers, at home or abroad, unbound by its provisions; while the men were incompetent to meet the current of new ideas in industrial policy, which were applied to the contract for labour at the same time as to the interchange of commodities.

10. That the masters most dissociated by non-residence and high commercial position from the district, sought the first opportunity of throwing off the bonds; while a much larger number, of far less opulence, and more nearly connected with it, were desirous of their maintenance, because of their supposed effects on the condition of society locally.

11. That, independent of the desire of the workmen to retain this institution, the opinion of so many masters closely connected with the district, in favour of it, notwithstanding their class interest in being exempted from any restrictions, is strong evidence to its having had some good tendencies.

When it is borne in mind that Mr. Peter Moore, one of the members for Coventry, was the most active person in the Commons' Committee on the Coventry petitions in 1818, it will not be surprising that, with evidence of the nature above abstracted, the following report of the Committee was carried by a majority of nine to five.

Recommendation by the Commons' Committee of 1818, on the Coventry petitions, that the Spitalfields Act be extended to Coventry.

The Committee to whom the several Petitions of Ribbon Weavers of Coventry and Leek; of Silk Weavers of Macclesfield and Reading, and of Silk Manufacturers of Macclesfield, were referred; and who were empowered to report their Observations thereupon to the House, together with the Minutes of the Evidence taken before them: have, pursuant to the Order of the House, examined the matters of the said Petitions, and have agreed upon the following Report.

"Your Committee beg to state, that they have proceeded at great length in the investigation of the several Petitions referred to them, and in the examinations of Witnesses; and have reported the result of such investigation and examinations, and refer the House thereto.

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"Your Committee also report, that it appears by the examinations, that the silk and ribbon weavers in particular, are, and have been for some time past suffering great privations and distress, arising out of inadequate wages; that such distresses have had the effect of reducing thousands of them to the necessity of seeking parochial aid, and have in consequence increased the poor rate, especially in the parishes in Coventry and in the county of Warwick, where the ribbon trade is the staple manufacture, and to an extent too burdensome to be much longer borne.

"That the low rate of wages complained of by the Petitioners is not a consequence of the want of trade, it having been proved to your Committee that there are as many silk goods, particularly ribbons, now making as at any former time.

"That a system of half-pay Apprenticeship has been resorted to, which has been attended with ruinous consequences to the morals of such apprentices, and exceedingly injurious to the trade.

"That the evils complained of, do not exist in London, Westminster, and Middlesex, which your Committee believe to be owing to the provisions of the Acts called 'The Spitalfields Acts,' which extend to those places, the effects of which are fully detailed in the Evidence.

"That the whole of the masters and weavers in the ribbon trade concur in the propriety of an extension of the Spitalfields Acts.

"Your Committee are therefore of opinion, that it is absolutely necessary, for the protection of the Weavers in the silk trade, and the ribbon trade in particular, and to enable them to support themselves and families, and also for protecting the parishes in which these trades are carried on, that some legislative interference should take place; and your Committee think that a remedy would be found in the extension of the provisions of the Spitalfields and Dublin Acts, or at least a trial of that extension for a period of a few years, by way of experiment.

"Your Committee cannot but remark, that whilst the statute of the 5th Elizabeth, c. 4, was in force, the distressing circumstances now complained of never occurred."

3 *June*, 1818.

The Act of the 5th Elizabeth above alluded to is that enforcing apprenticeships for seven years, and proportioning the number of apprentices to that of journeymen in the service of each master. It was repealed by the 54th of Geo. III., c. 96.

Further endeavours of the Coventry men to obtain a bill to regulate wages; and refusal by the House of Commons of leave to introduce it.

Encouraged by the prospects which this Report held out to them, the Weavers' Committee, at Coventry, towards the end of the year, as the next session approached, re-commenced their arrangements for prosecuting their objects in Parliament; renewed their correspondence with other towns, including Dublin and Manchester; again called on their representatives (now Mr. Moore and Mr. Ellice), and other persons of influence, to advocate their cause; and endeavoured to calm the spirit of political dissension which an intervening election had excited among their number. But in the following February it was intimated to them, through one of their leaders, that any bill to empower the magistrates of Coventry to settle and regulate the price of labour in the ribbon trade would not be supported by their representatives or by their masters, though it might be possible to gain some regulation as to apprenticeships. The readjustment of the duties and drawbacks was pointed out as a practicable and equivalent object to be attained, instead of the bill to regulate wages; but it was indignantly rejected by the weavers, who sent up petitions from every ward, urging their original prayer. "In this important question," say they, "there are three parties, viz. the master, the journeyman, and the parish; and they all concur in asking for the aid of Parliament."—

"Your petitioners therefore humbly pray your honourable House for leave that a bill may be brought in to remedy or limit the present apprentice system in the ribbon-trade; and to enable both employers and employed in the said trade to regulate and make uniform, from time to time, by mutual consent or otherwise, the prices or wages for labour in the said trade, for the city and county of the city of Coventry, and county of Warwick, in such effectual way and manner as to your honourable House shall appear most meet."

The town clerk, several delegates from the Weavers' Committee, and a deputation of two masters were sent to London; but leave was not granted by the House on the motion of the Coventry members for leave to introduce a bill to regulate wages. A bill was however introduced to make all apprentices be domesticated with their masters; but there was now a conviction among some of the local leaders, not that their objects were mistaken, but that they should never succeed in attaining them amid the feelings and principles which possessed the Legislature.* Disappointment was the ultimate result; and finally, a quarrel between the town clerk and the committee, on the subject of his bill. Their total expenditure was not less than 800*l.*

This disappointment, and the continuance of individual abatements of wages, against which the legislative interference was chiefly sought, led to a

* Evidence before Lords' Committee of 1823, p. 84.—Mr. John Carter.

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Encroachments on the lists of 1816, resulting in a strike, and the construction of a new list before the whole local community.

partial strike, "to considerable rioting in the town, to the exposure of people on asses, and to assembling to the amount of many thousands."* By means of agitation, "but with no violence except a little donkeying," as one of the witnesses† examined by me describes these proceedings, the list of 1816 was in the main maintained until 1819. In August of this year there was a general turn out for a few days, against the increasing depressions of price, and the weavers paraded the town in a body to excite public sympathy in aid of a new adjustment of their prices. "As they passed the justice room, the magistrates sent out to know what they sought; and being informed of their grievances in the reduction of prices, and their payment by one designation for work which was sold under another, they undertook to call a meeting of masters, who framed the list of 1819,‡ which contained a reduction only in the improving manufacture of figured satins in the engine room, from that of 1816. A meeting was called by the mayor, Mr. John Clarke, for the relief of the distressed men, and the corporation contributed 50*l.*; the Clothiers' Company 25*l.*; and the whole subscription was distributed by a magistrate in each ward, to whom a Committee in an adjoining room certified the cases by ticket as application was made."§

Lists of 1819, constructed by a majority of masters, and assented to by all, on the representations of the weavers.

A meeting of manufacturers was held at the Castle Inn on the 17th of August; Mr. C. Adams, the acknowledged head of the trade, in the chair; when it was resolved—

"That the resolutions passed by the majority of the meeting shall be binding upon the whole.

"That this meeting rely upon the co-operation of the manufacturers of this city and neighbourhood, now absent; and that the Weavers' Committee be requested to solicit their signatures, and report thereon.

"That the following gentlemen be appointed to receive the report of the Weavers' Committee—

Mr. C. Adams.	Mr. Roughton.	Mr. Hopkins.
Mr. Cope.	Mr. Thos. Hains.	Mr. Reynolds.
Mr. Merry.	Mr. Lilly.	Mr. Griffin.

"That the annexed list of prices for making ribbons be adopted; the payment to commence the first day of September next.

"That these resolutions, with a copy of the list, be published in each of the Coventry papers.

"That the names of the persons who agree to these resolutions, and those that dissent from them, be also published; and that each person who signs be requested to subscribe 3*s.*, to defray the expense.

"That the thanks of this meeting be given to the Chairman."

The printed hand-bill, which contains these resolutions, sets forth also the list of prices hereafter to be given, with the names of those who attended the meeting, being the representatives of twenty-nine firms, and the names of those whose signatures were obtained to it by the Weavers' Committee, being eighty more, including those of Bedworth and Attleborough; while the Nuneaton masters gave in their adherence to the list by a joint resolution. The bill closes with this memorandum:—

"*August*, 26, 1819.

"The Committee have the pleasure to add, that every manufacturer in the trade has now assented to the affixed prices.

"THOMAS COPE, *Chairman*."

Confirmation of the lists, which provide for the free enjoyment of advantages derivable from improved looms.

Another meeting of the masters was held on September 2nd, confirming the new lists, which carefully secure to the employers of the engine-looms their full advantage in the use of improved machinery by the lower price at which the same work (8dy satin figures, for instance,) is fixed, when made in them, as compared with their manufacture in the single-hand-loom. At the same time a few additional articles were added, and a committee was appointed to manage the fund collected for the relief of the weavers. By the commencement of the following month, however, partial departures were made from the new arrangement, in spite of the aggregate Committee of the Weavers, with sub-committees in every ward "for the protection of the masters' list of prices."‖ In fact, none of the lists before that of 1831, were fully observed more than a few weeks, though it was only by degrees that the departure from them became general.¶

Endeavours to maintain them only partially successful.

* Evidence before the Lords' Committee of 1823, p. 84.—Mr. John Carter.
† Gregory. ‡ Goode and others.
§ Gregory. ‖ Handbill, dated Oct. 5, 1839. ¶ Gregory.

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The Aggregate Committee, as it was called, consisted of two weavers, returned by the weavers in each ward, and was formed under the patronage of Mr. Ellice, who, with the concurrence of all the manufacturers of Coventry, some of whom themselves gave money, obtained a subscription in the silk trade to a fund, which was deposited in Messrs. Troughton's bank, to enable the weavers to maintain the prices stated in the new lists. This fund amounted in April, 1820, to upwards of 1,600*l.*; and Mr. Charles Lilly, a retired manufacturer, and one of the most influential inhabitants, was its treasurer. The Aggregate Committee shortly reported to the general meeting as follows:—

Aggregate committee, with a large fund, subscribed in the silk trade, "to maintain the masters' lists of prices."

"Your Committee have directed their attention, from their first institution, to various objects, such as the investigation of *abuses by individuals in the trade*, and the discouragement of that abominable system of *half-pay apprenticeship*, with its natural and legitimate effect of *working under price*. These objects and endeavours to urge on the necessity of subscriptions in the various districts of the trade, opening, at the same time, the ultimate advantage of the latter, as being calculated to protect the former, have occupied a large share of your Committee's time. As to the application of the *General Fund*, they have reason to congratulate the trade, that it has, in all instances which have come under their cognizance, been approachable and tangible; and the solicitude manifested by them for its proper application has been met with the most marked approbation on the part of the worthy guardian, as well as the greatest encouragement from one of the honourable collectors. * *

Report of the Aggregate Committee.

"Your Committee have also to communicate, with pleasure, the increase of the *Particular Fund*. The whole amount of money collected from the town and country, from the commencement of the system, is 234*l.* 4*s.* 7*d.*; the disbursements 53*l.* 5*d.*"*

Resolutions "to maintain the masters' list of prices inviolate," by the application, in modes undescribed, of money to be contributed by the trade, were passed by the meeting.

Movements in the trade in 1821, at the time of the transition from the undertaking to the journeywork system.

In September, 1821, another large meeting was held by the weavers in the "Hill-and-Hollow Close," on the subject of attempted departures from the list, and of the new systems of trade adopted by the manufacturers; and in November following appeared a printed letter to the Chairman of the Aggregate Committee from Mr. Peter Gregory, an active undertaker, which describes the proceedings of that Committee. It is a good specimen of the trade literature, and a graphic, though coloured, statement of the trade politics at the time of the transition from the undertaking to the journey-work system in the engine trade, which was effected without alteration of the lists of prices.—

"It is now upwards of two years since the manufacturers, at the suggestion of the magistrates, held a meeting to enter into an agreement to pay for the weaving of ribbons by one uniform list of prices; and in order that that list might be preserved inviolate, a Committee of weavers, was appointed at the request of the masters to watch over and protect this minimum of wages from the least innovation. Accordingly, the Committee over which you preside was formed; and though they have, I believe, watched with the most faithful attention, and deliberated with the greatest circumspection, they have not been able to prevent inroads, which have amounted to an indirect violation of the list. A direct reduction, I believe, few, if any, have ventured to impose on the weaver; but I am sorry to say many have had recourse to means which disgrace the man of honour and the fair tradesman. When the list was made and published, it set forth that such and such prices would be paid per gross for each article; and to whom was that price to be paid? why, the undertaker, who was (according to the ancient custom of the trade) to find the journeyman loom, tackling, and every other requisite for the manufacture, for which he was to receive one-third of the price in the list. The undertaker, you know, is also responsible for the just return of the weight of silk to the master, after a certain allowance made for waste, &c.

"Now, one indirect violation of the list is, that some masters have taken the advantage of circumstances to impose on the journeymen all the trouble and expense of the undertaker, while they put the undertaker's profit into their own pockets, and have gone even further in their oppressions than this. Not content with the undertaker's profit, they (the masters) have found their own looms, and then compelled the journeymen to take a house sufficiently large to contain them, and have obliged the journeymen, on pain of losing his employment, to purchase those looms at a price of their own fixing, thus making the journeymen return with an enormous interest that capital which they found it necessary to sink when they commenced business. I have seen looms which masters have imposed on journeymen, which are not worth near the money they have demanded for them; and the journeymen having no alternative but to take them at that price, or be thrown out of employment, have been compelled to submit to this cruel imposition. Another attempt to enable themselves to undersell each other has been to impose on the weaver an article, in point of width what it is not intended to be sold for: and we frequently find ribbons considerably above the standard width of what the master has pronounced it to the weaver; but I have never yet heard of a case of this nature where the weaver has demanded the price it deserved that the master has refused to pay him, well knowing it would not bear investigation, one case only excepted, in which

* Printed hand-bill, dated April 11, 1820.

the weaver demanded an arbitration, which was finally determined by a magistrate in favour of the weaver. There are some few—but I am happy to find they are of a description of men making no pretensions to respectability in the trade—who insist on taking one-third of the wages, on condition of giving them employment; and, lastly, another very novel experiment appears to be introducing itself to add to all the other modes of oppression, viz., the master demanding a portion of the wages for the use of the loom. Thus they have driven each other out of the market where they formerly could obtain a living profit on the sale of their goods, and are now reduced to the mean necessity of existing by buying, selling, and hiring looms, at the expense of the poor journeyman; so that this description of men can no longer rank with respectable ribbon-masters, but have descended into the ignoble character of brokers, or dealers in new and second-hand looms. The fundamental principle of the trade does not recognise any master as having anything to do with the loom at all; or if he did take upon himself the office of undertaker, he also took upon him all the undertaker's expense trouble, and risk. But of late some of these undertaking masters have compelled the poor journeymen to take the silk in the hanks, get it wound and warped for 3*d.* per ounce; and when they have brought in the work, have paid journeymen's wages only, though they have had all the undertaker's trouble and care. One of these *just* and *generous* manufacturers says, in a letter addressed to certain persons at Foleshill—'The operative weaver (*i. e.* the journey man or journeyhand, as he or she is called), we acknowledge, gets little enough, and we would never wish them to earn less; but we have proved that the undertaking is a good business, well worth our attention, who have every convenience for winding and warping, and we mean to share some of it with our friends Gregory, Rollason, and others. May we al. of us, as undertakers, have plenty to do, and we shall be very ungrateful indeed if we grumble!'"

Aggregate Committee's fund broken up.

But about this time the Aggregate Committee were deprived of the large fund which had been subscribed to assist them in maintaining the list prices. Its principal application, in assisting persons who refused to work on terms under the regulated prices, expressly on the ground of such refusal, where there was no such statute as that of Spitalfields to legalise the list, was obviously an illegal attempt to influence the price of labour by combination, so long, at least, as the combination laws remained in force. One Mr. Farrington, who had been prosecuted under the Spitalfields' Act, in London, came to Coventry, and employed some men, one of whom, perhaps by collusion, was placed on terms which violated the list, and then made application to the Aggregate Committee, who promised to afford him support if he left his employment. A note to him to this effect he handed to Mr. Farrington, who made it the ground of a prosecution against Mr. Lilly, the treasurer, in which the latter was cast in 50*l.* damages. Mr. Justice Best, who tried the case at the Warwick assizes, told the prosecutor he might still proceed at common law, which he accordingly did; and the matter was compromised only by the transference of the fund to the Street Commissioners, to be applied in paving the town. This was the sole case of prosecution under the combination laws in Coventry; combination having, it is seen, been reduced to a system in which masters and men united. There were, however, before the repeal of the Combination Laws, instances of punishment for ontrage in regard to wages and apprenticeships, as in 1820, when twenty men were committed to prison for "donkeying."

Only one prosecution under the combination laws, though punishment inflicted for some trade outrages.

Struggle in 1822 to maintain the 1819 prices, which succeeded; the Aggregate Committee to watch over it being yet maintained.

The list of 1819, continued in the main, to be observed until 1822, when, the individual deviations from it augmenting, three manufacturers printed and issued a reduced list, stigmatised by the weavers as the "bantling list." This led to meetings and a remonstrance; the reducing masters refused to retract the new list; and the result was a general strike; the longest and most complete ever known in Coventry. The townspeople sympathised with the men, and the first shopkeepers contributed to their subsistence. The other manufacturers expressed their willingness to continue the 1819 prices, and some even offered to give employment at those prices to the hands of the "bantling list" masters. The result was, the re-establishment of the list of 1819 and the continuance of the Aggregate Committee, which was elected quarterly, and met weekly.

Lists of 1819 maintained until the consternation, in 1824, at the expected introduction of French goods.

The re-established list was pretty well maintained until 1824, when great alarm was produced by the prospective throwing open of the ports to French silks, from which annihilation to the trade of Coventry was predicted and expected. The accounts brought home by members of the trade, of the cheapness at which ribbons could be made on the Continent, exaggerated these fears; many masters, who had been adherents to the lists, now abandoned them; trade was very slack; and the men were reduced to petition their masters in the following terms:—

"All that we can, therefore, honourable gentlemen, is to prostrate ourselves at your feet,

and implore your interposition, and the exertion of your ability, for preventing reduction and maintaining our price of labour."*

Re-establishment of lists for the plain engine trade and for the single-hand trade, with the revival of confidence.

A reduced list was framed,† but was largely disregarded, and neither men nor masters had courage or confidence to frame another until 1826; when the trade being found in a healthy state, notwithstanding the opening of the ports, confidence returned; and a new list, dated May 10th, 1826, was established for the plain engine trade, by means of a committee of the weavers, appointed "to adopt a medium list, and endeavour to obtain the masters sanction to the same,—to commence directly, and abide in force until the 5th of July next ensuing." They waited personally on the masters, who unanimously agreed to the list; a similar list was obtained by the single-hand trade; and both will be found in the summary of the lists hereafter given.

Abandonment of these lists on the influx of foreign ribbons; and agreement to a reduced list in 1829

The distresses resulting from out-rivalry by foreign ribbons, in 1829, were, of course, accompanied by an abandonmeut of this list, which had gradually been encroached upon. Some of the manufacturers issued reduced scales of prices. Others maintained that there was no necessity for reducing the price of labour. But when, on the revival of the duties on foreign silks in that year, the duty on plain silks was reduced from 30 to 25 per cent., to meet the smuggler, the general alarm overcame even these masters also; and the new list for the plain engine trade was framed, at a reduction of 15 per cent. It is dated September 19th, 1829, and to the printed copy, circulated by the manufacturers, was prefixed the following notice:—

"As the ribbon trade, in common with others at the present time, is suffering from the effects of a combination of *political* evils, the following reduced list of prices for weaving, is agreed to by the manufacturers. It must, however, be evident that these prices will afford but a scanty supply of the necessaries of life; and it is therefore hoped that a change of circumstances may ere long warrant a list of prices more beneficial to the trade.

A list dated the 26th of the same month was obtained in like manner by the single-hand weavers, and signed by the whole body of their employers. It was not maintained, however, more than three months, and there were several meetings of the weavers on the subject of these lists; but their committee despairing of success, there was no strike to raise them.‡

Meeting called by the directors of the poor to give relief during the interruption of trade by the disputes about prices.

At a meeting of the Directors of the poor of the united parishes, held September 30, 1829, a few days after the date of these lists, it was resolved unanimously,—

"That in consequence of the numerous applications to the Directors by the operative weavers and their families, for relief, arising out of the question between the manufacturers and the operatives, as to the prices to be paid by the manufacturers for labour; the Mayor and Magistrates be respectfully requested to convene a meeting of *the manufacturers, the principal inhabitants, and the operative weavers* (to be represented by a deputation), *to take the subject into consideration, and devise some efficient mode of relief*."§

The Mayor accordingly called, and presided at, a public meeting, at which subscriptions were entered into, and committees appointed for the distribution of bread and soup in each ward.

Return, in 1830, to the list of 1826, on an improvement in the trade.

In August of the following year (1830,) the trade having improved, the following letter was circulated among the masters in the trade:—

"Sir, "*Coventry, August* 26, 1830.

"Several manufacturers of ribbons in this city, conceive it would be easy to obtain a general advance in the prices of goods, and at the same time, avoid the evils and unpleasantnesses that have followed former attempts of this kind. A meeting will be held at the Castle Inn, on Wednesday the 25th inst., at seven o'clock in the evening, when it is expected a plan of proceeding will be agreed on, and as some approach to unanimity would, in a business of this kind, be highly desirable, it is earnestly requested that you will give your personal attendance.

"I am, Sir,
"Yours respectfully,
"A MANUFACTURER."

The subject of a general advance of wages was discussed among the manufacturers, and on the 7th of September following, and a circular address was sent to them by the weavers, to the following effect:—

"The long and painful period of privation which we have endured, in consequence of the

* Petition of the Weavers to the Master Manufacturers in the Ribbon Trade, Feb. 12, 1824.—Hand-bill.
† Poole,—Evidence before Commons' Committee in 1832, Q. 1036.—I could procure no copy of it.
‡ Goode. § Hand-bill.

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very low rate of wages paid in the ribbon trade, will prevent any surprise which the present application might otherwise excite.

"At the gloomy hour when we delivered up a part of our bread as a contribution to the common stock of misfortune, a mutual hope was expressed by both parties concerned that some favourable change might ere long restore to us what we had lost. A period has now arrived when some advance on the price of goods must and will take place; and it is the opinion of the trade generally, that it would be possible to recover for the labourer the 15 per cent. which was taken away last year. We therefore do most earnestly, but most respectfully, solicit your assent to the proposition, as being only for a reasonable participation in the improvement which has taken place in the trade."

General concurrence of the masters procured by a committee of weavers.

A committee of weavers was appointed to procure the re-adoption of the "medium list" of 1826, for the plain engine-trade, and prefixed to a reprint of it, they state that,—

"They have waited on the whole of the manufacturers, who have unanimously admitted the justice of our claim: the committee do, therefore, announce that its recommencement will take place on Thursday next, the 23rd of September, 1830."

Strike in protection of this list in 1831; the higher-paying masters saying that they could no longer continue their rate of wages while they were underpaid by others.

This list, like all which had preceded it, was very soon disregarded by some manufacturers; but the departures from it were not extensive enough to produce a general movement in the trade, until the autumn of 1831, when "the principal houses gave the weavers notice, that unless the partial under-paying was stopped, they also must make the reduction."* A general turn-out was the result, and as the circumstances attending it exhibit both the trade politics, and the worst manners of Coventry, while their result was a well-organised institution, for the maintenance of list-prices by the masters themselves, it will be advisable to recount the whole of them; the commercial heads of the trade, and the leaders among the men, being nearly the same now as then.

Circumstances of the strike of 1831, and the burning of Mr. Beck's factory, as related by the weavers' committee.

Communications between committee of masters and committee of men.

"By chalked notices on the walls," state the Weavers' Committee, "a meeting was called at the Cross Cheaping, in the centre of the town, on Monday morning, November 7th, 1831, which was adjourned to the great room at the George Inn. Here a Committee of seven first-hand journeymen† was appointed to wait upon the magistrates, because of the feeling between the masters and the weavers, to ask them to interfere on their behalf; to which they answered that, as magistrates, they could do nothing, but, as individuals, they would interfere, if they (the weavers) could not succeed without them. They then, about eleven or twelve o'clock in the morning, went in search of the manufacturers, whom, they found, could be called together only through the medium of a committee of their number, then in existence for the purpose of being prepared to call the whole body together whenever necessary. This Committee appointed two o'clock in the afternoon to meet and return an answer, whether they would convene a meeting or not. The meeting at the George not only appointed the Committee, but adjourned to meet again at the Cross Cheaping, also at two o'clock, P.M. The Weavers' Committee went to the Manufacturers' Committee at that hour, as by appointment, and were some time in communication with them. They could not make up their minds whether to call a meeting that evening or the next day, but expressed a willingness to call it. This was at Mr. Hennell's. The Weavers' Committee then went to the meeting at the Cross Cheaping, while the manufacturers were considering: they wanted half an hour or so to consider. When they came to the Cross Cheaping, there were no weavers to be seen, and scarcely any one else. They inquired where they were, or how it was that they had not come; and they were informed by stragglers that the weavers had fallen in with Mr. Beck, and that he had taken them down to his factory, which he had built for the purpose of employing power ribbon-looms in it, and where he would show them his looms.‡ They had scarcely heard this, when they learned from another that the weavers had begun to be violent, and to throw at the windows.

Consent of masters to call a meeting, and destruction of the steam-factory by a mob.

"They were then very anxious to go down and draw the men away by the promising appearance of their affairs in the willingness of the Committee of Masters to call the masters together; but they were checked by the thought, that, by so doing, they might expose themselves to the suspicion of being promoters of the mischief. In the midst of their perplexity, their appointment became due with the Manufacturers' Committee, and three left the rest to attend that appointment. When they reached Mr. Hennell's, where the Manufacturers' Committee was sitting, young Mr. Hennell took them up into the top warehouse, and showed them large columns of smoke issuing from a building, which led them to believe that Mr. Beck's factory had been set on fire, which was the fact. They then came down and found the Manufacturers' Committee (or rather Sub-committee), composed of Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Abijah Hill Pears, and Mr. Hennell, in evident alarm. One of them asked the weavers' three committeemen to make the best of their way down to the factory, and use their exertions to prevent further violence; but another of the masters checked this request, saying, 'Who would dare to go without an alderman, or some protection with him?' This led the weavers' committeemen to take the draft of the circular drawn up to call the meeting of manufacturers, and leave it at the printer's as they passed; and then to make the best of their way to the George Inn, in

* Weavers' Committee.

† Edward Goode, David Smith, and George Baddeley, who gave this evidence, were of that Committee.

‡ It was obviously under great fear of personal violence that he did this.

Little Park-street, to communicate the result to the other part of the Committee. Six of them then determined to go and place themselves in the hands of the magistrates, to assist them in any way they might direct in suppressing the riot. 'Supposing,' they said to the magistrates, 'they were sworn in as special constables, would it prevent them from attending to their interests as weavers?' The mayor, Thomas Morris, Esq., answered—'Most assuredly not; it would show that they were good men, and honest men, and afford a stronger proof of their fitness to attend to that duty.' They were accordingly sworn in immediately to act as special constables. The seventh of the Weavers' Committee (Johnson) was willing to take the same steps, but refused to go from the place where he was without the protection of a constable; but he was afterwards taken by some of the other committeemen, and sworn in a seventh of the party. The military had been in the mean time called out, and the mob had drawn off from Mr. Beck's premises to the Cross Cheaping. From thence they were moved by the military, without violence, from one part of the town to another. Their committeemen entreated them to disperse and be quiet; and a great number of special constables were sworn in, night having closed in on the turbulent proceedings of the day. Military guards were sent to the gaol and the gas-works; and the seven committeemen, with a serjeant, paraded in front of the house of Mr. Day, as a protection, on account of the exclamations which had been made by some of the mob against him."

Restoration of lists of prices on the day following by the masters assembled at the Castle inn, to meet deputies from the different branches of the ade.

"The night passed without any further disturbance, and the next day (Tuesday, November 8th) the manufacturers met at the Castle Inn. There was still considerable commotion in the minds of the people, of whom great numbers had left their work, and assembled in the Cross Cheaping and other places. As circumstances transpired they were informed by their Committeemen of the favourable position in which matters were towards a settlement. There were no further acts of violence, nor so much as an insult (to the knowledge of these witnesses) to a single one, even of the under-paying manufacturers, in coming to the inn. The manufacturers set earnestly to work to prepare a list of prices, more full, perhaps, than had ever previously existed, or at least since that of 1819. The course they pursued was to invite deputies from each branch of the trade, from the plain weavers and the figure weavers of Coventry, who may be said to have represented the engine-trade, and from the single-hand weavers of the country districts. Those delegates were all invited to their meeting, and the lists which had been broken in upon were produced. Each article was discussed by the whole body of manufacturers here assembled, with the delegates of the weavers; the old lists were made the groundwork of the new; a few trifling reductions were proposed on some articles by the manufacturers, and discussed with the weavers, who acceded readily to some, and put in a plea against others; but all was amicably settled; and advances were volunteered by the masters on the article of loves, and obtained also on one or two others."*

Proceedings of this meeting.

The following is from a printed statement of the proceedings of this meeting of manufacturers, held on the 8th of November, 1831, Mr. Samuel Hennell in the chair:—

"Moved by Mr. C. Ratliff, seconded by Mr. C. Bankes, and resolved unanimously—

Mutual committee to revise the measurement and nomenclature of breadths.

"That a Committee of five manufacturers and five engine-weavers be appointed, for the purpose of making a new standard (of breadths), on a scale of inches and parts of inches, making the standard measure of 1822 their basis, and omitting the widths of 18 d. and 22 d. altogether; and that the following manufacturers be accordingly appointed—Mr. Stephen Hammerton, Mr. Cleophas Ratliff, Mr. James Jenkins, Mr. Samuel Hennell, and Mr. Jonathan Bray.

"On the part of the weavers, the deputation present from that body nominated—Mr. Isaac Johnson, Mr. Edward Goode, Mr. James Adams, Mr. George Baddeley, and Mr. Thomas Goode.

"Moved by Mr. Richard Hands, seconded by Mr. Thomas Cope, and resolved unanimously—

Resolution to pay by the piece and not by the day.

"That the manufacturers present pledge themselves to pay for the goods they manufacture by the piece, and not by the day, or in any other manner than by the piece.

"Moved by Mr. James Jenkins, seconded by Mr. C. Ratliff, and resolved unanimously—

Committee of twenty manufacturers appointed "to prevent encroachments on the part of any manufacturers."

"*That a permanent Committee of twenty manufacturers be appointed to watch over the general interests of the trade, and adopt such measures as they conceive will prevent encroachments on the part of any manufacturers, or any infringement of the spirit of these resolutions, by which temporary advantages may be obtained to the injury of the trade generally; and that this Committee shall convene general meetings of the trade at such times as they deem proper; and that five of their number be empowered to act.*

"The following manufacturers were accordingly appointed:—Mr. Samuel Hennell, Mr. Jas. Jenkins, Mr. C. Ratliff, Mr. T. Cope, Mr. C. Bankes, Mr. R. Hands, Mr. Jonathan Bray, Mr. John Day, Mr. John Pratt, Mr. R. Caldicott, Mr. W. Robinson, Mr. A. H. Pears, Mr. Thomas Brown, Mr. A. Cheeper, Mr. Richard Crofts, Mr. Thomas Dodd, Mr. Joseph Williamson, Mr. J. S. Evans, Mr. T. S. Morris, and Mr. John Molesworth,

Single-hand lists to be framed at an adjourned meeting.

"A deputation from the weavers of Foleshill having been heard, who detailed the distress and privations which they, in common with all the other single-hand weavers of Nuneaton, Bedworth, Bulkington, and the other manufacturing villages of this district, are suffering, it was moved by Mr. C. Ratliff, seconded by Mr. J. Williamson, and resolved unanimously, That this meeting do hereby invite two delegates from each of the manufacturing parishes,

* Goode, Baddeley, and Smith.

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to attend an adjourned meeting at the Castle Inn, in this city, on Thursday next, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, when they are requested to be prepared with a list of prices, of single-hand work, for general consideration; and that the *manufacturers* of Nuneaton, Bedworth, and all other places, are hereby invited to attend.

"Moved by Mr. A. H. Pears, seconded by Mr. John Pratt, and resolved unanimously—

"That the proceedings of this meeting be immediately printed and circulated.

"Moved by Mr. Cheeper, seconded by Mr. Hammerton, and resolved unanimously—

"That the Chairman be requested specially to invite those manufacturers who are absent to-day to attend the adjourned meeting on Thursday.

"Moved by Mr. Jonathan Bray, seconded by Mr. John Smith, and resolved unanimously—

"That this meeting do now adjourn to Thursday next."

"The signatures of the following manufacturers present were attached to the above resolutions:—

William Johnson
John Ward
Henry Newsome, for W. Newsome
G. Nuttall for T. Sawyer
W. Odell, for R. S. Cox and Co.
R. Steane
Pratt and Leigh
John Pratt
Freeman and Paul
T. Jolly, for Sargeant and Cox
Francis Dresser
James Jenkins
Richard Keene
Woodhouse and Co.
Simmons and Williamson
Richard Crofts
Gibbon and Muddiman
James Twaites
Edward Everton
Merry and Brown
John Day
Sergeant, Brothers
W. Robinson
Abijah Hill Pears
Thomas Morris
Clowes and Wedge
J. L. H. Bankes
Joseph Coleman
Richard Caldicott
Jonathan Bray, Jun.
William Bray
Henry Merridew
Isaac Brown
John Smith
Enoch Jephcott
John Molesworth
Abraham Riley
Cope, Son, and Hammerton
Anthony Cheeper
S. Hennell
Caldicott and Son
James Bray
J. and C. Ratliff
Joseph Brown
W. and G. Brunskill
Bray and Smith
Richard and Joseph Hands
Walter and Son."*

Final settlement of the new lists.

The following day was occupied by the revision of the *breadths* of the ribbons, and of their nomenclature, by the sub-committees of masters and men; and the Masters' Committee superintended the making of the rules, by which to measure the breadths, that are now in use. It was determined that the lists should take effect and be dated on the following day, November 10th, when the country weavers brought their proposed list for the single-hand trade to the adjourned meeting. This, however, was rejected by the manufacturers, who themselves framed one on a lower scale, which, "low as it was, and acknowledged to be by the manufacturers themselves, was received as a boon, in full reliance on their integrity for their strict adherence to a regulation of their own making."† The lists thus settled were agreed to by the whole body of the trade, and the breadths and their nomenclature, to which they referred, were added to these lists, and are subjoined to the comparative table of the lists hereafter given.

Working of the masters' committee to maintain the lists.

To maintain these lists, it is seen, a committee of twenty masters was organised; one of them acted as secretary; the Weavers reported to this Committee any departures from the list; and they then resorted to *remonstrance* (their only means) to recal any under-paying manufacturers to their engagements. The following letters from the manufacturer acting as secretary to the members of the "Bulkington Deputation" will show its operation:—

"GENTLEMEN, "*Coventry, November* 30, 1831.

"I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, the contents of which I took care to lay before the Committee last evening. It is their opinion, that to make the case you state quite complete, it would be better for the party to receive the price for the work, whatever that may be. They will then be able distinctly to make a charge against Mr. B., and enable the Committee to adopt those measures the occasion may require. We most earnestly entreat you to give every information where you suspect any infringement of our mutually-agreed-on prices contemplated by any party, whether employer or em-

* Printed hand-bill. † Weavers' Association hand-bill, in the January ensuing.

ployed. As I may not be at home next week I would recommend your furnishing Mr. Jenkins with any further information on this matter.

"I am, Gentlemen, very sincerely,

"Your most obedient servant,

———

"*To the Members of the Bulkington Deputation.*"

"Gentlemen, "*Coventry, Dec.* 16, 1831.

"I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this morning, and immediately forwarded the information it contained to the sub-committee of manufacturers. Excuse my again urging you to the exercise of the strictest vigilance in detecting *any and every attempt to infringe on the spirit of the list.* Have you had a meeting yet to petition the Parliament for the prohibition of foreign ribbons?

"Your very faithful and obedient servant,

———

"*To the Members of the Bulkington Deputation.*"

Greater difficulty of maintaining a list of prices in the single-hand than in the engine trade.

"The arrangements recently made by the Coventry manufacturers," says a Nuneaton Weavers' placard of nearly the same date, "will be beneficial to the ribbon trade in general, both as it respects operatives and masters. If they had virtue enough to abide by those arrangements it would bring the ribbon trade into a more regular channel, and prevent that vexatious and ruinous competition introduced among themselves through their own invidious proceedings." And this undoubtedly was, however ill it is here expressed, the feeling under which the masters were acting.

The greatest difficulty in maintaining list prices, was always, indeed, felt in the single-hand branch, which usually came into combination only at the greater movements in the trade, and could not long together maintain a common understanding and active repression on the subject of prices. Unlike the engine-weavers centred in Coventry, they are widely diffused over a rural district, in every corner of which the influence of mere inspection and opinion could never be incessantly penetrating from a central committee. "Young journeyhands can at any time be encouraged by petty employers to enlarge their pittance by undertaking work on their own account at any prices; and no combination among a poor and dispersed population can overcome so formidable a difficulty as this pressure of young hands, and lay the first step for its removal. It has been repeatedly tried, but always without effect,"* "under the encouragement of the manufacturers."†

Brief maintenance of lists in the single-hand trade, and movements therein at the time of the general trade commotion in 1831.

The list of 1816 was observed only about twelve months, and there was then no list until 1819, when the one was framed which continued in use about two years. There was then no list whatever until 1826; and that of 1826 was wholly abandoned towards the end of 1828.‡ The list of 1829 was not observed more than three months.§ On occasion of the commotion in Coventry in 1831, the Nuneaton undertakers and their journeymen struck, together with the single-hand weavers generally.

Maintenance of the single-hand list by aid of the masters' committee.

"Parties even went round the neighbourhood and compelled the undertakers to shut up their shops, which they did for safety to the goods for which they were responsible, no less than to get matters finally settled, as well to their own satisfaction as to that of their hands. * * * The hands were out about two days; had meetings; were about the streets, and made a partial appeal to the public. Some few of the weavers formed themselves into a Committee, for the purpose of getting a list settled, and further, for the purpose of forming a fund to be used in compelling its observance. This Committee was formed at a public meeting in the Town Hall, which also sent delegates to meet the masters in the arrangement of the lists which were then generally being made in the ribbon trade. The Committee, at whose meetings Mr. Cradock (a banker residing in the vicinity), himself a lawyer, was present, finding there was no legal method of applying money in support of the list, formed no fund to maintain it, and here the affair terminated. * * * The new list began to be broken through in less than three months, but with the aid of the Committee of Masters, it was in the main adhered to until early in 1833."‖

Endeavours of the single-hand trade to maintain their list, described by the Foleshill weavers.

The endeavours of the single-hand weavers to maintain the list are thus described by the Foleshill committee:—

"In maintenance of the list, the engine-weavers of Coventry formed their committee, which used to communicate with the manufacturers' committee at the Castle Inn, and the single-hand trade of the country formed a committee composed of delegates from Foleshill, Nuneaton, Bedworth, Bulkington, and Sowe; which met sometimes at one, and sometimes at another, of the three preceding places. They met as often as occasion required, and communicated

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* Slingsby. † Holmes.
‡ Nuneaton Weavers' Committee. § Ibid.
‖ Nuneaton Weavers.

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monthly with the committee of masters, the whole of the delegates waiting upon the manufacturers. Not always composed of the same persons. Mr. Holmes, the witness now speaking for the committee, was himself sometimes on these missions. The number of single-hand employers out of Coventry was then, as now, but few. The object of the monthly meeting was to report whether the list were faithfully maintained, and to write to the manufacturers to remonstrate with the parties who violated it. Certain individuals of each committee, of the masters or operatives, would wait upon the parties, and the subject was amicably explained. Sometimes it was merely a misunderstanding,—a false report,—that a lower price was being paid. The manufacturers having all signed the list, any deviation from it was a breach of honour, which the committee thus undertook to expose. Sometimes a master, who wanted to underpay, would circulate a report against an 'honourable' manufacturer, that he was underpaying, and consequently that his example must be followed; and it became necessary to clear this up, to avoid the consequences. No other intimidation was resorted to, since it would have been illegal. In the case of the men who took out under-price work, the masters did not wait upon the men with the committee of weavers, to reprehend their conduct in taking out under price; but the weavers' committee remonstrated with him, and endeavoured to explain to him the injury he was inflicting on his fellow-operatives, by reducing the price of their labour in offering his own for less, since all manufacturers must follow the example of one. It must be remembered these were cases *of necessity* on the part of the man, but of *avarice* only on the part of the master. The man who had so chosen between the parish and the under-price work might be excused, but the master could not be excused.

"This system at last failed, after an eighteen months' trial with some success. There were several violations of the list, though only one had positively refused to comply; but at last Mr. Cheeper, who was perhaps merely taking the advice for several larger houses generally, refused all compliance with the list, and it was abandoned. The single-hand weavers have never had any regular list since; although the Coventry plain engine weavers have one to the present day. The condition of the weaver was better during the continuance of this list than it was previously or after. But the trade is now without any list whatever, and there is great variation in the prices actually paid by masters. They are, however, on the whole, such only as will maintain the lowest state of human existence."*

Instance of trade legislation by the masters' committee on petition of the undertakers.

A curious act of explanation was passed by the little trade "council" of masters, on petition of the "poor commons" of ribbon weaving (the undertakers), against giving out weaving to single-hand looms on the journeywork system in lieu of the undertaking system; which explains, in some degree, the working of the trade constitution. A hand-bill made the following announcement:—

"At a meeting of 'The Committee of Twenty Manufacturers' for Protecting the General Interests of the Ribbon Trade, held January 10, 1832, deputations from Nuneaton, Bedworth, Bulkington, Sowe, and Foleshill, attended, and presented a written statement of the serious evils that would arise from a system just commenced by several manufacturers, of giving out silk journeywork to single-hand weavers:

"It was, therefore, moved by Mr. Banks, seconded by Mr. Ratliff, and resolved unanimously—

"That the following resolution, made on the 10th of November, 1831, by a general meeting of the manufacturers, having been misconstrued—viz. '*That this meeting pledge themselves not to give out silk in the hank to any single-hand weaver by a journeywork system, or in any other manner than best hand*:'—This committee are of opinion that the above resolution was intended to prevent manufacturers from giving out work *in any manner* to a single-hand weaver by a journeywork system.

"The committee have the pleasure to state, that all the manufacturers who had adopted the journeywork system, have this day consented immediately to abandon it.

"*Wednesday, 11th January*, 1832."

Its want of executive powers sought to be remedied by the Weavers.

But the Committee of Manufacturers were grievously deficient in *executive* powers, and the undertakers, therefore, endeavoured of themselves to enforce their views upon the whole trade:—

"At a Meeting of the Undertakers in the Ribbon Trade, held at the City Arms, Coventry, February 14, 1832, the following Resolutions were unanimously adopted.

Resolved,

"That the Undertakers of Foleshill, Sow, Shilton, Bulkington, Bedworth, Chilvers Coton, Attleborough, Nuneaton, Stockingford, Anstey, Hartshill, and Atherstone, hold frequent Meetings for concerting measures to promote the interest of the trade, as to the price of labour; and in order to secure the object of this resolution, it is necessary that the Undertakers enter into a subscription of *one penny* per week, and that it be published forthwith.

Resolved,

"That as the Journey-work system is totally abandoned in Coventry and its neighbourhood, the Nuneaton Committee are guilty of a dereliction of duty in not giving in a fair representation as to the extent of that system existing in Nuneaton and its vicinity; and that arrangements be immediately entered into by the whole of the single-hand trade, in order to

* Holmes.

induce the manufacturers of Nuneaton to comply with the resolutions of the Coventry manufacturers upon that subject.

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"And that a Special Meeting of Delegates be held at Nuneaton, on Monday, the 20th of February, at the Rose and Crown, precisely at ten o'clock in the morning.

"*Signed on behalf of the Trade,*

"Richard Holmes,
John Wykes,
Thos. Marston,
Joseph Whale,
Geo. Bunney,
John Tustin."

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The resort to the journey-work system, it is very probable, was sought to avoid the lists, but, like the framing of the lists themselves, the endeavour to prevent it was a very singular assumption of authority to make openly, though the same is exercised covertly in a great number of trades.

Method of trade agitation in maintenance of prices.

A meeting of delegates from each rural parish, on the subject of the departures from the list prices in the single-hand trade, threatened "to point out every one among their fellow-operatives who withholds his assistance, and hold up his conduct to the public odium it so richly deserves." But this seems to have been almost as unavailing as the labours of the masters' committee in this department of the trade, whose sub-committee at this period "waited upon Mr. John Clarke, having heard he was giving out work on the journeywork system, when he said, he should conduct his business how he pleased."*

Report of the manufacturers' committee after two years' experience of the lists.

The report of the manufacturers' committee at the second anniversary of their new trade constitution, in November of the same year, shows fully the feeling of the masters on the same subject, and the operation of a list system, when the whole manufacture comes to experience the rivalry of another place. The manufacturers, it will be seen, would meet this rivalry by reduction of wages, to be made simultaneously, if absolutely necessary. The following is extracted from a local newspaper :—

Silk Manufacturers' Association.

"On Tuesday last the annual meeting of the Coventry General Silk Association was held at the Castle Inn, Mr. Ratliff in the chair, when the Committee presented the following Report, which was adopted unanimously. The Members present afterwards partook of an excellent dinner provided by Mr. Hall.

"The second anniversary of the General Association of Ribbon Manufacturers having arrived, it becomes the duty of the Committee to report the proceedings during the past year, and to offer such suggestions for the future as their experience enables them to make.

Plain engine list maintained.

"In performing their duty of 'watching over the interests of the trade,' the exertions of the Committee have been principally directed to the maintenance of the list of prices so unanimously agreed to in November, 1831. In regard to the plain engine branch their efforts have been entirely successful, for that part of the List is strictly maintained. The prices for single-hand work have also until lately been generally paid. They are, however, now compelled to state that some infractions have lately taken place, which will require all the exertions of their successors to repair. The Jacquard engine branch presents still greater difficulty, for although that part of the List has not been directly broken, nevertheless modes of paying wages have been practised which have enabled some to get their goods made at nearly half the prices indicated by the list, to the great dissatisfaction of those who have abided by its spirit as well as letter The Committee, finding themselves unable to remedy this evil, thought it their duty to call a meeting of manufacturers engaged in the Jacquard Branch, to state to them the difficulty that had arisen, and to request them to agree among themselves upon some course that they would wish pursued. If these manufacturers had recommended any course at variance with the instructions received from the general body, the Committee would have felt it their duty to summon a general meeting of the trade, that they might receive from them fresh directions. They are, however, sorry to state, that so small was the attendance of Jacquard manufacturers, that they could take no further steps whatever, and the List therefore remains, as regards this important branch, without support or authority.

Single-hand lists broken through.

Jacquard engine list abandoned.

"The Committee greatly regret this circumstance, for it appears to them that whenever a difficulty occurs manufacturers should at all times be ready to meet to remove it; and unless this readiness is manifested, it is impossible that that system of harmony which has for nearly two years so happily existed can be permanently preserved. They therefore earnestly entreat the attention of the trade to this subject, and trust they will agree upon some measure that shall prevent the recurrence of the inconveniences and evils that attended the manufacture in 1831. At the same time they are bound to state their conviction, that from the introduction of foreign manufactured ribbons, and the consequent

Impossibility of maintaining jacquard prices owing to the superabundance of hands.

* Private Memorandum of one of its members.

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superabundance of labour in this market, united to other causes, such is the demand for employment at the reduced rate complained of, that it will be impossible to devise any mode by which the present jacquard prices can be secured for the operatives.

"The Committee also beg to submit to this meeting that the principal object of the Association should be to preserve the manufacture in its present location, now more than ever threatened by the power-looms almost daily increasing in the North. *The desire, however laudable, of preserving for their work-people good and sufficient wages, cannot be gratified at the expense of the existence of the trade itself.* Whatever measures the trade may adopt, the Committee still hope they may be taken in general concert; for, next to preserving the manufacture itself, nothing can be more advantageous to those engaged in it than to preserve uniformity in their proceedings, more especially as regards the payment of wages.

Rivalry of power ribbon looms in the North, to which the desire of "preserving for their workpeople good and sufficient wages, must, if necessary to preserve the existence of the trade itself, be sacrificed."

"The Committee consider they would be guilty of great injustice were they to omit stating the services rendered to the trade generally by their secretary, Mr. Jenkins, and beg of him to accept their best thanks.

"It will be the duty of this meeting to elect 13 persons to be on the Committee, 10 in lieu of Messrs. Bankes, Caldicott, Hennell, Jenkins, Day, Pears, Crofts, Pratt, Williamson, and Molesworth, who quit their office in rotation; two in lieu of Messrs. Adkins and Brunskill, who resigned theirs; and one for Mr. Jacombs, who has never accepted his."

Reasons why a list of prices cannot be maintained in the jacquard engine trade.

Next to the single-hand branch, the figure-engine trade has always found it most difficult to maintain a list of prices, partly because of the extension of the factory system, under which the master manufacturer himself employs journeyhands, of whom the rising number, including the young men from the single-hand loom, is always excessive. Were the trade confined to the city of Coventry, the necessity of paying higher than for plain engine-weaving would give to the figure-weaver, through the means of the plain list, an advanced price; but in like manner as the unlisted figure weavers of Spitalfields were rivalled by the factories of Macclesfield, so are those of Coventry by the factories of Bedworth employing cheap labour. The competition of the young hands coming up from the engine loom, and of half-pay apprentices, employed by one manufacturer in his factory, to the number of thirty, is of course felt by the first-hand journeymen, working on their own looms; and to maintain an equal price for labour among them, with any means now available, is almost impossible. It cannot be done by the manufacturers in the fancy trade not having factories; nor by their first-hand journeyhands; nor by the journeyhands in the factories themselves, though the Bedworth men have tried it; and the factory masters therefore prefer employing the journeyhands on their own looms and premises, to paying a larger price to first-hand journeymen, without the same advantage of superintendence. So early as January, 1833, therefore, notwithstanding the exertions of the Masters' Committee, the first-hand journeymen in the jacquard department met to express in strong terms their alarm at encroachments on the lists of 1831. On every such occasion they have expressed the greatest reprehension of the factory masters of Bedworth; and in October, 1833, immediately preceding the Report from the Masters' Committee, a meeting of masters in the figure trade came to the resolution, "That in consequence of the continuance of the half-pay apprentice, the half-pay journeyman, and the weekly-pay systems, as practised by different manufacturers, the list of November, 1831, regulating the prices of jacquard-weaving, cannot be continued." Still, however, general reference to the list appears to have been had.*

Strike against Mr. Day's contumacy in paying by the week.

In February, 1834, Mr. Day's hands struck against his weekly pay system, as "in direct opposition to the legal and customary usages of the trade;" but they did not succeed in breaking it up, notwithstanding the strong feeling throughout the trade in their favour. On March 17th, a meeting of manufacturers was held, at which the lists of 1831 were confirmed by the signatures of all in the trade, excepting only seven, Mr. H. Atkins, Mr. J. Day, Mr. Cheeper, Mr. James Jenkins, Mr. John Ward, Mr. Brunskill, and Mr. J. Barnewell. The manufacturers present, however, "pledged themselves not to give out any single-hand work, until a further meeting of the trade," with a view to a revision of that part of the lists.† The undertakers protested against reductions, and at the further meeting, on March 26th, it was unanimously resolved, "that they should recommence giving out work, engage to pay, and endeavour to maintain the list of November, 1831."

Re-confirmation of lists.

Efforts to get the few dissentients to sign the lists.

An address to the inhabitants of Coventry, by the Weavers' Committee, dated April 15, 1834, alludes to this meeting of masters, and complains of the violation of the lists by some masters, "without their being able to assign any other reason for their conduct, than that *they should pay what price they pleased.*" * * * * "Of the seven masters who have recently refused their signatures to the list, it is

* Weavers' Committee. † Handbill.

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but fair to state that Messrs. Jenkins and Brunskill continue to pay the uniform price, and Mr. Barnewell has authorised his name to be attached to the list, but it is to the other four, whose names and conduct are too notorious to need any mention, that we now call your attention, and we ask you, whether it shall be suffered, that *four individuals* shall reduce the town to wretchedness, or whether you will unite with us to prevent such a calamity."

Appeal of the weavers to the public opinion of the town generally.

They then enumerate their reasons for the interference of the community generally—

"Fellow-townsmen, we anticipate that the Magistrates, who cannot be ignorant that such a state of things will greatly increase the mass of crime; that the Director (of the poor), whose official duty brings before him hundreds of already wretched and half-starved operatives; that the shopkeeper, who has in various ways experienced the sad effects of a reduction of our wages; that the minister of religion, whose duty it is to enforce the injunction, 'Thou shall not covet,' and exhort the 'master to give his servant that which is just and equal;' that our townsmen in general, will make common cause with us, in adopting every prudent and lawful measure, to induce those who have deviated from the path of rectitude to retrace their steps, and that we may be saved from the sad consequences, which a reduction of wages could not fail to produce."*

Final abandonment of the lists of 1831, and proceedings towards framing a new set.

Departures from the lists were now, however, becoming frequent; the exertions of the Masters' Committee to restrain them greatly relaxed; and this committee at length ceased its meetings altogether; but the weavers' committee took care, as was their custom in cases of threatened general reduction, to ascertain from some of the principal manufacturers, whose interest they well knew it to be that they should not be underpaid, what was the real state of the markets; and from these they ascertained, that the rivalry of the north in the manufacture of plain black sarsnets was threatening to withdraw that branch of trade from the city altogether, but that in coloured ribbons generally, there was no such rivalry, and a reduction of their prices for weaving, which would certainly lower their condition, would be of no mentionable advantage, even to the manufacturer, in extending the trade.†

Meeting of manufacturers not numerous enough to "*legislate*."

Accordingly, they resolved to issue a circular, on July 14, inviting the manufacturers to a meeting at the Castle Inn. To this invitation, which was signed by the secretary of the Weavers' Committee, only 13 or 14 manufacturers came. "In the course of the evening, the weavers said they had been authorised by their fellow-citizens to have consulted and framed a list, and should have been happy to have stated their views, had there been a sufficient number of manufacturers present to have *legislated* upon the subject; but that not being the case, they declined stating their ideas upon the subject of a revision of the lists. After the weavers retired, it was generally understood by the manufacturers present, that the list of prices was entirely abandoned, and that each manufacturer was at perfect liberty to pay what prices he thought proper."‡

Movement in the trade resulting in new lists of prices for weaving.

There immediately ensued numerous partial reductions: the weavers proposed a new list, altering the prices for black sarsnets: a list, proposing very extensive reductions, was published in one of the local newspapers; and a general agitation again took place to get the matter readjusted. Addresses to the inhabitants generally were published by the weavers; a meeting was held, at which a general strike of the plain engine-trade was resolved upon; a Committee was appointed to go round and put a seal on the looms, and to take a record of the names of those who refused to strike, or permit their looms to be so sealed, for the purpose of exhibiting them at a public meeting;" and the following account of the proceedings that led to the framing of a new list is too interesting a picture of a recent trade movement to be omitted. It is extracted from a local newspaper of the day:§—

"For the last few weeks a good deal of excitement has prevailed among the weavers of this city, in consequence of a few of the manufacturers wanting to reduce the price for weaving certain goods below the present miserably low price paid. As the whole of the manufacturers would of consequence be compelled to reduce the price if a few persisted in so doing, there has been but little work of the kind alluded to given out lately, the manufacturers waiting till some kind of arrangement should be made respecting the prices. The weavers have held many meetings upon the subject during the last fortnight; and, on Monday last, they endeavoured to enforce a general strike in the plain-trade throughout the city, in order that a decision might be come to upon the subject; and meetings have since been held, morning and evening, in the Hill-and-Hollow Close, on the London Road, to furnish information to the weavers, and to report the proceedings of the Committee. On Tuesday, the following requisition to the Mayor was drawn up, and taken round for signature by such gentlemen as they considered favourable to their cause.—

* Handbill. † Private Memorandum of a Manufacturer. ‡ Ibid.
§ Coventry Herald, August 29, 1834.

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General town's meeting, called by the mayor, to consider the differences between the weavers and their employers.

"We, the undersigned, inhabitants of the City of Coventry, viewing with regret the unhappy differences existing between the weavers and their employers, should feel obliged if you would convene a meeting of the town as early as convenient, to consider their case, with a view, if possible, to adjust the differences. (Forty-two Signatures.)

"On Wednesday the requisition was responded to by the Mayor, who issued handbills, calling a general town's meeting, to be held at the County-Hall on Thursday, at twelve o'clock, at which hour a very large and respectable meeting was held. We noticed a considerable number of the manufacturers at the meeting. The weavers, of whom a considerable number were present, conducted themselves with the greatest propriety on the occasion, not one of them offering to go into the hall till informed that the business of the meeting had commenced, but forming a line outside, in order that every gentleman might obtain free access to the place of meeting. The Mayor, and Aldermen Vale, Merridew, and Hawkes, were present. The Mayor stated that he had felt great pleasure in complying with the wish of those gentlemen who had signed the requisition, and had consequently called the present meeting; but, having done so, he must now beg to retire. The meeting being called to endeavour to settle the differences between the employers and the employed, it would not be proper, he thought, for the magistrates to be present, as it was very probable they might be called upon, in another place, to decide judicially between the parties. The magistrates then withdrew. On the proposition of Mr. T. Troughton, seconded by the Reverend Mr. Hook, Mr. T. Pepper took the chair.

"The Reverend Mr. Hook (Vicar of Trinity parish), in rising to propose the first resolution, said, by some it might be considered presumption in him to do so, being entirely unconnected with trade, but he did it at the request of the weavers themselves. He wished to bear his testimony to the patience and forbearance of the weavers of this city under their distresses. He had resided here for six years; and, during that time, he believed their condition had been regularly getting worse, but the patience with which they had borne it did them the highest credit. He had been told of the great distress that existed in other parts of the country;—the distress might be great in other places, but it was nowhere of longer continuance than in this city; and he therefore wished the Government would take into its consideration the state of the ribbon-trade. Whatever benefited the weaver was a benefit to the manufacturer also; and it would be found that, whatever one branch of trade suffered, would be suffered in proportion by the whole town. After a few more observations, Mr. Hook proposed the resolution—

"That, as the ribbon-trade is almost the only trade in Coventry and its neighbourhood, it is important that the operatives engaged in that manufacture should be placed in the best possible condition, as it regards a remuneration for labour.

"The resolution, seconded by Mr. T. B. Troughton, was then put, and carried unanimously.

"*Mr. Seal* proposed the next resolusion—

"That, in the opinion of this meeting, the price now paid for weaving is sufficiently low to enable the manufacturers of Coventry to compete with the manufacturers of other districts, and too low to enable the operative to obtain the necessaries of life for himself and family.

"*Mr. Oswin* seconded this resolution.

"*The Chairman* was about to put the resolution for the approval of the meeting, when

"*Mr. C. Woodcock* (solicitor) said, he considered they were acting most absurdly in passing the resolution in this off-hand way. They were called on to adopt a certain resolution, as the opinion of the meeting, upon a point of the greatest importance—that of the rate of wages—without one word been said to prove to them that they would be justified in adopting such opinion. There were many manufacturers present; let some of them come forward and state what were the wages they were paying, and whether they considered there was a necessity for a reduction; they should then have some data on which to judge of the propriety of passing the resolution.

"*Mr. E. Goode* (weaver) said, he hoped the manufacturers present would give their opinions on the subject. For his own part, he could say that the present rate of wages was too low for an operative to live as he ought to do; and he did not know what they must do if a further reduction took place. The other part of the resolution, as to whether the manufacturers would compete with others in the plain coloured trade at the present rate of wages, they could best answer themselves. He considered that a reduction would neither benefit the manufacturer nor the weaver, as not a yard more ribbon would be made. The article in dispute was not subject to foreign competition, and the demand was entirely dependent on fashion. In his opinion the statements made in the resolution were correct.

"*Mr. C. Ratliff* (one of the principal manufacturers) said, he was not aware there was the least necessity for any reduction in the present rate of wages: the only thing that could call for it was the competition among the manufacturers.

"*Mr. Troughton* thought, after the statement made by an operative, and the confirmation of that statement by a manufacturer, there need be no hesitation about passing the resolution.

"*Mr. E. Goode* said, he wished to observe that, in the evidence given before the Committee of the House of Commons two years ago, it was stated that a weaver in full work could not possibly earn more than from 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week: now, if the loss of time in waiting for warps and various other causes were taken into consideration, it would be found that their earnings would be reduced to a very low average.

"*Mr. Woodcock* inquired whether this employment would average nine months out of twelve.

"*Mr. J. Adams.*—No; not so much.

"*Mr. Cope* (one of the principal manufacturers), in reply to a remark made by Mr. Wood-

cock, said that, with respect to competition with other places, he was not aware of any in the coloured plain trade; and he perfectly concurred with Mr. Ratliff, that a reduction in that branch was unnecessary. He also believed that wages were sufficiently low to enable the manufacturer to compete with foreigners. Very few plain coloured ribbons were now imported into this country; but he begged it to be understood, that he considered the present scale of prices essential to the preservation of the trade; and that if any advance were to take place, foreign ribbons would be immediately imported.

"*Mr. Caldecott* (a manufacturer) wished the words 'plain coloured ribbons' to be introduced into the resolution after the word 'weaving.'

"*Mr. Goode* said, the amendment would alter the meaning of the original resolution, as it would make black goods an exception. The resolution referred to *plain* ribbons, but the amendment would apply only to *plain coloured* ribbons. As many operatives were now present, he hoped that they would have an opportunity of hearing that question discussed.

"*Mr. Cope*, in reply, stated that he had several times given his opinion to Mr. Goode and others of the weavers' committee, and he had not the slightest hesitation in saying, publicly, what he expressed on those occasions. In his own trade he had once employed one hundred looms in the manufacture of black ribbons, but he had gradually lost that trade in consequence of being undersold elsewhere, and he had not now more than ten looms employed in making black goods. He was now compelled to purchase that description of goods from other places, in order to keep his trade together, because customers expected to be accommodated with black as well as colours. These facts he stated to Mr. Goode and the weavers' committee on a former occasion, and they had met the question very fairly, by admitting the necessity of some concession in the price of making black ribbons for the sake of preserving the remnant of the trade, and also with respect to gauzes, in competition with France; not that he expected that such a reduction would bring the trade back, in either case, but still it was better to do so than to go on getting worse.

"After some conversation the words were inserted, and the resolution carried.

"*Mr. Pearman*, in a speech of some length, in which he argued against 'annihilating the trade of the city to satisfy the avarice of a few individuals,' proposed the third resolution:—

"That this meeting learn with regret that there are a few manufacturers attempting a reduction on the present list, when such a reduction will not increase the consumption of ribbons, or give any increased employment to the weavers, but will only restrict the circulation of money in this district, to the manifest injury of the inhabitants at large."

"A considerable discussion ensued between Mr. Wilmot, Mr. Pearman, Mr. Goode, Mr. Buckney, and Mr. Pratt, as to whether this branch of the ribbon trade was not injured by the importation of foreign goods.

"*Mr. Lea* seconded the resolution, which was put and carried.

Condemnation of manufacturers wishing to reduce, after the heads of the trade had stated that there was no necessity for it.

"*Mr. Pratt* proposed, and *Mr. Seal* secended the next resolution—

"That this meeting respectfully request those manufacturers who have intimated their intention of departing from the present list of prices to desist therefrom; and that a committee of gentlemen be appointed to wait upon them to effect this desirable object."

"Captain Bunney, Mr. Seal, and Mr. Soden, were then appointed a committee, to wait upon the manufacturers who had refused to pay the present price, to solicit their compliance with the wishes of the meeting; and Mr. B. Goode, Mr. G. Baddeley, and Mr. D. Buckney, were deputed to attend them on behalf of the weavers. It was agreed that, they should meet on Friday morning, at ten o'clock, for the purpose for which they were appointed.

"*Mr. Cope* hoped the committee would speedily make known the result of their application, in order that the men might return to their employment.

Stronger resolutions threatened, if the reduction is persisted in.

A question was here asked, what was to be done if the manufacturers refused to accede to the wishes of the meeting? when it was suggested, in that case, that another meeting should be called, and stronger resolutions passed.

"*Mr. C. Woodcock* said, that those masters who refused to pay the price ought to have come to the meeting to prove that they were justified in their conduct. It appeared, that the reduction originated solely in the avarice of a few individuals, and if they now refused to comply with the wishes of their fellow-citizens, they would subject themselves to their contempt and scorn.

"*Mr. Goode* wished to ask any manufacturer present, if plain satin gauze was considered to be a plain ribbon.

"*Mr. Cope.* I certainly consider satin gauze a plain article.

"*Mr. G. Baddeley* (a weaver) proposed to the gentlemen present, the thanks of the Operatives at the other end of the Hall, for so readily responding to their call upon this occasion.

"Thanks were then voted to the Chairman, and the Meeting broke up."

Lists henceforward have applied only to the plain engine trade.

The new list applied only to the plain engine trade, and has been in the main retained to the present day. But the Jacquard engine trade was unable to re-establish its list; and, like the single-hand trade, has never since had one, for the reasons already stated. All combined movement, in regard to list of prices, has, from this time, been restricted in Coventry to the plain engine trade. In February, 1835, the weavers in this branch again struck against the extension of underpaying by individuals; the principal houses certifying, that there was "no necessity" for any reduction; and the same round of proceedings was gone through as in the preceding year; the inhabitants being addressed by the weavers, and holding a meeting in the county-hall, at the requisition of the mayor, when a committee to adjust the differences between the weavers and their masters was appointed. Through this

Reduction in the wages of engine weavers in 1835, because of the rivalry of the single-hand looms in the rural districts, after loss of lists.

committee, the masters proposed to the weavers a partial reduction, to which the latter refused to accept, and they struck; but they had no resources upon which to fall back, and they soon yielded. The ground of this reduction was stated to be the cheaper rate at which the same work could be done *in the single-hand loom*, since the cessation of the list which formerly regulated its prices. The reduction was on the broader articles only, being those which are made in that loom.*

Representations at the Board of Trade, and before the Commons' Committee on the condition of the hand-loom weavers, of the want of "a law to make an agreement entered into by a *majority* of the manufacturers and workmen conjointly binding on the whole."

The "Coventry Herald," of April 3rd, contains the report of a meeting of weavers two days previously, at which various letters, from the city representatives, on the subject of the trade, were read. One from Mr. Williams, states, as the result of his interview with Mr. Baring, President of the Board of Trade, that "Mr. Baring was favourable to a law to make an agreement entered into by a *majority* of manufacturers and workmen conjointly binding on the *whole*; but he would not agree to fixing a minimum of wages." And one of the resolutions to which the meeting came was, "That the harmony and happiness of this district would be promoted by the appointment of a local board of trade, to fix and regulate wages, and that a petition to the House of Commons be drawn up and signed by the committee, praying that Mr. Maxwell's committee do extend their inquiry to Coventry, and that three operatives be allowed to give evidence before such committee." The authorities were, indeed, shortly required by the committee to call upon both manufacturers and weavers to send up witnesses; and Mr. J. Jenkins, of Coventry, and Mr. Charles Hood, of Nuneaton, were sent on the part of the former; and Edward Goode, of Coventry, and David Shaw, of Nuneaton, on the part of the latter. Edward Goode's evidence proposes the institution of a "local board of trade," in which "the manufacturers and weavers should be parties united in regulating the price by deputation," as "the system that has generally been pursued in Coventry, and would be most agreeable to the feelings of all parties there."† The same views were advocated by David Shaw; but Mr. Jenkins, the only manufacturer examined on this subject, would give to such boards only the functions of the French *Conseils des Prud'hommes*.‡ Mr. Williams, one of the city members, advocated in the House the enactment of some "law to enable a vast majority of the masters to carry into effect their good feelings towards their workmen by paying them such wages as they can afford, after calculating upon every competition they may have to contend with."

Advance of prices by a new list for the plain engine trade, in September 1835; by which the weavers are now paid.

In September 1835, an improvement in the trade gave occasion to the weavers to issue to the manufacturers generally a circular, dated the 23rd of that month, stating that "the great demand at present for broad satins, loves, and gauzes, having fully employed the single-hand weavers, and restored to them their old prices, the weavers in the engine-loom have been induced to attempt a return to the late list. The deputation on their behalf have waited on most of the manufacturers, and are gratified in stating, that they have found them predisposed to pay the advance solicited; and many of them assured the deputation that they should have commenced an advance immediately. They feel fully justified in issuing the enlosed list, fully assured that the manufacturers will kindly and uniformly comply with it in their payment to the weavers this week." The list, which was a return nearly to that of 1831, has been adhered to ever since, and is contained in the subsequent summary.

Manufacturers urged, at the discussion in 1836, to give out only half or quarter work rather than reduce prices.

On the depression which was felt in the ribbon trade, as in most other departments of manufacturing industry, in the latter part of 1836, the individual departures from the list again increased, when the weavers had a public meeting, and issued a hand-bill, dated November 23rd, urging the manufacturers generally "to follow up the plan hitherto adopted by many manufacturers, that of limiting the employment to half-work or quarter-work, until full employment can be restored. This is all we ask. We know that in the present state of things prices can only be maintained by withholding the goods from the market." * * * "It is no excuse for a manufacturer, when he breaks the list, to say work was asked of him at a reduced price. It is probable some men, either from avarice or hunger (but more from the latter), may be driven to make such a request; but we conceive it to be the duty of the manufacturer, if he does give work to any such, to pay the price for it notwith-

* Edward Goode, evidence before the Hand-loom Committee of 1835.
† Question 3532. ‡ Question 4523, 4547.

standing, and not to take advantage of a few such instances in a large population, and thereby inflict an injury upon a whole community." This appeal appears to have been successful, and the list was maintained.

Last movement in August, 1837, by which the existing list was preserved from reduction.

The next and last movement in the trade was in August, 1837, when departures from the plain engine list again occurring, a committee of weavers was formed to maintain the list. "At a Public Meeting of Weavers held at the Mayor's parlour, on Wednesday, August 2nd, 1837, it was resolved unanimously, that those manufacturers who are of opinion that there exists no reasonable cause for a reduction of the present prices paid for ribbon weaving, be respectfully requested to attach their names to a public declaration to that effect."* A deputation accordingly waited on the several manufacturers of plain ribbons, to request them to sign the following declaration:—"In compliance with the above requisition, we, the undersigned ribbon manufacturers, certify that we know of no reasonable cause of departure from the present list." The understanding upon which the manufacturers individually signed is fully expressed in a sort of MS. check, taken by one of them from the members of the deputation, to the following effect:—"We, the undersigned, hereby certify that Mr. —— signed the declaration that there was no reasonable cause to reduce the prices of weaving ribbons, with the understanding that in the event of manufacturers continuing to pay lower than the present established list, he is at perfect liberty to alter his list for making, in the same proportion.—Coventry, 3rd August, 1837.—Signed, George Baddeley, Thomas Hopkins, David Smith."† This was certainly sufficient bond to their exertion of every effort to procure a uniformity of prices.

Principal manufacturers certifying that there was no necessity to reduce, if others, besides themselves, could be induced to pay.

The declaration was signed on this ground by all the plain ribbon manufacturers excepting two; and a hand-bill was issued stating the whole circumstances of the case, and indicating the means by which alone the compliance of these two houses could be ensured. It states—

Signatures o mas ters obtained to a declaration that there was no necessity for a reduction —two only refusing.

"The two who are excepted are Messrs. Nuttall and Robinson; but as one of those manufacturers has said he will pay by the list on Tuesday next, and the other has declared he will not be singular from the other manufacturers, we confidently expect, on that day, the re-establishment of the list by their conformity—that day is at hand; the public will then know who are the enemies of Coventry generally, and of the weavers in particular.

WEAVERS

keep your eyes upon to-morrow, and if twelve o'clock on that day shall fail to testify of the expected conformity of Messrs. N. and R., let every weaver resolve to adopt all moral means to secure themselves against oppression, which nothing but selfishness and cruelty could suggest, and which, if submitted to, will involve ourselves in the greatest difficulty and distress. With justice, reason, religion, and the *interests of the town*, on our side, we fully rely on your co-operation and support.

Mode of overcoming their refusal.

"We are, yours, &c.

"The Committee.

"Monday,
August 14, 1837."

A Public Meeting will be held at the Mayor's Parlour, to-morrow, Tuesday Evening, at seven o'clock.

In this manner, the compliance of the two unwilling houses was obtained; the list was fully re-established; and no deviations from it worthy of notice have been attempted to the present day. One reason assigned for a deviation from the list prices was the payment of weekly wages by Mr. Day, exceeding in amount the usual earnings of a weaver, but for which much more work was done than for the same amount of wages under the list.

System of weekly wages still pursued by one manufacturer.

"Mr. Day, in his factory, is, in fact, the only person in Coventry who is paying weekly wages. * * * Paying by the week is paying by the piece, in fact;"‡ for the men are tasked to produce a certain quantity; § and are employed only on the condition of producing an excess of quantity beyond their excess of earnings, which they would do rather only than be without work, and the system is therefore adapted for times of depression much more than of prosperity in the trade. It was on account of this system, which he had pursued for ten years, that, during the trade commotions in November 1831, Mr. Day was exposed to considerable annoyance and personal danger; and from that time until his removal to his present more retired residence, he was never, he states, free from insult.‖ And his hands have sustained even assaults; they could not appear in any public house in Coventry. In 1834, early in the year, these annoyances assumed a more serious shape, and an attack was made on his house, and malicious acts against

* Handbill. † Private Papers of a Manufacturer.
‡ Messrs. Ratliff, Cope, and Caldicott. § Day. ‖ Day.

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Opposition to it extending to insult and violence.

his property have repeatedly been done."* Mr. Day sums up the principles on which he pays his men by stating that, "seeing no prospect of any good on the old systems, and considering it proper to follow out free-trade principles, he disclaims to acknowledge the interference of any third party whatever, in the contract between himself and his men for their services."† That the weavers, with the opinion of the masters in their favour, should maintain their opposition to the weekly pay system, is not certainly surprising; and Mr. Day "considers, that the corporation magistrates and police never in the old time did their duty towards him; but it would not be so on occasion of emergency since the passing of the Corporation Act."‡ The same opinion was expressed by Mr. Richard Hands.

Position of the masters and men generally in case of partial under paying in the plain engine trade.

In the figure branch of the engine trade, wages have repeatedly been lowered since the loss of the list.§ And the relative position of the masters generally, when a lowering of wages beneath the plain engine-list is made by individuals, is thus described by the Weavers' Committee :—

"When one master lowers, the others must lower. Those who have most concern for their hands never come down to the same lowest price that some others may be paying. Some men, for their own profit, always have a disposition to pay lower than others, and where there is no list, believe that some always *are* paying below what others are paying. The largest manufacturers generally pay the best price. They frequently reduce only under compulsion and in self-defence. So long as the lower price is not paid to a considerable extent, it does not affect the large manufacturer, who is liberally disposed, so much as to make him follow the example. When there is no list, the better paying master is kept in constant fear of being underpaid in wages, which he always is, in some limited degree.‖ While the list of 1831 was maintained by the sub-committee of manufacturers, there was among these less mutual jealousy and fear of being underpaid."¶

"In slack times masters disposed to underpay the trade generally will offer a man, perhaps as a charity, work at a lower price, and the man has no alternative but to accept the offers made to him.**

Desire of larger houses not to reduce, but compelled by the under-paying of others.

"The man accepts the reduction, other houses hear of it; and we are then forced either to make a strike against the reduction, or to yield to the desire of the other manufacturers, that their prices should be reduced to the same level. There have been, on these occasions, many masters who have expressed their desire rather that the old rate of wages should be maintained than the new one be adopted.

Weavers strike if told by the higher houses that the reduction is uncalled for.

"These masters are generally the larger manufacturers, and they would say, unless that is stopped (unless the partial underpaying is prevented), they must have their prices brought to the same level, or they cannot go into market with the same goods. These masters have then been asked, if there were any circumstances in the trade calling for such a reduction, and the answer generally received has been, that it was uncalled-for, and that it would not give them one piece more to make, if submitted to. This has frequently been said, and witnesses could mention houses which have signed declarations to that effect.

Advice of the higher houses as to striking followed.

"Sometimes these more favourable houses would give the contrary advice, as in the recent case of the broader goods, saying,—You know that there are few broad goods now in demand, and that these men, who are reducing, can get them made by the single hand-loom in the country, at as small a price as they offer you (the Coventry plain engine weaver), and we therefore advise you to submit. And we have generally, if not uniformly, followed the advice of the principal houses in the town. But when the principal manufacturers have represented that it was advisable not to reduce, we have resisted by a strike, and endeavoured to put our grievances before the public; and in 1819 even the *magistrates* interfered on our behalf, and called upon the manufacturers to meet them at the Mayor's parlour, which was then the justice room.

System on which a strike is conducted.

Public meeting of weavers appoint a Committee.

"The way we set about striking is this:—The weavers generally convene a meeting of the whole body of the operatives in the trade, or as large a body as they can. Some few men are then asked by that body to officiate as a Committee for the whole. The more active in calling the meeting and taking the preliminary steps are the men out of work, to whom the masters, willing to pay higher, say:—'Here are your warps as soon as the price is fixed.' It is very common for a manufacturer to say, 'I shall give no more warps out until this price is settled; and, as soon as the price is settled, there are your warps.'

"If the whole or the great body of the manufacturers had recommended the reduction, cannot say whether the trade (the operative weavers) would submit to the reduction, but believes not without remonstrance, though, it is most probable, the reduction would take place

Committee expostulates with underpaying masters.

"On occasion of a strike, with the feeling of the larger and 'more honourable' masters in its favour, the first proceeding of the Weavers' Committee is to wait upon the masters who are reducing, to expostulate with them, to ask them to show the necessity for their conduct in reducing; and if they still refuse to comply with the request to adhere to the old prices, the Committee have appealed to the good feeling of the inhabitants of the City. On two such several occasions the consequence has been a requisition from the principal inhabitants to the mayor, to convene a meeting of the town, which has been complied with. On occasion, for instance, of the first disturbance in the trade, after the settlement of the lists in 1831, a meeting was held in the county hall, of some manufacturers, and some of the most wealthy and

* Day. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. § Weavers' Committee.
‖ Weavers' Committee. ¶ Ibid. ** Ibid.

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respectable inhabitants, with the understanding that the Committee of Weavers would meet them. There has been an expression of opinion drawn from the manufacturers then present, as to the course which the underpaying individuals wished to pursue. They have said that they knew of no other cause for the reductions proposed, other than the desire of those men to reduce. The town's meeting has then solicited some of the more wealthy and respectable of their body to form themselves into a Committee, with a view to assist the weavers. This Committee would then go with the Weavers to the reducing manufacturers, and urge the compliance of the latter with their request; and this has in two instances succeeded—the only occasions on which such a course has been resorted to, and both within the last four years. In the former, in August, 1834, the weavers were out nearly fourteen days, and during that time the inhabitants generally were appealed to by hand-bill for subscriptions, which were made, though to a small extent, compared with the wants of so large a body of people. * *

Failing, get a town's meeting.

On principal masters saying there is no necessity to reduce, a committee of the most respectable inhabitants would remonstrate with the underpaying masters.

Subscriptions of inhabitants to support the weavers while out.

"On both occasions the Town's Committee left the reducing manufacturers determined to come to an understanding with the men. The Weavers' Committee then drew out a list in conformity with the expressed wishes of the generality of the manufacturers, and took it to each warehouse, asked them severally whether they would pay by it; the manufacturers gave them to understand that they would; they desired, and understood from the weavers, that it should be printed; and this was done, and each was served with a copy. The reducing houses were among those upon whom we waited, and they also acceded. The printing and delivery of the lists was the last proceeding of the weavers; and the lists were tacked or pasted up in the master's warehouses."*

Proposed lists then carried round by the weavers' committee, sanctioned by all the masters, and printed.

"The preventing a reduction of wages, in the cases where the leading masters favoured the weavers in opposing it, was as much their interest as that of the weavers themselves; for the reduction of price on the manufactured article, which would thence ensue, would extend as well to the stocks on hand as to the articles to be produced."†

Mr. Holmes says—

"When there is any trade movement the single-hand weavers meet in their several parishes, and send delegates to a meeting generally at Bedworth, who appoint from among themselves a deputation to meet the masters in Coventry; whenever it is necessary for the interests of the trade to consult funds are provided; but there is no permanent union or fund. The journeymen take part in sending the delegates, and though under-takers are generally sent, instances have been known of journeymen being sent. But the under-takers themselves are the great body of adult male hands. There are in in each parish men well known and confided in by the trade, with whom alone it is necessary to communicate, and they call the trade together in their respective parishes. The movement does not always come from Coventry, for there are interests of the single-hand trade which are quite independent of any in Coventry,."

System of striking in the single-hand trade.

Depreciations in the price of labour would tend to allow a larger proportion of business to be done by the smaller capitals, without the prospect of a proportionate extension of consumption. But it is much to be doubted whether the accumulations of stock alluded to as an advantage of lists of prices, are ever very extensive in a fancy trade.—

Effects of the fluctuating nature of the trade moderated by list prices, giving masters confidence to accumulate stock.

"The trade has always been, and, as a fancy trade, always must be, exposed to fluctuations. In the plain branch the retention of the list has, on the whole, under depressions, given more work than there would have been without its existence; for the master, not being fearful of being undersold by some one who should get the work done for less, rather than turn his men off will give them some, if not full employment, with the expectation of presently selling his goods at a remunerating price. Without the list the master would be disinclined to give employment at a depressed period, for want of such a confidence. So much goods would not therefore be made without the list, for the existence of a stock beforehand often allows the demand of a fashion to be more fully supplied than it could possibly have been had there been no stock on hand.

"The reason most commonly assigned to the Coventry City Weaver for reducing wages is, that the work can be done for the price offered, or for less, *in the country*. This has been the case for several years; and witnesses think that the competition of Coventry City Weavers would, on the other hand, be assigned to those in the country, as a reason for reduction. Has known instances of this."‡

Mutual competition of town and country weavers.

"With respect to the mode of agreement between the capitalist and the weaver," say the masters, "the lists of 1831, are, to the present day, regarded as regulating the prices in some degree; but they are extensively departed from in the single-hand trade; the prices being, since the revival of the trade, somewhat better than they are according to that list. In the plain engine weaving, the lists are most nearly adhered to. The fancy engine prices are less adhered to than the plain in that list. It is a sort of *public opinion* that enforces adherence to these lists. It was at a trade crisis, when encroachments were being made, that these lists were framed."§ "Weavers will never tell the masters of underpaying or departing from the lists."‖

List prices maintained, say the masters, by "a public opinion.

And this for the obvious reason that the knowledge of it by the masters that pay the higher price exposes them all immediately to the like reduction, or to the privations and interruption of a strike. Some underpaying is therefore always being practised.

* Evidence of George Baddeley, one of the Weavers' Committee, confirmed and extended by the others of that Committee. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid.
§ Messrs. Cope, Ratcliff, and Caldicott. ‖ Ibid.

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Depreciation and inequality of prices paid for weaving in the single-hand trade since the loss of its list of prices.

"Since the abandonment of the last list," say the Nuneaton weavers, "prices have declined, and no equality of prices in weaving is now observed. The same manufacturer pays the same price for the same article at the same time; but different manufacturers pay very variously for the same. In fact one manufacturer is always underpaying another. Clewes (one of the Weavers' Committee) is at this moment manufacturing the same article for different masters at different prices, without any difference in the quality of the silk to warrant that variation, since that is, of the two, the best, for the working up of which he is best paid. In this one, also, the sleighs are coarser, the threads of the warp fewer, and the shoots in the inch the same, although he is paid 1*s.* per piece more than for the other article alluded to."*

Incapability of the single-hand trade to maintain list prices sought to be explained.

The Nuneaton weavers attribute the inability of their single-hand trade to maintain a list of prices, to their dispersion, and the consequent want of any efficient public opinion among either masters, weavers, or the inhabitants generally.

Clewes, their principal evidence, says, he—

"Cannot account for it how it is that the single-hand weavers have lost their list of prices, while the plain engine weavers of Coventry have maintained theirs, but believes it to arise from the latter being more united and living all in one place, while the single-hand weavers live dispersed, and have no common understanding. The master will say, 'Well, this (lower price) is what we have paid, we can get some one else to do it.' * * * The men, especially in slack times, must have what they can get, for they dare not lose work altogether. They therefore accept the master's hard terms, and are unchecked in so doing by any public opinion among their neighbours. While in the town, the man who has out work on lower terms is known, and is browbeaten by his fellows. Shaw (another undertaker) believes that the Coventry City Weavers have a regular combination and Committee, which collects the information of any underpaying, and waits on the manufacturer to be informed if reall the state of his profits will not allow of his paying the established rate of wages, which the largest masters will pehaps join them in saying it is unnecessary to reduce. While the country weavers were able to maintain their committee, they also succeeded in keeping up their list, but when that ceased they came perforce to receive whatever the master could give them. Inasmuch as the master is acquainted that the operatives are awake to their interests, and may perhaps expose them in the public prints, he will not pursue an individual reduction. *The master does not like to have public attention brought upon him as reducing beyond what other masters say positively the fair profits of the trade will allow.* * * * When masters have been remonstrated with both by masters, by men, and by the inhabitants generally, it has repeatedly had the effect of bringing them to a higher list."†

Rallying of public opinion to bear upon under-paying masters the only means of protection available to unions in the Coventry trade.

"It is therefore Shaw's opinion that it is the bringing to bear upon the masters the opinion of all classes of their neighbours which prevents reduction in such cases; that when, as another witness expressed it, this opinion is not in their favour, it is in favour of the reduction, and therefore the men must succumb. It is the purpose of the Union of the Coventry men to find out the reducing master, and bring the opinion of men, masters, and the public, to bear upon him. This is the only purpose that it is seen can be answered by union, and at *present* this is the only mode by which he imagines they can act. Unless public opinion could be kept up in favour of the working class, it would be impossible for them thus to succeed; and in the country districts the workmen are incompetent to effect this. Does not see how the country weavers could effect the object of preventing reductions of wages, as the towns'-people do; not contemplating the possibility of union, for want of means, and because of the almost impossibility of keeping the outlying weavers in union, except at an expense and labour which they are quite unable to meet. Moreover, the country weavers, being widely spread, they could not have so good a public to support them, when public feeling was in their favour; the other inhabitants being, in fact, dispersed, and as little in communication with each other as the weavers themselves.

Rural weavers have no public, and, if they had, would be incapable of rallying its opinion.

To public opinion alone do the weavers of the city owe their recent successes.

"It is possible for public opinion, in the circumstances which have been alluded to," says Shaw, (viz. when supporting the opinion of the higher-paying masters,) "to keep up the prices paid by some masters, who would be willing to gain an advantage by under-paying their men. Cannot say there is always a feeling in favour of the men in Coventry, but that on certain occasions, when an appeal has been made, it has been raised, and effected the purposes of the men; but it cannot always be kept up, nor would it be wise even on the part of the men to attempt it. Does not know whether the Coventry men have any fund, but thinks little or none.

Nuneaton weavers' committee.

"The committee now existing at Nuneaton was formed about a twelvemonth ago, for the purpose of watching over the interests of the trade, and seeing what could be done through the county representatives to amend its condition. The weavers of Nuneaton had felt anxious in favour of Mr. Fielden's bill, because 'labour had been borne down to the last extremity by capital.' A witness was sent from this district to the House of Commons, and was examined by the Committee of 1835. There was then a committee, which sent Mr. Shaw, the present witness, who gave evidence before the Commons' Committee, with the concurrence of a general meeting of the trade, held at the Hart, in Nuneaton, which instructed him, as also did the Foleshill people, to plead for Mr. Fielden's bill. This committee, then existing, defrayed its expenses by petty subscriptions; and several of the gentlemen of the town have repeatedly subscribed something in aid of them; but the time sacrificed by those who took part in the committees was a severe tax, almost ruinous to their families. Finding their efforts unavailing, the men generally became dispirited, and the committee dissolved. But last October, a

* Nuneaton Weavers.] † Ibid.

year ago, the present committee was formed, to endeavour still to gain Mr. Fielden's bill through Parliament. It was conceived by Messrs. Shaw and others that they would get efficient support in the House of Commons on the part of Mr. Maxwell, Sir Eardly Wilmot, Mr. Williams of Coventry, Mr. Thomas Attwood, Mr. William Stratford Dugdale, Mr. Gillon, Mr. Fielden, &c. This committee has sent to Mr. Fielden, Mr. Maxwell, Lord Strangford, &c., begging them to bring forward this measure again. Mr. Docker (a clergyman, and master of the Grammar School) wrote the letters on behalf of the committee, and the answers were favourable."*

Endeavours by it to procure Mr. Fielden's Bill.

The hand-factories or loom-shops of Bedworth, which had risen into rivalry with the looms of Coventry, through the cheapness of the dispersed labour which they employed, by centring the men on their masters' property, soon gave facilities for combined action in making their bargain for wages, an occasion for the exercise of which occurred in June, 1838. Notice was given to the weavers of a reduction of 6*d.* per piece, against which the hands immediately struck.

Assembling of weavers in the jacquard factories of Bedworth, led to a common understanding, a strike, and a collective bargain as to the price of their labour.

"They were encouraged," states Mr. Williams, one of the masters, "to resist the reduction by some of the inhabitants, who thought, perhaps, that the masters were taking an unfair advantage. Trade was very awkward; very little was doing; and the masters believed, that if they could reduce, they should extend their trade. * * * Does not know but the inhabitants might be apprehensive of poor's-rate burthens.†

Interference of the inhabitants in behalf of the men.

"The weavers," says one of the men, "were out about a week, when the masters took them in again, without effecting the reduction. The men were by no means prepared for a strike, and though out for so short a time, the married men, with families, were much put about, and became afraid of any future strike. A meeting was held in the schoolroom, at which the rector, the masters, and a deputation of the men from each shop were present."‡

Working of the list system of Bedworth, as at Coventry, or formerly in Spitalfields.

"The list shown by the weavers," adds the master above mentioned, "was verbally accepted by the masters, and has been paid by ever since, though neither written nor printed with signatures. If work be damaged, the wages would be docked; but if a dispute arose on this, a Bedworth master would give way, and dismiss the hand, rather than go before a magistrate. The masters, since the turn out, have repeatedly met together, and have entered into an agreement not to employ the hands leaving one master, *without a written character from that master*, as regards their conduct as workmen, to avoid advantages being taken. There has never been anything else on the carpet, but the characters of men as to honesty, &c. Have not met for above five months, but, if there were any 'eruption,' or 'misdemeanor,' or 'anything of that kind,' they would immediately meet to settle it."§

Combination of the masters permanent.

Though the men succeeded for the time, in opposition to the desire of the masters, yet a few months later their prices were reduced in another form, by the imposition of 2*s.* 6*d.* per half length for loom-rent, "which was not resisted because of the horror which so many of the men had of the inconveniences which they had previously suffered. There have since been no reductions; and, in fact, there has ever since been an increasing plenty of work, though sometimes with inferior silk."‖

No recent alterations in the Bedworth list; trade having been good.

The feeling between the masters and the men is, at Bedworth, far less amicable even than in Coventry, and is, I think, evidently soured by the near equality in recent position in society betweeen the employer and the employed—

Relative position of masters and men. Association of masters to regulate prices. Excess of hands coming in from the single hand trade.

"The masters of the Bedworth Association," says one of their number, "agree among themselves to pay a fixed price, so that they may not underpay each other. They inquire of the men and of undertakers what are the prices paid by Coventry masters, and, without taking the very highest or the very lowest, fix a medium price, which they all agree to pay to their men. Does not know that they have either a formal, written, or printed list, but the price is perfectly well understood."¶

This explains the ordinary mode of fixing the Bedworth wages, independent of its temporary disturbance by the strike. Whatever the Coventry prices may be, the Bedworth prices will always be struck under them so long as cheap labour can be found within call, in the single-hand trade—

"It is impossible for the jacquard weavers to get a better price while there are at Nuneaton and the neighbouring villages, numbers of young men on the single-hand loom, anxious at any moment, and at every opportunity, to get engine employment, to which they can readily adapt themselves, if they can and will work. They are, however, while on the single-hand loom, careless and disorderly,—almost always out;—but thinks they become better on coming to constant engine-work. There are no Irish or north country weavers come to Bedworth, but some who came only from Nuneaton were at first avoided as strangers."**

Abstract of the successive trade lists.

Annexed is an abstract of the engine-lists and of the single-hand lists successively made during the present century. There have been slight alterations made at various times in the standard of widths; but these lists throw considerable light on the progress of the trade in each kind of loom respectively, and in the articles produced by them.—

* Nuneaton Weavers. † Williams. ‡ Dewis. § Williams.
‖ Dewis. ¶ Peake. ** Dewis.

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I.—ENGINE LISTS.

*** The last List of 1835 is the one by which the *Plain Trade* is now governed. There is no List for the Fancy Trade, it will be seen, later than that of 1831, which is still referred to as a standard, but not obeyed.

Description of work.	Width of Work.	PERIODS WHEN MADE.									
		Oct. 1, 1816.	Sept. 1, 1819.	May 10. 1826.	Sept. 19, 1829.	Sept. 23, 1830.	Nov. 10, 1831.	August 30, 1834.		Feb. 13. 1835.	Sept. 23, 1835.
		Per Piece.	Per Piece.	Per Piece.	Per Piece.	Per Piece.	Per Piece.	Per Piece, Black.	Per Piece, Coloured	Per Piece.	Per Piece.
	dy.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Plain Sarsnets.	1	1 0	1 0	0 7	0 6	0 7	0 6	0 5	0 6	0 6	0 6
	2	1 3	1 3	0 8	0 7	0 8	0 7	0 6	0 7	0 7	0 7
	4	1 6	1 6	0 10	0 9	0 10	0 9	0 8	0 9	0 9	0 9
	6	2 3	2 3	1 2	1 0	1 2	1 0	0 10	1 0	1 0	1 0
	8	2 9	2 9	1 6	1 3	1 6	1 3	1 1	1 3	1 3	1 3
	10	3 6	3 6	1 10	1 7	1 10	1 7	1 4	1 7	1 6	1 6
	12	4 0	4 0	2 2	1 11	2 2	1 11	1 8	1 11	1 10	1 10
	14	..	..	2 8	2 3	2 8	2 3	2 0	2 3	2 1	2 1
	16	..	..	3 0	2 7	3 0	2 7	2 4	2 7	2 4	2 4
	18	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	20	..	..	..	2 11	3 10	3 4	3 0	3 4	3 0	3 0
	22	..	..	..	3 4	..	..	..	..	..	..
	24	..	..	..	3 8	4 10	4 1	3 8	4 0	3 8	3 8
	30	..	..	..	4 1	5 10	5 0	4 6	5 0	..	..
								s. d.			
Loves and Satins, five Leish	1	..	..	0 10	0 8	0 10	0 8	0 8		..	0 8
	2	..	..	1 0	0 10	1 0	0 10	0 10		..	0 10
	4	..	..	1 3	1 1	1 3	1 1	1 1		..	1 1
	6	..	..	1 6	1 3	1 6	1 3	1 3		..	1 3
	8	..	..	1 10	1 7	1 10	1 7	1 7		..	1 7
	10	..	..	2 2	1 10	2 2	1 10	1 10		..	1 10
	12	..	..	2 8	2 3	2 8	2 3	2 3		..	2 3
	14	..	..	3 2	2 8	3 2	2 8	2 8		..	2 8
	16	..	..	3 6	3 0	3 6	3 0	2 10		..	2 10
	18	..	..	..	3 5	..	..	..		..	..
	20	..	..	..	3 10	4 6	3 10	3 6		..	3 6
	24	..	..	..	..	5 6	..	..		..	..
Satins, eight Leish.	1	..	..	1 0	0 10	1 0	0 10	0 10		3 10	..
	2	..	..	1 2	1 0	1 2	1 0	1 0		1 0	..
	4	..	..	1 5	1 3	1 5	1 0	1 3		1 3	..
	6	..	..	1 9	1 6	1 9	1 0	1 6		1 6	..
	8	..	..	2 2	1 11	2 2	1 11	1 11		1 11	..
	10	..	..	2 3	2 4	2 8	2 4	2 4		..	..
	12	..	..	3 2	2 9	3 2	2 9	2 9		2 6	..
	14	..	..	..	3 2	3 8	3 2	3 2		..	..
	16	..	..	..	3 6	4 0	3 6	3 4		3 0	..
	18	..	..	..	3 11	..	..	..		..	..
	20	..	..	..	4 4	5 0	4 4	4 0		3 6	..
	24	..	..	..	..	6 0	..	..		..	..
Satin Loves, eight Leish.	1	..	1 9	..	..	..	0 9	0 9		..	0 9
	2	..	2 0	..	..	..	0 11	0 11		..	0 11
	4	..	2 6	..	..	..	1 2	1 2		..	1 2
	6	..	3 0	..	..	..	1 4	1 4		..	1 4
	8	..	3 6	..	..	..	1 8	1 8		..	1 8
	10	..	..	..	..	..	2 0	2 0		..	2 0
	12	..	..	..	..	..	2 5	2 5		..	2 5
	14	..	..	..	..	..	2 10	2 10		..	2 10
	16	..	..	..	..	..	3 2	3 0		..	3 0
	20	..	..	..	..	..	4 0	3 8		..	3 8
Satin Gauzes.	12	..	..	..	..	..	2 9	..		..	..
	16	..	..	..	..	..	3 6	..		..	..
	20	..	..	..	..	..	4 4	..		..	..
	24	..	..	..	..	..	5 0	..		..	..
	30	..	..	..	..	..	6 0	..		..	..

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Description of Work.	Width of Work.	PERIODS WHEN MADE.								
		Oct. 1, 1816.	Sept. 1, 1819.	Sept. 10, 1826.	Sept. 19, 1829.	Sept. 23, 1830.	Nov. 10, 1831.	Aug. 30, 1834.	Feb. 13, 1835.	Sept. 3, 1835.
		Per Piece.	Per Piece.				Per. Piece.			Per Piece.
	dy.	s. d.	s. d.				s. d.			s. d.
Satins, three Leish.	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0 10
	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1 0
	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1 3
	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1 6
	8	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1 11
	10	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2 4
	12	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2 9
	14	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3 2
	16	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3 4
	20	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4 0
Chinas.	½	0 7½	0 7½							
	1	0 10½	0 10½							
	2	1 3	1 3							
	4	1 6	1 6							
	6	2 1½	2 1½							
	8	2 9	2 9							
Mode.	2	1 1½	1 1½							
	4	1 4½	1 4½							
	6	2 0	2 0							
	8	2 6	2 6							
Indias.	2	..	2 1½							
	4	..	2 4½							
	6	..	2 0							
	8	..	2 6							
	10	..	3 0							
	12	..	3 6							
Satin Figures.	1	2 6	2 0							
	2	3 0	2 6							
	4	3 6	3 0							
	6	4 0	3 6							
	8	4 6	4 0							
Sarsnet Leys.	8	4 9	4 0							
	12	..	20 0							
China Loves.	1	0 10½	0 10½							
	2	1 1½	1 1½							
	4	1 4½	1 4½							
	6	1 7½	1 7½							
	8	1 10½	1 10½							
	10	2 3	2 3							
	12	2 9	2 9							
Velour and Floret Gauze.	16	..	..	..	..	..	4 3			
	20	..	..	..	..	..	5 6			
	24	..	..	..	..	..	7 6			
	30	..	..	..	..	..	10 6			
Clipt and double Floret Gauze.	16	..	..	..	..	..	5 0			
	20	..	..	..	..	..	6 6			
	24	..	..	..	..	..	8 6			
	30	..	..	..	..	..	12 0			
	40	..	..	..	..	..	15 0			
Common lutestring Fgures.	16	..	..	..	..	..	5 0			
	20	..	..	..	..	..	6 0			
	24	..	..	..	..	..	8 0			
	30	..	..	..	..	..	11 0			
	40	..	..	..	..	..	14 0			
Clipt lutestring Figures.	16	..	..	..	..	..	5 6			
	20	..	..	..	..	..	7 0			
	24	..	..	..	..	..	9 0			
	30	..	..	..	..	..	12 0			
	40	..	..	..	..	..	15 0			

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

METHODS OF CONTRACT FOR LABOUR.

Description of Work.	Width of Work.	PERIODS WHEN MADE. Oct. 1, 1816.	Sept. 1, 1819.	Sept. 10, 1826.	Sept. 19, 1829.	Sept. 23, 1830.	Nov. 10, 1831.	Aug. 30, 1834.	Feb. 13, 1835.	Sept. 3, 1835.
	dy.	Per Piece. *s. d.*	Per Piece. *s. d.*				Per Piece. *s. d.*			
Damask Figures.	20	..	..	..	..	..	7 0			
	24	..	..	..	..	..	8 0			
	30	..	..	..	..	..	12 0			
	40	..	..	..	..	..	15 0			
Damask Figure Pads.	24	..	..	..	..	..	11 0			
Shute Figure Pads.	6	..	..	..	..	..	4 0			
	20	..	..	..	..	..	14 0			
	24	..	..	..	..	..	15 0			
Figured Satins.	20	..	..	..	..	..	7 6			
	24	..	..	..	..	..	8 0			
	30	..	..	..	..	..	12 0			
	40	..	..	..	..	..	15 0			
Galloons.	..	Black. 0 10½ Coloured. 1 0	Black. 0 9 Coloured. 0 10½							
Doubles.	4	1 3	1 3							
	6	1 9	1 9							
	8	2 3 Coloured do 1*s.* per gross extra.	2 3 Coloured do 1*s.* per gross extra.							
Satin Shot Hard.	1	1 9								
	2	2 0								
	4	2 6								
	6	3 0								
	8	3 6								
Satin Shot Soft.	..	1*s.* per gross extra.								
Orris nd Vellum.	..	Same as Satin Shot Soft.								

Engine Trade Regulations.

1816.—Shading 6*d.* per gross extra on all articles in the Engine.

1826.—Rich goods to be paid extra.

1831.—At a Meeting of the Committee of Ten appointed at the General Meeting, to make a new Standard, held at the Castle Inn, on the 9th of November, 1831, it was resolved, that the following deviations from the Standard of 1822 be made, and that the following be the width of Sarsnets.

1 dy.	¼ of an inch.	8 dy.	1 and 1-12 of an inch.		16 dy.	2 and 1-12 of an inch.	
2 „	7-16 ditto.	10 „	1 „ 4-12	ditto.	20 „	2 „ 7-12	ditto.
4 „	5-8 ditto.	12 „	1 „ 7-12	ditto.	24 „	3 „ 1-12	ditto.
6 „	10-12 ditto.	14 „	1 „ 10-12	ditto.	30 „	3 „ 10-12	ditto.
			40 dy. 4 and 7-12 of an inch.				

Resolved.—That satins, satin loves, satin figures, sarsnet figures, orientals, and all dressed goods excepting gauzes, be 1-12 of an inch wider than sarsnets.

That fine gauzes be 2-12 of an inch wider than sarsnets.

That pads be the same width as sarsnets.

That on the standard, gauzes be named as undressed.

That the standard be marked Coventry, 1831.

If any Manufacturer requires a Weaver to make any breadth exceeding the standard, it is to be paid for as the next width wider.

1834.—No pads to be made at less price than coloured sarsnets.

No distinction to be made between blacks and colours, on any articles than those of sarsnets.

The standard the same as 1831.

1835.—The same regulations as 1834.

1835.—September 23, The same regulations as 1834.

*** The widths and nomenclature settled in 1831 are those which still guide the trade.

II.—SINGLE HAND LISTS.

*** The last of these lists is still used somewhat as a standard of reference, but the prices actually paid are very various.

Description of Work.	Width of Work.	PERIODS WHEN MADE.						
		Prices paid in 1807.	Feb. 15, 1813.	Oct. 1, 1816.	Sept. 1, 1819.	May 11, 1826.	Oct. 1, 1829.	Nov. 11, 1831.
	dy.	Per Piece. *s.* *d.*	Per Piece. *s.* *d.*	Per Piece. *s.* *d.*	Per Piece. *s.* *d.*	Per Piece. *s.* *d.*	Per Piece. *s.* *d.*	Per Piece.
Plain Sarsnet .	10	4 0						
	12	5 0	6 0	4 6	4 6			
	14	5 3	6 3	5 3	5 3	4 0		
	16	5 6	6 6	6 0	6 0	4 6		
	18	..	7 0	6 9	6 9			
	20	..	7 6	7 6	7 6	5 9		
	24	..	8 6	9 0	9 0	7 3		
	30	..	..	..	Plaids 1*s.* per gross extra for every additional shuttle. Purl and Footed 1*s.* per gross extra.	10 0		
Sarsnet Leys .	8	..	6 3					
	12	..	7 0	Same as Satin Figures.	Same as Satin Figures.			
	14	..	7 6					
	16	..	8 0	..	..	6 3		
	18	..	8 3					
	22	..	If made with tyers, 6*d.* per piece advance on each brdth.	..	..	8 0		
	24	..		..	..	10 0 With tyers, 6*d.* pr. piece extra.		
Satins and Satin Loves	8	3 9						
	10	4 3						
	12	4 9						
	14	5 0	..	..	..	4 6		
	16	..	..	..	..	5 6		
	20	..	..	..	..	6 9		
	24	..	..	..	..	8 3		
Satins, Shot Hard	8	..	4 6	4 0	4 0			
	10	..	5 0	4 6	4 6			
	12	..	5 3	5 0	5 0			
	14	..	5 9	5 6	5 6			
	16	..	6 3	6 3	6 3			
	18	..	6 9	7 0	7 0			
	20	..	.. Shot soft 6*d.* per piece extra.	7 9 Shot soft 3*d.* per piece extra.	7 9			
Damask Figures	8	..	7 9					
	12	..	8 6	8 0	8 0			
	16	..	10 0	10 0	10 0			
	20	..	..	..	..	11 6		
	24	..	..	..	..	14 0		
Indias . . .	12	..	5 0					
	14	..	5 3					
	16	..	5 6					
Orris Satins, or Footed ditto	..	..	..	Same as Satin shot soft.	Same as Satin shot hard or soft.			
Satin Figures .	8	..	..	5 3	5 3			
	12	..	..	6 0	6 0			
	14	..	..	6 9	6 9			
	16	..	..	7 6	7 6			
	18	..	..	8 6	8 6			
	20	..	..	If made with tyers, 6*d.* advance on each breadth.	9 6	..	8 0	
	24	..	..		11 6	..	10 0	
	30	..	..		If made with tyers, 6*d.* advance on each breadth.	..	12 0	
	40	..	..			..	15 0 Not exceeding 80 shoots; if exceeding 80 shoots, according to trouble.	
Venetian Leys .	8	..	..	5 9	5 9			
	12	..	..	6 6	6 6			
	16	..	..	7 6	7 6			
Orientals with Satin Stripes .	8	..	..	5 3	5 3			
	12	..	..	6 0	6 0			

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

METHODS OF CONTRACT FOR LABOUR.

SINGLE HAND LISTS—*Continued.*

Description of Work.	Width of Work.	PERIODS WHEN MADE.						
		Prices paid in 1807.	Feb. 15, 1813.	Oct. 1, 1816.	Sept. 1, 1819.	May 11, 1826.	Oct. 1, 1829.	Nov. 11, 1831.
	dy.	Per Piece. *s. d.*	Per Piece. *s. d.*	Per Piece. *s. d.*	Per Piece. *s. d.*	Per Piece. *s. d.*	Per Piece. *s. d.*	Per Piece. *s. d.*
Figured Satin	..	..	..	Same as Damask Figures.				
Brocades	6	..	..	7 6	7 6			
	8	..	..	8 6	8 6			
Paduasory, or Ducapes	..	..	..	Paid for according to quality.	Paid for according to quality.			
Lustrings	16	..	..	..	..	4 6	(*c*)	
	20	..	..	..	..	5 9	5 6	5 0
	24	..	..	..	..	7 3	6 6	6 0
	30	..	..	..	..	10 0	8 0	7 6
	40	..	..	..	..	..	9 6	9 0
							If made rich to be paid for extra.	Grograms 1*s.* per piece extra.
Shaded Lustrings	24	..	..	..	..	8 6		
	30	..	..	..	..	10 6		
Satin, 8 Leish	12	..	..	..	..	5 3	4 0(*a*)	4 0(*a*)
	16	..	..	..	..	6 0	5 0	5 0
	20	..	..	..	..	7 6	6 0	6 0
	24	..	..	..	..	9 0	7 0	7 0
	30	..	..	..	..	11 6	9 0	8 6
	40	..	..	..	..	..	10 6	11 0
							If made rich to be paid for extra.	
Pads	8	..	..	..	..	4 6	..	3 0(*b*)
	10	..	..	..	..	5 0	..	3 6
	12	..	..	..	..	6 0	5 0(*e*)	4 0
	14	..	..	..	..	7 0	..	4 6
	16	..	..	..	..	..	7 6	5 0
							If made rich to be paid for extra.	
Ley Pads	8	..	..	..	..	5 0		
	10	..	..	..	..	5 6		
Orientals	16	..	..	..	..	6 3	5 6(*b*)	5 0(*c*)
	20	..	..	..	..	..	6 6	6 0
	22	..	..	..	..	8 0	7 6	
	24	..	..	..	..	10 0	7 6	7 0
	30	..	..	..	..	..	9 6	8 6
	40	..	..	..	..	..	11 0	11 0
							If made rich to be paid for extra.	Standing coarse Leys at the same price.
Satin Gauzes	16	..	..	..	..	..	6 0(*d*)	4 6
	20	..	..	..	..	..	7 0	5 6
	24	..	..	..	..	..	8 6	6 6
	30	..	..	..	..	..	10 6	8 0
	40	..	..	..	..	..	If made rich to be paid for extra.	9 6

Single Hand Trade Regulations.

1816.—Shading 3*d.* per piece extra on all articles.
Drawing-in edges up to four dents, 1*s.* per piece extra; if more than four, to be paid for accordingly.

1819.— Ditto. Ditto.

1829. (*a*) Satin loves and five leish satins, 6*d.* per piece less.—(*b*) Orientals with grograms, leys, and brocades, to be paid for extra, according to trouble.—(*c*) Brocade lutestrings, grogram lutestrings, and figured lutestrings, to be paid for extra according to trouble.—(*d*) Gauze leys, 6*d* per piece extra, tyre figured ditto, 1*s.* per piece extra; clipt figured gauze according to trouble; brocade gauze according to trouble.—(*e*) Brocade pads and figured ditto to be paid for according to trouble.
Damask figures and clipt satins on ground, to be paid for extra, according to trouble.
All breadths above 16dy, 3*d.* per piece for shading.

1831. (*a*) Five leish satins and satin loves, 6*d.* per piece less than eight leish satins.—(*b*) (New Standard) all other breadths in proportion.—(*c*) All tyer sarsnet figures, not exceeding 80 shoots, with or without satin, to be paid for 2*s.* per piece extra; if exceeding 80 shoots, according to trouble.
All other articles, not enumerated in this List, to be paid for according to trouble.

*** The widths and nomenclature settled in 1831, and appended to the engine lists, are the same which guide the single-hand trade.

III.—BEDWORTH ENGINE LIST.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

WAGES OF THE UNSKILLED.

The Bedworth Prices, paid by the Association of Masters, for work on the first-hand system in the fancy trade, are as follows :—

12 dy.	2*s.*	8*d.* per piece.
16 dy.	3*s.*	6*d.* ditto.
20 dy.	4*s.*	7½*d.* ditto.

Moral influences restraining the full effect of competition for employment, in constant operation; and

From the preceding details may be gathered the fact of the constant operation in the contract for wages, made by large masses of lowly-skilled artizans, of influences which have been little elucidated, and are wholly unrecognised by economical science. We see a powerful *public opinion* among the great body of employers, and of the community at large, that it would be uncharitable and unwise to allow the competition of numbers for employment to take its full course, and reduce large masses of a lowly-skilled population to a demoralizing state of misery, in the midst of wealth. And among the workmen themselves we see combination to express their *public opinion*, on the subject of reductions, towards those who underpay, and who are underpaid, in modes not always within the limits of the law. Indeed, on both sides, the strict letter of the law has been systematically though almost unconsciously violated, in proceedings which the judge would condemn, but which it is incumbent on the legislator carefully to observe, as indicating the elements which he has to meet, to pacify, and to govern.

appear in the case of the lowly-skilled population of the Coventry trade in its "legislation" on prices.

We see lists of prices made by a council of masters on petition of the men, in like manner as the Commons of England used to apply to the king in council. They receive the sanction of the great body of the "trade," a little *imperium in imperio*, of which the law of the land has no cognizance. They are enacted by the representatives of the two parties, and ratified by public opinion; but are enforced only by *moral* sanctions, of a character unrecognised by the law, liable to be extended to intimidation, and vested in the hands of masters or men, little skilled in, and little scrupulous about their application, except that they both still bow to the appellate tribunal of *public opinion*. This tribunal we have seen repeatedly convoked to ratify the acts of a trade convention, to give weight to their revision, and to overawe the disobedient by its disapprobation. The question necessarily, therefore, arises—Are these proceedings unjust and immoral in their object, as well as unsanctioned by the law in practice,—or are they not?

Purpose to fix a relative standard of comforts for a population at the base of a society of given industrial powers, beneath which it is disgrace to descend.

Their purpose is, by reference to the general state of society, and (though without a full consciousness of the fact,) to its total revenue, to fix a standard of comforts for a population *at its base*, below which it is esteemed wrong to descend, although trade *might* possibly be extended by reducing lower the subsistence of the workmen. It is compelling the population to limit itself nearly to the number who can be employed at this price, by the total want of employment at any lower price. It establishes a law analogous in principle to that of Norway, which prohibits the sub-division of land beyond a certain limit; while in other countries this is generally fixed by the habits and opinions of the people; and, among a demoralized people, has no limit short of a merely animal subsistence.

Recapitulation as to the inevitable "overstocking" of the labour-market in an "old" country.

I have endeavoured to show, in the preceding pages, that men will inevitably exercise their discretion upon the subject of marriage, whenever they are in as fair employment as their trade or occupation affords; which, though its reward may not be husbanded with the care which a better training might have instilled, will always be deemed by the mass as "the fair prospect of maintaining a family," described by Mr. Malthus. The restraints of a salutary pride interpose to prevent this contract without such a prospect, in every moral community; but in other occupations besides the Coventry ribbon trade, we find too great a want of such a degree of self-respect; and the limits imposed by positive misery are then approached in cases undistinguished by any peculiar misfortune. Society, however, which, to each individual is that part of it with which he is connected, will not, where healthily constituted, approve that man's conduct who brings into it a family which he had no rational prospect of maintaining in the class to which he belongs. But the number of candidates for employment, arising from the marriages of men who do not contract such tie "improvidently," will, in an "old" country, constantly be in some excess, in proportion to that employment. And it is, in fact, the prevalence of this excess, seconded by the competition of capitals, which secures to landowners in such a country so much larger a share of its industry than in one of newer settlement.

In an "old" country, increased means of employment may sometimes, but cannot constantly, absorb the whole of the *healthy* increase of its population.

Society, by the internal force of its talent, industry, and frugality, constantly increases the means of subsistence, and the avenues of employment, by new invest-

ments of capital. This increase of means may, under some circumstances of progress in the useful arts, be such as to keep pace with the increase which nature gives in the number of our race, from the families already fixed in their several class positions; and so enable all, or nearly all their rising members, to assume easily the like positions. But such an extension in the means of subsistence can seldom be looked for in an old country; and celibacy, or deferred marriage, is the practical limit to numbers, well known in the private morality of society, though seldom contemplated in its *general* consequences, to which practical reference is obviously seldom made. A barbarous or a demoralised population—one which has never had any pride of condition, or may have had it destroyed by alienation from the superior parts of the social structure—recognizes no such considerations as impose these limits. It is brutal and reckless, and is restricted in its increase only by the limit of the lowest animal subsistence. Supposing that no danger should arise from such a population, which has all the feelings and passions of slavery, it is yet an opprobrium to the rest of the community, which it may be easier to avoid than remove.

Pressure of competition for employment usual, therefore, in every "old" country.

A great pressure of competition in every branch of employment, is therefore the ordinary state of society in an "old" country; for advancing civilization, even in our own, has almost as rapidly improved the value of human life, as it has extended the means of subsistence. This competition has always kept the labourers in a low condition; but their superiors have greatly depended upon them for peace and

Could not formerly depress the mere labourers *comparatively*,

security, as well as for their services in labour; and hence arose the trade-guild principles of towns and the feudal principles of the country, on the ruins of which was founded the poor-law of Elizabeth, which adopted parochial limits for the organization of new communities, on partly feudal principles. The parish pay-table thus became the focus of a polity which, in earlier times, centred in the hall of the castle or the monastery, or at the hearth of the yeoman and tradesman. While the yeoman and the tradesman lived in close community with their men, and often in the same family (nearly all industry being domestic), the feeling was habitual that the workman ought to enjoy a certain rate of comforts in relation to those of his employer, which themselves were very low; and it was impossible that he could belong to a

because of the feudal and the social bonds, frequently of domesticity.

class comparatively depressed, hopeless, and demoralised. The old principle of a claim to relative comfort on the part of the retainer, however low it might be, was an essential part of the feudal system; the impotent and friendless were maintained by the lord, the priest, and their neighbours; and the whole population was kept down by famine and plague.

Modern progress to large industrial combinations and centralized political institutions.

It would require a disquisition far beyond the bounds of my present duty, to trace the growth of society from domestic industry and local communities, self-existent for the preservation of the public peace, to the vast combinations of capital and industry, and the centralized political organization of modern times. That the condition of the unskilled labouring masses was determined by their industrial circumstances, their moral character, and their relative political position, in the former state of society, will at once be recognized; and that the like influences still determine their condition, the preceding investigation into the circumstances of the contract for labour plainly demonstrates. But the same influences which formerly completed their cycle within the narrow limits of a local community, now act nationally, and with various relative intensity in different classes and different places.

Comparative simplicity of the influences determining the prevailing standard of subsistence among a peasant proprietary.

It is the effect of these influences upon the wages paid at the present day to the great body of the lowly-skilled labourers, who form the mass of every people, and are the foundation of the industrial edifice, that we would, if possible, trace; for the remuneration of the classes above them must successively rise higher, reckoning from this basis. Those in operation among a peasant proprietary are comparatively simple. Possessing property, their degree of intelligence, various circumstances of locality and climate, and the institutions and habits which guided their predecessors, determine what amount of property shall be deemed a decent subsistence, and regulate the present standard of comfort, beneath which they will not descend by thoughtless multiplication. When part of a population consists of such proprietors, and the rest of mere labourers for hire, the notions and habits of the latter receive an influence from the contact of the former, which affects the common opinion as to the relative condition in which wages ought to maintain them; and portions of England may, I believe, be pointed out, where such influences are obviously in operation.

Intricacy of them where the mass of

But where the peasantry are not in any considerable number proprietors, new principles intervene. If they be renters of land in small portions, they may ob-

viously be placed on very various terms; and it may even be said that they are merely hired labourers, paid, more or less liberally, by the proprietor, for the cultivation of the land, with the surplus produce beyond the value of the rent. The step from their condition to that of the day-labourers is not very great; and the causes which would make the rent paid by the former low, and the wages received by the latter high, are precisely the same.

the unskilled are actually or virtually mere labourers for hire.

The unskilled labourer must always be paid less than any other; therefore, it is not the influences determining his relative, but those deciding his positive, condition into which we have to inquire. In the great interchange of services, the rest of society will buy his as cheaply, and sell theirs as dearly, as all individuals and classes mutually do. His relative position is obviously unchangeable; but why his positive condition is no worse (through the prevailing competition) or no better (through countervailing influences) the labours of the present commission may tend to demonstrate. A feeble industry, and the great principle of mutual competition for subsistence, must, in all early ages, have rendered it almost universally low: as industrial powers have been developed, the total wealth of society in the commodities of life has been augmented; and the moral improvement of the unskilled masses has enabled them generally to advance in the scale of comfort. The practices existing in the Coventry trade with regard to the contract for wages, bear abundant evidence to the political operation of this moral improvement; the modern experience of Macclesfield, hereafter noticed, tends to prove the same; and far more conspicuous instances in other branches of industry might be adduced. Nor is there anything alarming in the exercise of such influences thus indirectly, for they are here in their proper field, which is not, in the present age, that of active and direct interference with government. The unskilled labourers can never change their *relative* position; and their *positive* condition they can never ameliorate but by slow degrees, through augmented intelligence. Were it possible suddenly to advance their wages for a moment, the numbers thrown utterly without subsistence, since the means of society to employ them would not be augmented, must instantly cause them to be lowered again. It is true, the greater their political freedom, provided they be fit to exercise it, the more will they be respected by their employers and the superior classes generally; but even to attain this freedom so fully as to give it the voice of a parliamentary suffrage, and much more to exercise it rationally, they require a degree of moral development to which they are almost wholly strangers, and to which it may take them generations to attain.

Operation of industrial circumstances, moral development, and political relations, on the real wages of the unskilled masses.

It is obvious, therefore, that the relative position of the proprietor and the labourer, industrially, morally, and politically, is a vital element in the condition of the latter, in all the unskilled occupations, in every phasis of society, from that in which he subsists as a serf, which is the first step from the equality of barbarism, to the one in which he enjoys perfect political freedom which is the sole equality known to civil society. In the former state, labour is comparatively as unproductive as its produce is unequally distributed; in the latter, it is more productive, and its produce somewhat more equally distributed. Modern societies have exhibited a slow growth, under various modifying influences, from the one towards the other; and it is only by the recognition and appreciation of this growth, as irrepressible as it is slow, that the various classes of society can hope to maintain and improve their worldly position without encountering the direst calamities.

Industrial, moral, and political influences operating upon their condition in every state of society.

Mutual competition for employment,—a necessary concomitant of freedom,—is a means of depression, as effective as any which could exist in barbarous ages. Unless it be restricted by healthy relations between the several classes of society, the proprietors must become alienated from their labourers; and the latter, miserable, hopeless, demoralized, and disaffected. The only means of preventing this result, amid the vortex of centralization into which an advancing civilization first draws only the higher classes, is to give to the labouring classes a moral development, which shall make them respect themselves, and enable them to claim the respect of their employers and superiors.

Danger of mutual alienation where the social relations are unsound.

An eloquent writer, after justly remarking that, "the master manufacturers hold, in the industry of the towns, the same place that the great territorial proprietors do in that of the country," thus describes the alienation to which I have alluded:—

Analogy between the master manufacturers and landed proprietors.

"If the territorial aristocracy enter into conflict with its peasantry, to enrich itself at their expense—if it oppress them—if it impoverish them—if it sour them—if it be obliged to disarm them because it mistrusts them—if it separate itself from them, whether by enlarging by pride the social distance, or by abandoning the country for the towns and the capital, it no longer discharges the functions for which it was instituted,— it exercises among the great

masses no salutary influence, whether moral or intellectual. Far from elevating the peasantry, it degrades them; far from rendering the nation warlike, it enfeebles it and puts it in danger of intestine discord; far from supplying trade with customers, it ruins the towns, because it impoverishes the country. The well-being of society demands, therefore, a just proportion between the gentlemen and the peasantry; their mutual independence as well as their union; the distribution of the gentry in every part of the territory; the maintenance of their ease, in fine, but also of the ease of the cultivators, that the consumption of all may increase *yet more than population*."*

Philanthropy not to be demanded of any *class* of society.

It is in vain thus to call upon a whole class of men for the exercise of a philanthropy, or an enlightenment in policy, of the possession of which by any *community* the world presents no example. Cultivators and manufacturers pursue their vocations to become rich, and not to be philanthropists. As the resources and the instruction of society increase, the feelings of charity, it is true, become more lively, and the efforts dictated by them become part of its public institutions. But it is of the daily exchange of mutual services that we are speaking, and not of the pecuniarily unrequited aids of pity. It must be a claim much more forcible and definite than that of charity, which raises the wages of any class of labourers.

Real wages of the unskilled dependent on the general productiveness of labour, and their moral character and relations.

The *real wages* of *unskilled* labourers in any "old" country, must obviously depend on the general productiveness of labour in that country, with all the aids of industrial refinement, and on the prevailing moral relations between employers and employed, resulting from the character of their occupations, their intellectual development, and their position as citizens and neighbours. These relations alone can restrain the competition for employment from here depressing the unskilled masses; and their varying character and operation in every country are evinced by the results. Among dense populations, assembled for the pursuit of some particular manufacture, we see these relations give rise to arrangements which are almost *institutions*, and have sometimes been fully acknowledged as such by the legislature; but among dispersed populations they can act only on the conduct of individuals.

Local *opinions* and *habits* the interpretation of this relationship, and a check on depression by competition.

The *local opinions and habits of society*, of ancient origin and various growth, are the practical interpretation of this moral relationship, and exercise a powerful influence in determining the wages of such labourers, relatively to the total revenue of the society of which they form part; they encounter the principle of competition, check it, and compel the number of the labourers of the lowest classes to limit itself by the extent to which employment can be found at an accustomed standard of comfort, and not at the verge of animal subsistence.

If employers of the unskilled alienated, dangerous depression must ensue.

That a highly intelligent and moral population of unskilled day-labourers, or renters of small holdings, would preserve themselves from such depression, though wholly alienated from their superiors, I do not doubt; but an agricultural or manufacturing population sufficiently intelligent and moral so to do, has never yet existed in these islands. Whenever, therefore, augmentation in the general resources of society is attended with an alienation between the employers of the unskilled masses and their labourers, through an unhealthy moral condition, the change cannot be regarded without solicitude. The unskilled labourers, whether well or ill paid in proportion to those resources, are equally compelled to limit their numbers to an excess but little beyond the amount of employment. But in the latter case, hopelessness begets improvidence, and the pressure of numbers beyond the meanest subsistence is greater than beyond a higher standard, and facilitates a still further depression.

Wages in all occupations above the unskilled can be decided only by competition, and must range above their remuneration.

In the case of all occupations above the unskilled, it is necessarily and simply competition which decides the rate of wages; such competition acting always within limits above the condition of the unskilled masses, and affording the only just index by which the men themselves can guide the application of their industry. In the case of the unskilled, my means have been insufficient to trace the operation of moral influences upon the amount of their wages, much beyond the instance of the Coventry trade, in regard to which I have adduced the fullest details that I could collect. The actual circumstances of the contract for labour, present a field as yet but little explored, and unfortunately disfigured by aggravated dissensions. I can therefore accomplish but very little in the endeavour to point out the *relative* condition of the Coventry weavers, and of other classes of low-skilled labourers, in these respects. The great source of distinction is everywhere the varying nature of their industrial circumstances, their moral condition, and their political relations, in which latter the most important peculiarities result from geographical dispersion or congregation, with or without their masters.

Limited means of describing the condition of the Coventry weavers, as compared with that of other low-skilled labourers, in regard to the contract for labour.

* Sismondi: Etudes sur l'Economie Politique, p. 242.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Wages of the Unskilled.

The price of agricultural labour marks in each district the *habitual position* of the labourer, as determined by the various past or present operations of these influences, and hence the variations observed in it in different districts, under the same physical circumstances, as between East Kent and Dorsetshire; and in the wages paid in many districts to single and married men respectively; and in those paid at different times, according to the price of provisions, as at the recent rise in grain—wholly inexplicable by the ordinary principles of supply and demand, and unknown to the more skilled labourers above this level. This "natural or necessary rate of wages," as it has been called, which "consists of the various necessaries and accommodations, or the money sufficient for their purchase, required to enable the labourers to exist and continue their race, *according to the habits and customs prevailing in the countries to which they belong*,"* is obviously decided by these habits and customs, the origin of which is hid in the physical character and circumstances of each race, but which have assumed their present form through the various action of the influences above enumerated which has given to society its existing form and feelings. Mr. M'Culloch's explanation of the mode in which this "natural or necessary rate of wages," is determined, does but reassert its existence, in terms of more detail. "It varies," he says, "in different countries, according to the varying wants and necessities of the labourers; and it varies, in the same country, according to the perpetually-occurring changes in their diet, dress, lodgings, and other accommodations."†

Habitual real wages among agricultural labourers, through restrictions upon the depressing tendency of competition for employment by *opinion*, as is seen in the Coventry trade.

This rate of wages, when fixed, is of the same nature to the individuals paid according to it, as the means of living by which the propertied classes measure the propriety of their assuming the cares of a family. The great bulk of the agricultural population being denied the occupation of land, by the more economical system of large capitals, it is the common rate of wages which alone can be the test of their standard of comforts, beneath which it is disgraceful to descend. The employment of unskilled labour in the production of food, is one of a permanent character, carried on by a dispersed and overteeming population, incapable of combination; and its remuneration might be reduced to a most wretched pittance, but for the "habits and customs" which public opinion, however tacitly, declares shall be maintained. The utter want of resources on the part of the labourer, who has not the perseverance or the self-denial, were he able, to accumulate them, always places him with his master, whether landlord or farmer, in the character of a mere supplicant for employment, and for its price. Yet, to supplant another, by working for a lower price, is inevitably an indelible disgrace among the labourers; as an advance of wages by one farmer, when others are not advancing, is exceedingly unpopular among the employers. It is the old habits of society, of immemorial origin, variously modified, and thus checked on either side, that decide the rate of *real* wages, which have somewhat risen with the general growth of civilization, notwithstanding a fearful demoralization through an abused system of poor-laws.

Operation of this system, and its fundamental importance to society.

Such are the circumstances of the contract for labour in an unskilled and constant occupation, where the employers and the employed live dispersed among each other, in separate little parochial communities. Similar relations will, I believe, be found to exist, to some extent, in all unskilled trades where the masters are dispersed in various places with the men, and not the men alone dispersed. But there is a great distinction to be noted between the farmers and the tradesmen, in the fact that, among the former, one cannot, at least so rapidly, deprive another of his trade and property by underselling him in the market; and consequently the underpaying in wages gives no such alarm as to compel an immediate following of the example. The same principles appear to have formerly determined the wages of the mechanic, while he was in intimate contact with his employer; and various acts of the 15th and 16th centuries attest precisely their relative position by prescribing, not only how much each farm labourer, but how much a master mechanic should be paid, and how much his journeyman. It is remarkable, indeed, that the pay to a master and to a journeyman (6*d.* and 4*d.* per day respectively,) bear the same proportions in these statutes that the best hand price has always borne to the journeyhand price in the Coventry trade. Such acts, however, are full evidence of the generally low condition of all industry, for they were assuredly directed rather to the depression of wages than to their enhancement. It is obvious, too, that, independent of such

Relative character of agricultural labour and of handicrafts in this respect.

* M'Culloch's new edition of the "Wealth of Nations," 1838, p. 472. † Ibid.

Midland District.

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Wages of the Unskilled.

legislation, where the wages of workmen are regulated on the rural system, their position is anything but that to which *skilled* artisans of the present day lay claim. Indeed, the money-price of wages, once generally settled, appears formerly to have been habitually adhered to in the lower branches of industry, for a long succession of years, under the most varying circumstances. And of this we have a conspicuous example in the ribbon trade itself, regulated by the social influences meeting the downward tendency of competition, and restricting the decrease of wages, consequently the amount of employment, and hence that of the population employed.

Mode in which *opinion* is created and operates through employers and employed being bound up in local communities, in lieu of being not only domestically dissociated, but wholly alienated by absenteeism.

An agricultural population is always dispersed, and, confessedly, incapable of combined action, or even of common opinion; but, on the other hand, it is employed on the property of the master, whether in land or stock; the master, too, is resident, generally, among his men; and the feelings of *community* arising from these considerations, and the influences upon the master from the bonds of charity, enforced in a poor-law, are powerful calls upon his endeavours to retain the labourers in a state of morality and contentment, to which the steadiness of their occupation greatly conduces. The burthens of a poor's-rate are an unfailing index to their condition, constantly forced upon his attention; and its administration forms the focus of a *public opinion*, the importance of which to the unskilled labourer is strikingly attested by the preceding details. Weavers, on the other hand, are generally employed upon no more of the master's property than the small amount of floating capital comprised in the raw materials of their web; they are often as dispersed as the agricultural population; but their employers frequently neither reside among them, nor have property exposed to the burden of poor-rates which may result from their demoralization, or from a reverse in trade. Such, to a considerable extent, is the case of the single-hand weavers of the country north of Coventry, and of the frame-work knitters of stockings who succeed to them on entering Leicestershire. The absentee employers of hand-loom labour much resemble absentee landlords, except that, in the former case, the employed have not even the single claim to consideration arising from connexion with any mentionable value of the master's property, while the little spot of trade on which they exist is liable, at any moment, to become barren. Competition for employment among them, therefore, takes its course unrestricted; and the lowest subsistence, accompanied by hopelessness, and a demoralization still increasing the competition, is the necessary result. It may be said that so simple an operation as weaving must be badly paid; but if society be served by it, it is an investigation not unworthy of its efforts, through the present Commission, to ascertain if it be essential that those employed in it should yet be in degradation and misery. The difference of feeling between absentee and resident employers of hand-loom weavers was conspicuously evinced at the period of the Coventry petitions to Parliament in 1818, when by far the greater number of masters *resident* in Spitalfields memorialized the Committee of the House of Commons in favour of the Spitalfields Act; but the much larger "city" houses were for its repeal. Many of the smaller masters are now throughout the country, rather in the character of middlemen, getting the work executed for great houses, and for the warehousemen, who may be regarded as the absentee landlords of the trade. The employment of hands upon fixed capital belonging to even these masters, at Bedworth, gave them, however, a tie of which we have seen that they immediately endeavoured to avail themselves to maintain the price of their labour.

Bonds of "community" in the city of Coventry.

In the city of Coventry, employment upon the master's property and premises exists only to a limited extent, but there are the ties of community resulting from the residence of employers, from the existence of a middle class of shopkeepers depending largely on the sufficient payment of the weavers, from the poor-rate liability, from an habitual feeling of the old relation, and from the possession of the parliamentary franchise by the weavers and those who largely depend on their custom; a circumstance which will go far to account for the obviously greater consideration which the men have here received from their masters, from the local community, and from the Legislature, than weavers generally could obtain. Political influence, to a respectable manufacturer in a represented town, is a matter of much feeling, if not of interest; he endeavours therefore to maintain his popularity with the men, and with the shopkeepers who depend upon their custom, not only where the franchise is possessed by freemen, as at Coventry, but also where it belongs exclusively to the 10*l.* householders, as at Macclesfield, where the same considerations operate.

The "natural" price of labour, then, if there be really any use in such a term, must be the wages of the least-skilled classes in any given community, as determined by the usual excess of the supply over the demand for labour in such classes, of which the depressing tendency is variously checked by intervening "moral influences," of which the most obvious are those resulting from the steadiness of of the trade; from its healthy industrial organization; from high moral development both of employers and employed; from residence of the *propertied* masters among the employed; from residence of the employed in such contiguity to each other as readily to have a common understanding, which every buyer well knows it is best for him that the sellers should not have; from periodical returns of active seasons of business; from employment on the property of the master; from the charitable bond found in a poor's-rate bearing chiefly on the propertied employers; from possession of the political franchise by the men; and from their intelligence and prudence in representing their own interests, rallying the sympathy of others, and abstaining from violence.

Summary of the sources of moral and political influence on the "natural" price of the labour of the unskilled.

These act, through the habits and feelings of society, merely in checking the fall of wages by competition among labourers, and have little influence in preventing their rise by competition among masters for their services, whenever such competition occurs. Nor is this rise unfair, since the master would not bid higher wages unless he had very good prospect of their being repaid with interest by his profits. Wherever, in an "old" country, among labourers of the lowest skill, there is wanting one or more of the above-stated sources of moral influence, to restrain depression through the competition of numbers, the securities for their contentment are proportionately weakened; and little influence can even all these have in a manufacturing community, like that of Coventry, when the same *do not pervade the whole nation;* for to the uninfluenced place, if one there be, will competition inevitably withdraw the trade, if recourse be had to them at its existing seat.

Checking the decline through competition.

In proportion as the moral bonds derived from the circumstances above enumerated are strong, combination of the men, if it exist at all among the lowly-skilled, is *with* the master and proprietor. And although the local history of Coventry itself bears testimony to jealousies between its masters and its men, it shows also the unchanging relation which the latter bore to the former, until twenty-five years ago. But in proportion as the rapid material civilization of the last fifty years has advanced, and industry, intelligence, political power, and even amusements, have been centralized, the successful employer and the proprietor, have, with the aid of the wealth given to them, been dissociated more and more from the labourers dependent upon them. Many who complain of the modern movements of the labouring classes in mass, do not perceive that they themselves have been drawn into a new vortex, with new class interests and class feelings. Local communities, in each of which a slowly-formed gradation of classes existed, are gradually being superseded by a nationalization, which must ultimately have the best results, but may more immediately lead to the highest civilization or to the deepest misery, according as it shall be understood or misunderstood by rulers and by classes. No longer separated into distinct towns and provinces, we are rapidly becoming one vast community, in which the mere palpitations, resulting from the instantaneous circulation of intelligence, suffice to alarm the timid.

Progress of civilization in breaking up local association and combination of the labourers *with* the masters, by nationalizing industry, intelligence, power, and even amusements.

This centralization, with enlarged capitals, both commercial and manufacturing, has much changed the relations of the Coventry weavers with their employers, together with the position of these employers towards the community at large, though less, probably, than those of the masters and men in many other branches of manufacture. By the extension of machinery, and by the tendency to larger industrial combinations altogether, as well in agriculture as in commerce and manufactures, the general powers of production have been enormously increased; but the virtues requisite for the accumulation for which they have afforded the opportunity, were not to be found in the masses generally. The advantages of the augmented powers of production have therefore come chiefly into the hands of the middle classes, besides forming some more vast individual capitals; and the change which the last half century has seen in the manners and habits of the middle classes, and in their relations with their workmen, are familiar to many. Although the labouring classes, with some exceptions, have largely shared in the advantages of the general civilization, it is not surprising that the relatively more elevated position of their employers has excited a class of feelings previously dormant,

Separation of Classes consequent on the general advancement; leading to

especially when it is borne in mind that the estrangement also operates in the mind of the employer, who has frequently himself arisen from the ranks of the workmen. In the Coventry trade the effect has been to make the multiplied masters, to a considerable extent, little other than *middlemen*, getting the work done for the capitalists of the London warehouses, who are of course non-resident.

Combinations *against* masters, instead of *with* them.

Under this change in the relations of society, which was hastened by the anarchy into which all industry was thrown at the Peace, combinations have necessarily advanced with rapidity in their modern progress from being combinations *with* the masters to being combinations *against* them. When the estrangement is only partial, as at Coventry, and in the richest cotton-spinning districts, this combination is on terms of such amity with the great body of the masters, as to be constantly recognised and used by them as a part of the trade system, giving voice to the old guild principles, which tacitly governed the trade until after the Peace, and are still in a great degree maintained. When the estrangement, under circumstances which are readily explicable, is much greater, stronger animosities are shown by the men, not so much towards their masters as towards each other,—by the combined against the uncombined,—*the masters occasionally co-operating with the former.* And where almost every tie is broken, we see the men forming themselves into desperate associations for the sacrifice, not only of rivals in their own class, but of their masters and superiors, as among the peasantry of Ireland. When it is borne in mind, too, that every new mechanical agency does but bind us closer and closer in community with that portion of the United Kingdom which has long been industrially demoralized to an enormous extent, it will not be thought too soon to bestow attention on this subject, however easy it may be imagined at any time to stop the current of contamination which threatens from that quarter to undermine the peaceful foundations of British industry.

Internal policy of other branches of industry.

Such I believe to be the tide of events, of which the phenomena presented by the Coventry trade are only a part. After the preceding detail of the movements in this trade, it is important to give some idea of the internal policy of other branches of industry, before deciding upon the adoption or rejection of the schemes proposed for directly influencing the contract for labour; since the like principles are applicable to all. The overt exhibition of this policy is principally in *combinations* to affect the rate of wages, chiefly on the part of the men; since, beyond such tacit understanding as I have shown now to exist among all the principal houses in the Coventry trade, the irreconcileable interests of the masters, in nearly all branches of industry, prohibit combination on their part, except under extraordinary circumstances. Competition for employment among the men usually supersedes the necessity of combination on the part of the masters; but the labourers generally have great faith in *combinations*, which, however, unless they assail the public peace, or encroach upon civil liberty, can have little effect upon the rate of wages (unless sanctioned by the local public opinion), however useful they may be in discussing, drawing up, and maintaining rules for the general regulation of the trade, to receive the sanction of the masters.

Purpose of combination on the part of the employed to make trade regulations, and to limit the supply of hands, but chiefly to maintain list prices of labour.

But the procuring of such regulations is only a secondary object of the combinations of labourers, of which the main purpose is always to keep up or to raise the price of their services. The labour market not being kept understocked by limits to the population, they endeavour to impose artificial limits in the shape of restrictions upon the admission of apprentices, which have sometimes been sanctioned by the legislature, to the general injury of society, since they can have no other effect than to prevent many from exercising their talents in its service in the field for which they are best adapted, and to form society into an aggregate of miserable monopolies, preying upon each other. Legal sanctions being withdrawn, there are now few branches of industry in which such regulations can be enforced; and the great effort, therefore, is universally to obtain list prices of labour, framed by the men, acceded to by the masters, and maintained *as best they may.* The principle of combinations having this aim was well stated by Mr. Foster, chairman of the Manchester Quarter Sessions, before the Commons' Committee on Combinations, in 1838.

"*Lord Ashley.*—Surely it is a sign of an unhealthy state of things, that men should be obliged to combine for self-defence?—It seems to me a natural result, when you have, on the one hand, a desire to manufacture at the lowest cost, and, on the other, a desire to keep up the rate of wages, that the men should combine to that purpose."*

* First Report, Q. 3309.

Such combinations employ various means to enforce a common price of labour upon the masters collectively, or upon those who disagree individually from the terms generally acceded to; in the former of which attempts they generally fail, and in the latter, succeed. According to the means to which they resort, they may be classed as—

1. Combinations to attain their object by force and intimidation.
2. Combinations to attain their object by means of public opinion.
3. Combinations to attain their object by holding back the supply of labour.

Classification of combinations according to their means of attempted influence.

A few words will explain the operation of the two first classes of combinations, of which alone the unskilled masses are generally capable. The first class belong to a barbarous and demoralised state of society, where "combination," as it is commonly understood in England,—which is the third class above specified,—cannot exist. They are not generally extensive associations, but *futile* temporary conspiracies of some of the most active and desperate, to preserve themselves and neighbours from depression by competing numbers, through the fears of the competitors or of the proprietors, the latter of whom, in a rural community at least, might have avoided this state of things by a proper moral management of their estates, in attaching to them, in proportionate comfort, the number of labourers whom alone they require; but, by neglecting which, they become merely the masters of slaves, without the power of slave-holders. There can be no greater proof of the low and unhealthy condition of a people than this, in which murder, arson, and assault, though perpetrated only by a few, receive the approbation of the many. These events are merely the pestilence resulting from the predisposing misery and demoralization of the masses,—whether dispersed, as in Ireland, or concentrated under the agitation of incendiaries as in some portions of Great Britain;—*mutual competition being allowed to lower them, or to make them feel in daily danger of being lowered, to the verge of animal subsistence in the midst of wealth.* This is one of the most virulent elements with which the civil magistrate has to contend; for subdue it he must. But the lowest classes of dispersed hand-loom weavers and frame-work knitters cannot even make the last futile efforts of violence; but, in pauper-like demoralization, cultivate every little patch of trade which they can obtain, and multiply upon it, in hopeless disaffection, as the Irish do upon their patches of potatoes.

Vain attempts of the unskilled masses to attain their objects by force and intimidation.

Of combinations exercising only the influence of public opinion, the more recent movements in the Coventry trade present the best example that has come to my knowledge. I have endeavoured to show that there are analogous tacit combinations in the agricultural districts, based on local ties, and, in fact, operating in the poor-law administration. Were the agriculturists in the same relation of active rivalry to each other that the manufacturers are, combinations among their men, to resist the inevitable individual endeavours which would be made to reduce their wages, would be the immediate result, unless the great majority of the masters organised themselves, as the Coventry manufacturers did in 1831, to maintain the price of labour, or endeavoured, through the Board of Guardians itself, to compel payment of an equal rate of wages by the force of opinion. The conduct of the Coventry manufacturers, in recognising the organization of the men as a means of enforcing such a rate of wages, is extensively, though tacitly, imitated in the cotton trade itself, as many mill-owners can testify. And I am informed by some of these gentlemen, that they regard the existing combinations among the men, though a bad mode of enforcing on individuals the general opinion as to the rate of wages, yet, as far preferable to the absence of any such restriction, under which much worse forms of combination would in the end inevitably show themselves. The vital principle of the Spitalfields Act, it has been seen, was to lend, at this point, the assistance of the magistrate, to supersede the efforts of combination on the part either of masters or men, the latter of whom had resorted to open violence. At present, "moral means" are alone resorted to, in the endeavour to enforce upon individuals the common contract. These consist in inducing the hands of the under-paying masters to strike; supporting them while out; subjecting to every obloquy those who go to work, whether the subscriptions be sufficient to support them without employment or not; and in fact using every means of annoyance short of positive violence and injury.

Combinations to attain their objects by means of public opinion.

These proceedings, it must be borne in mind, take place under the tacit sanction of the masters generally, who thus extensively enforce upon unwilling individuals a common rate of wages in various large branches of industry. But such enforcement, without the arm of the law, can never be complete.

Combinations to attain their object by holding back the supply of labour.

Combinations of the third class, which can be attempted only by the more highly-skilled and highly-paid trades, so long as they abstain from all violence, and do not interrupt the free circulation of labour, are as fair trade speculations on the part of the men, as they would be on the part of the holders of any commodity that may be in request. Some of the combinations now prevailing are, however, of a mixed kind, depending partly on an accumulated fund, partly on public or class opinion, and sometimes, though seldom, resorting to personal violence. Combinations in the ribbon-trade partook formerly of the same mixed character, but they are now wholly of the second class; for their attempts to hold back the supply of labour have always inevitably failed, and the use of violence was the result of temporary excitement, and not of preconcerted design. The impossibility of suppressing combinations was the chief inducement to the House of Commons, in 1824, to ameliorate their character by making them legal, as they have every claim to be, when their objects and the means of attaining them are such. It was as much due to common justice to repeal the former laws against combination, as to repeal those against forestalling and regrating.

Examples of combination held out by the professions.

Examples of combination regulating the prices of personal services are seen in the highest professions; and the difference between these and the various classes of artizans, consists merely in the circumstance that the services of the former are commonly rendered to society without the intervening agency of a capitalist. They affix a minimum price, in the shape of fees, to certain services, and the income of the individual will depend on the amount of employment which he gets, or is able to perform; and in like manner, combinations of workmen make lists of prices for payment *by the piece*, if they possibly can, leaving the income of each individual to be decided by his industry, or the amount of employment which he can obtain.

Endeavour by the employed in the better trades to pension off and emigrate their surplus hands

To maintain the list prices, the richer combinations of workmen resort to a means beyond the mere odium of *opinion*, which the professions inflict. Those in the more skilled trades, or those centralized on the fixed capital of a master, where wages are not at the lowest, besides endeavouring to restrict the number admitted to their ranks, frequently direct their efforts to providing a *fund*, with which to pension off or emigrate the hands beyond the number who can get employment at the fixed prices, rather than allow their competition to reduce those prices. It is always the great body of good hands who are included in the combinations of this character; the better the character of the man, the less is he able to support the obloquy to which he would otherwise be subjected; and the club thus held together refuses its aid to those dismissed as bad workmen, from whose competition they know that they are in no serious danger. While, on the one hand, the labourers have every claim to be allowed to operate peaceably upon the labour-market by these or any other means, it is impossible that, on the other, society at large can suffer by their endeavours, so long as the public peace and the freedom of industry are preserved inviolate.

Any exorbitancy of price demanded by combinations must bring their own remedy, by swamping the trade with an excess of hands, or forcing the masters to a general strike, in which they must be successful.

Where the reliance of the men, for the maintenance of their list of prices, is on a majority of the masters, as at Coventry, they cannot, of course, attempt any exorbitancy. And when their reliance is on their own funds, any exorbitancy must necessarily fail. The supply of hands coming into the several trades is at present regulated by the difficulty of acquiring the art compared with the earnings which are customarily made in it. And to increase the amount of individual earnings, is immediately to attract an excess of hands into a narrowed market; their number will exceed the amount which the employed can afford to pension; and the master, if he have not in the first instance defied the imposition, by suspending his operations, in fear of his market being cramped (whereby the men would be starved into submission), now avails himself of the excess of hands to give reduced wages. Indeed, a strike against the great body of masters, if the men turned out on their refusal to advance, or on their proposal of a decline in wages, would have only still more disastrous results to the workmen, if it were seriously injurious to the masters to submit to their demand. For the latter would not yield; and the most dreadful pri-

vations must ensue to the men, until, with the accession of hands brought in to supply their places, they should return to work at reduced wages.

It is in this power of resistance on the part of the masters, that the security of society at large from even partial injury consists; for although combination of labourers may, with its sanction, have the effect of preserving a lowly-skilled population from demoralising depression, yet the principle of all such combination is merely an endeavour of the several classes of labourers to sell their services to each other, and to society at large, for the highest amount of services in return which they can possibly obtain by their wages. It does not, therefore, immediately appear why such organization of individuals in a trade should not enable them, as was supposed by our former laws against combination, to obtain an undue share of the wealth of society.

Laws against *all* combination therefore unnecessary.

This, however, they could not do, even temporarily, without injuring the masters, and, at the same time, giving them, and through them society at large, the means above described of escaping from their attempt, of which they would immediately avail themselves. To prevent the due accession of hands to the trade, or to oppose the introduction of strangers who are willing to work where those previously employed have struck, are offences which can receive no other designation than that of conspiracy; and, as well as any attempt upon strange workmen by violence, will always be resisted by the unmitigated vengeance of the law, supported by the public opinion of the whole body of any well-constituted society. In fact, however, the men are seldom led into strikes against the whole, or the great body, of the masters, but through their success in partial strikes, with their connivance. The Coventry men, however, have been too poor or too sagacious to fall into this error; and, as in 1829 and 1834, submitted when they could have no sanction to a resistance from the heads of the trade.

Monopolizing endeavours of the men, whenever such as to make the masters unite against them, with the support of public opinion, must fail.

The want of parsimonious providence among the labouring classes is the great secret of their feebleness, and of their immediate want of success in general strikes. The great body of labourers spend their earnings without reserve, and many even before they receive them. Those who exceed in providence become in some degree capitalists, and emerge from the class of mere workmen or labourers. But the great mass rely on health and employment; and in most trades a man of known ability, once in work, can feel almost as certain of a good share of employment, as that society will continue to exist. To suspend their daily labour, in order to make a new bargain for its price, when opposed by the whole body of masters, they are plainly very ill prepared, notwithstanding their accumulation of some club-funds. The masters, with their superior knowledge of the state of the trade, will have already calculated the possible consequences of a strike; and the men merely throw their own inadequate funds, and those of the trades which assist them, into the gulf, which has been fathomed only by the masters. Although they shall put up with every privation, and even seriously injure the masters, they must still be defeated, after the struggle has excited on both sides feelings inimical to the general welfare, and even leading to acts of desperate outrage. The aid of the community at large would in vain be asked by the men, unless, as at Coventry, it was seen that a great body of the masters were in their favour, and it was merely an underpaying minority who were to be wearied out or overawed. The same defeat must attend any improper trade regulations against which the masters choose to unite; and the masters seldom need to combine to lower wages, which a superabundance of hands generally enables them to reduce individually.

Utter feebleness of the labouring classes in general strikes;

through which any serious encroachments by combinations, on their part, can be stopped by the masters.

Thus it is obvious, that while industry is free, so as to prevent the several trades from becoming monopolies, and the public peace is preserved, so that every individual may be secure from violence or intimidation, combinations of workmen to keep back the supply of labour cannot raise its price beyond the narrow limits within which the surplus hands tempted to enter it are so few, that they may be profitably pensioned off from competition; that combinations obtaining the sanction of public opinion can merely work by list prices, to which the great body of the masters give their overt or tacit acquiescence, but which cannot be completely, though they may be extensively enforced; that combinations for purposes of violence are merely the explosions of discontent and error, which the civil authorities will suppress and punish; and that

Narrow limits within which combinations can serve the labouring classes.

Advantage to the higher trades of the lower occupations being well paid.

industrial communities which subsist without combinations are those which do not think the little advantage to be attained by them worth the trouble and cost of their maintenance, or those which are too feeble to form them on any available scale, or with any efficient sanction.

When the wages of the unskilled labourer are such, through whatever considerations, as to afford him a fair subsistence, then the position of the skilled labourer is comparatively secure, for his remuneration must be made higher still, or candidates for employment could not be got to learn the trades in preference to taking employment in the easier unskilled occupations; but, when the unskilled labourer is depressed, the more skilled workman feels himself endangered by the excessive cheapness of labour around him; and hence all those passions of disorder which have shown themselves, with such demoniac fierceness, in Dublin and in Glasgow.

Conclusions deducible from the preceding examination of the circumstances affecting the contract for labour in the Coventry trade.

In thus endeavouring to adduce grounds for an opinion upon the circumstances of the contract for labour in the Coventry trade, I have attempted to describe the principles operating in such contracts through the whole field of industry, and the mode in which they influence its terms as expressed in *wages*. Without this sketch, imperfect as it is, it would have been impossible to show the exact position of the Coventry workmen, or to classify the phenomena which arise out of it. The conclusions to which I am led, are—

1. That the proportion of the productive powers of a community appropriated to the service of labourers, has a *tendency* to be governed solely by the master principle of proportion in the supply of labour to the demand for it.

2. That excess in the supply of labour, in an "old" country, is the necessary and natural state of society, operating to the development of all its best energies, when restrained, by a moral community, to the surplus of a single generation, the unskilled masses of which are far removed from the borders of famine.

3. That this "healthy" excess produces, among a population dependent solely on wages, a competition for employment very different in character from that which prevails among a peasant proprietary; a competition which in manufactures is far more active than in agriculture, and in fluctuating manufactures is yet more aggravated.

4. That in occupations of the lowest skill, this competition has a constant *tendency* to reduce the mere labourer for hire or cottier tenant to the minimum of animal subsistence, though in the midst of wealth—to hopelessness, demoralization, and disaffection—but for the operation of moral influences and considerations, sometimes working tacitly, and sometimes brought into operation by means of peaceful combinations, seeking the support of the main body of masters, and of the public.

5. That from this basis the more skilled occupations are successively paid higher, and are enabled extensively to pension off or emigrate the surplus hands from competition, which is not the case with the poorer labourers.

6. That the joint endeavours of the masters, the men, and the community at large of Coventry, to maintain, among the ribbon weavers, a fair rate of wages, have therefore been dictated by the soundest morality, in so far as they have been kept within the bounds of the law.

7. That the limits within which their exertions could, however, have any effect, must always have been very narrow, under the competition of other places, unless the like principles were in full operation in those places.

8. That there being no means of enforcing the general opinion as to the wages which the state of the trade could fairly afford, while it is a first principle with some manufacturers to underpay if possible, the success of the list prices, even within these narrow limits, never was complete.

Mutual underpaying, or "*home competition*," of manufacturers, availing itself of the competition of the weavers for employment, esteemed by the latter to be the great agent of their depression; and "*boards of trade*" to restrain it the chief remedy proposed by them.

It is this underpaying of the masters generally, by individual manufacturers, that the Coventry weavers describe, under the name of "*home competition*," as the chief agent of their depression; and to check its progress is the purpose of the "*Boards of Trade*," to the institution of which they almost exclusively look for effectual relief. Such boards they design, in fact, to apply to the punishment of that underpaying of the prevailing rate which their "moral means" are insufficient to prevent.—

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"Considers that *home competition* is the most powerful cause of depression; *i. e.* the competition between one manufacturer and another in supplying goods to the market; because he believes that at this moment the manufacturers of Coventry are making some description of goods at 15 to 25 per cent. less than the price of French goods that have paid duty. Founds this statement on an opinion expressed by a principal manufacturer. Has heard other manufacturers say that they were not now so much affected by foreign as by home competition."*

"Out of this competition it arises that the manufacturers frequently say to the town weavers, that they can get work done at such or such a lower price in the country. Does not believe that it is the advantage of lower rents, &c., which enables the country weaver to underwork the town weaver, but their deprivation of the common necessaries of life. Believes that the reason assigned to the country single-hand weaver for a reduction of price, is, in like manner, the lower price at which the article may be made in the engine-loom in the town."

Partial agreement of the masters with their views.

The sources of this excessive competition have been fully traced. And it is seen to be the settled conviction of the men, countenanced by many of the masters, that its depressing consequences may be averted at the contract for labour. To this end they seek a legislative sanction to their customary system of lists of prices, that the magistrate may be empowered to enforce on every individual in the trade, the observance of the common list agreed to by the great majority of masters and of men. The following is the substance of evidence on the subject of a local "Board of Trade," given by four of the principal manufacturers in the city, from which it will appear that their views are limited to the grant of authority to a magistrate to carry out the measures by which, for two years, their own committee endeavoured to maintain the list of 1831; power remaining with them to make collectively new terms with the men, or, if they should not make terms, to terminate the validity of the list, as fully and freely as they have heretofore had power to do:—

Desire of leading manufacturers for the enforcement of a list system.

"The great body of the honourable manufacturers would be desirous of paying by *a common list*, if it were practicable to make one by which all should adhere.

"The factory masters may be made to pay the same prices as others, per piece, deducting for loom-rent, and hire.

"If there arise any attempt to avoid the lists, by putting extra work on the weaver without remuneration, as might be done with the shute-winding, the master should be liable to fine, as for under-paying. The shute-winding, and all other processes given out with the weaving, to be paid for by the list.

"Supposing the masters had the *power* to settle the wages with the men, and had an organization for the purpose, there would be no harm in a list system.

"If the masters and men come to an understanding on a list, the list so settled may be enforced by the magistrate under penalties. *But he must have no hand in making the terms between master and man.*

Lists to be settled by representative majorities of masters and men, and terminable on notice by either.

"The only broad principle upon which any organization could be established for a general understanding on wages, would be the following:—The object is simply to make the contract for a minimum list of prices, entered into by the masters and by the men (by a decisive majority of them), binding on the whole trade. This would steady the whole trade, preserve the man from inevitable depression, and enable the capitalist to proceed in making a stock, and so employ hands during a slack time, against a brisk one, without fear of being undersold.

"The trade divides itself into the two great branches of *plain* and *fancy*, and the masters in the trade may therefore be formed into the two corresponding groups, those who are engaged in both branches appearing in both groups.

"To meet these, there should be a committee of each branch of the hands similarly divided into plain and fancy.

"The agreement which would be come to, should be the list to be paid until a fresh agreement were entered into,—or at least until this was, by an express and public act, abandoned. And until such alteration had taken place, the master should be liable to fine by the magistrate, as for breach of contract.

"These are the broad outlines of a plan apparently feasible. The detail is a matter of serious consideration, since a single mistake would cause the entire loss of the proposed objects. It is necessary to prepare minutely the organization of each party, for the purpose of having a well-founded deliberative; to see to the expression of their agreement, and the definition of its terms, so that they be injurious to no party; to arrange for its enforcement, and meet all the current consequences thereof; to guard against its evasion; and finally to regulate the mode of its termination. The latter we think should be at the option of the full majority of either masters or men, on the whole list or only on certain parts of it; and this after notice to the opposite party; when, unless the existing terms, after a mutual exami-

* Baddeley, on behalf of the Weavers' Committee. † Ibid.

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Would abolish strikes.

nation, were confirmed, or new ones come to, there would be no list, or none affecting that class of articles under discussion, for the magistrate to enforce.

"The men, in this case, would never strike, for the list would not be a *maximum* list, but only a *minimum* list; and they would know that, if their payment could be raised, it would be soon seen in individual instances. When all the hands engaged previously on any article were employed, if more were yet wanted, they would be sought. If they could be found at the list price, wages could not rise. If they could not, they would begin rising without an alteration of the list, by one manufacturer offering the premium of a higher price to the weavers employed by another. So that they be protected from a fall without other reason than home competition, they will not think of a rise except under these circumstances, when they ought to have it, and when the master can afford to give it.

"We believe there are sound principles for such an agreement by majorities, and its enforcement by the magistrate on all; but the details necessary for coming to such an agreement we are unprepared to state." *

Masters in the fancy trade equally in favour of a system of enforced list prices.

The principal masters in the fancy trade whom I examined were equally in favour of a local Board of Trade to enforce the observance of common lists of prices. Two of these suggested some details as to its organization.—

"It might consist of thirteen individuals, six weavers, six masters, and the mayor; the six weavers elected by the weavers, and the six masters by the masters. Each body should be registered, and vote by registry. The fairest plan of the manufacturers' representation would be according to the number of the looms he employed, if practicable. This council not to make any list of prices for weaving, but to enforce any that may be made. Such list should be made by a general convention of masters and men periodically, by their representatives, or the whole body of masters might meet the deputation of the men. If they did not agree, Mr. Hands (one of the witnesses), does not see to what authority appeal can be had. Mr. Bray (the other witness present) says that such a contingency has repeatedly occurred, and has been decided sometimes by a strike and sometimes by submission without striking. If times were good, the men gained their point; if they were bad, they had to submit." †

Plans of the city operative weavers for the institution of a "board of trade."

With various modifications, the same idea of a "Board of Trade," with magisterial authority to enforce upon all a common list of prices to be agreed to by a large majority of masters and men, has complete possession of the great body of the trade, among both employers and employed; but the organization for the purpose contemplated by the men is far from being such as could ever receive the acquiescence of the masters. Their plan contemplates an assembly composed of representatives of the masters, the men, and the local public who habitually interfere in their differences; this assembly to *vote* upon the prices to be paid; a system which entirely overlooks the fact that the contract for labour is a *bargain* between two different parts of the assembly, in which the third acts as mediator, and not a subject of common interest, like one of municipal government. The following is the evidence of the principal witness on the part of the weavers, confirmed by that of others :—

Board of trade, the chief remedy sought.

"The great remedy for the evils of the prevailing depressed condition of the weavers would be a *Board of Trade*, not so much to raise wages as to prevent the depression of them. The constitution of a sort of joint committee of masters, men, and impartial persons has long occupied the attention of the men. Witness supposes it might be constituted of an equal number, say seven—of masters, of men, and of impartial persons; such would be the best plan his own mind could suggest, but he has no understanding on this subject with the trade at large, whose ideas on the subject of the constitution of such a board are less made up than his own. The seven journeymen weavers should be elected by the journeymen weavers generally; but the detail of this representation he has not well thought over, but believes there would be no difficulty in arranging it. It should comprise the whole of the weaving districts dependent on Coventry, as well as the city. In the representation of the masters, is unprepared to say whether the man who employed 50 looms should have a vote equal to the one who employed 350; but firmly believes that the detail of such representation, upon which his own mind is unable to determine, might be readily arranged. With regard to the seven disinterested persons, three might be elected by the weavers, and three by the masters' committee-men; and although they would be elected by each party, yet being persons of the first respectability in the town, and not actually engaged in the trade, their first and chief feeling would be for the general welfare of the town, and they might be relied upon for acting a just and impartial part though thus appointed. They might be either retired manufacturers, or independent gentlemen of the neighbourhood. Believes that the moral feeling of each of the parties of seven would be sufficient guarantee for their election of really impartial, intelligent, and respectable persons, without any limit as to property or other distinction of class. These six impartial men to choose a seventh. This last not necessarily the chairman.

Constitution of such a board.

Masters, men, and impartial persons.

Method of discussing and voting lists of prices for weaving.

"There is then a committee of 21, who will meet, and perhaps it would be best they should choose a chairman from their whole number. This committee is to determine the price to be paid for weaving every article that is made. In case of dispute, to decide by a

* Cope, Ratliff, Hammerton, and Caldecott. † Messrs. Hands and Bray.

majority. May rely upon having *all* the 21 there. But there might be a provision that 14 should have power to act. There would be no danger that too many of one party should attend. Certainly there would be no danger of the weavers not attending. The very *desire for unanimity*, would in such a case induce them to adjourn their meeting. In cases of a division with an equal number on the masters' side and the men's, a casting vote might be given by the chairman, chosen by the parties there assembled. Is convinced that although the enormous extent of the power to be thus exercised by a chairman would be obvious, the good feeling of both parties, though the meeting were composed of the original 7 and 7, would prevent any squabble, even in case of an equal division, when the chairmain came to give a casting vote. Such a committee or board thus constituted might hold its meetings every three months, which, in his own opinion, would be sufficiently frequent to meet the exigencies of the trade.

Structure of the lists.

"Their duties at the commencement would be more arduous than at any other time. They would have to make lists of prices. The several *fabrics* are well known, and indicate the sections into which the subject would subdivide itself. Were such a board granted, it would be wise to make a distinction in the price between cheap and heavy goods of the same breadths, where the cheap goods really require less labour. The present lists in each fabric are arranged according to technical money names, which, in fact, describe a certain width, whatever the number of threads in the warp, or the number of shutes in an inch. And thinks it would be wise to modify this system according to the number of threads in the warps or shutes in the inch, or rather according to the *general quality*. But is not at this moment prepared to describe the mode by which the cheap and the rich work could be separated. For several years the whole trade (from 1831) was regulated by tables of prices agreed to by the masters in Nov., 1831, which lists described all the goods, whether plain or figured, by *width* merely; and those lists were practically used for several years. Never heard that system of description complained of; and has no idea that such a board could find any difficulty in making usable lists.

Penal sanction to them.

"The observance of these lists must be enforced by penalties: but has thought of no applicable scale of punishment, beyond its being made applicable to weavers as well as to manufacturers. Has not at all thought of the nature of the punishment. Would have a master punished for paying under that list. Would *not* have him punished for paying *over* the list. The man should be punished for receiving under the list; and notwithstanding this punishment, the weavers would find out from that man,—he would tell them—that he was receiving less than the list price. His idea is, that the punishment on the manufacturer should be by fine, and on the weaver by fine, and, in case of non-payment, by imprisonment. With such legal enforcement the lists would be observed, and within the district its operation would be effective.

Would rather prevent a decline than cause a rise in wages.

"Does not positively contemplate that the working of this would effect a rise in wages, unless possibly in the figure trade, of which, at this moment, he is ignorant. Feels persuaded that it would prevent '*unjust*' lowering of wages. Means by 'unjust' lowering of wages, the lowering of them merely through the competition of the manufacturers of Coventry among themselves, availing itself of that among the men for employment.

Would work, because Coventry has the manufacture to itself.

"The institution proposed is designed to prevent the 'unjust' lowering of wages, and a place not under such an institution might be exposed to such 'unjust' lowering; and the manufacturer there would possess an advantage over the Coventry master, were it not that the supposed Board of Trade would alter their list to meet that reduction. Knows of few places where any, even a few, coloured ribbons are made out of the Coventry district; and believes that the black trade never was so much a Coventry trade, although the Macclesfield district has certainly gained upon it, and the number of looms making such goods has, he thinks, on the whole, decreased in Coventry.

Mutual rivalry of the city and rural weavers the chief cause of depression.

"The country districts of Coventry now compete with the town, and lower wages in the latter; but such a place as Derby, were the whole Coventry district under the Board, could not be to it as Nuneaton has been to Coventry; for its hands are not bred up in the requisite skill; and the superabundant hands now coming up in the Coventry trade, would rather scramble on with half work at a depressed time than go to Derby or any other place. The dexterity of winding, warping, filling, and dyeing, possessed by practised hands in Coventry, is also a bond on the retention of the trade, which mere cheapness of labour at another place would find it hard to outrival. Though, perhaps, not impossible, it is highly improbable that a ribbon manufacture should arise in any other place in Great Britain in rivalry with that of Coventry. The attempts made at different places have proved abortive, as at Evesham, Andover, and Ashby-de-la-Zouch. Sees no probability of any formidable rivalry, even by the Manchester district; for a son of a manufacturer of Coventry went to Chapel-en-le-Frith, to manufacture by power; but failed in his attempts, and returned to Coventry. Sees no prospect of great rivalry by Manchester, since he regards it as impossible for weavers not brought up in Coventry to take to the ribbon-weaving with advantageous skill. If even such were to arise, it would be met by reductions by the Board of Trade; as every rivalry of any other district whatever would be met.

Hold of the trade by skill and system.

Rivalry in other districts might at worst be met by reduction of wages by the board of trade.

"Does not consider it *impossible* that necessity for such reductions might occur. Is certain that if they did occur, a Coventry weaver would not consider his legally protected list price as something on a very different foundation from the ordinary remuneration of labour. He would not consider it as a more sacred contract,—something in which he had a stronger legal title than the workman of another place had to his wages; but would submit to the necessity imposed on his masters. In proof of this, refers to his knowledge of the fact, that in the

Weavers would re-

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sist such reductions much less than under the present system.

weaver's mind, in the cases of reduction which have taken place, the dislike of the weaver to such reductions, and the greater portion of his alarm and resistance, arose from his fear of their being the commencement of a series of reductions to which he saw no end, and against which he saw no resting-place. That such a resting-place being supplied by the Board supposed, his resistance to reductions enforced by foreign or domestic rivalry would be moderated and lessened. Further, considers that by giving confidence to manufacturers, and removing fears of their under-selling each other, it would have the advantage of making employment more regular, by encouraging them to manufacture during a time of depression. In fact, it would have all the advantages of a list price, when observed, which have already been described.

"A *minimum* of wages has never been debated by the Coventry weavers, to his knowledge.

"If, by possibility, wages were a little raised by the operation of a *Board of Trade*, it would scarcely be felt by the consumer, perhaps not in the slightest degree,—and the *consumption* of ribbons—an article of luxury—would not, therefore, be lessened, and a decrease of employment be the consequence of its adoption."*

Desire of the weavers of the rural districts for some such measure.

The single-hand weavers of the country, no less than the engine-weavers of the town, universally desire the institution of some Board of Trade, to carry out the principles upon which the masters acted in support of the list of 1831.—

"Foleshill, Sowe, and Exhall," say the Foleshill weavers, "should form one electoral district, and Nuneaton, Coton, Bulkington, and Bedworth another; the journeymen and undertakers to have equal votes. There might be seven masters and seven operatives, who should discuss the terms of lists, and decide by separate majorities as to the terms upon which they would agree. If terms could not be agreed upon, appeal might be had to another body of seven persons out of the trade, three appointed by the seven masters, three by the seven workmen, and the seventh by the bench of magistrates from their own number. Such an assembly might aid in supplying the want of regulations, and of a tribunal to enforce them, as to payment for work at the price at which it was actually given out." "There need be no fear," states the principal Foleshill witness, "of the list prices being underworked by the men working on their own account, and selling their goods at a profit for less than the master can dispose of his. It is the good time which brings the little undertaker into a manufacturer; it is his desire of independence, and to free himself from the disagreeableness of his position as a workman. When there is a time of slack trade, he is the first to feel it; and when for two or three weeks, or perhaps a month together, he cannot find purchasers for his few pieces of ribbon, which he cannot afford to stock, he is then obliged to entreat employment of any manufacturer from whom he can get it; and to him, of course, it will be given with some degree of suspicion lest he should as a tradesman avail himself of things given to him only as a journeyman. These men are therefore the last whom a manufacturer will employ, and Mr. Holmes has known them to suffer most severely. In case of a bad time, such men as can be assisted by their friends under such circumstances, to hold stock, must manufacture at a loss. Sometimes even they might hardly get the price of the silk. Has himself tried the making in slack times, and been a loser by it. A man cannot most certainly get by manufacturing for himself in a bad time the ordinary wages of his labour, and will, the moment that prices improve, resort to a master's employment. When times become brisker, so as to enable masters to offer more employment, and he can get it, the same briskness would improve the sale of the goods making by himself; but then what would he do in a bad time again? The moment it comes, he is in the most miserable condition, being forced to sell his goods at any price, while the manufacturer, who makes stocks against an approaching season, goes on stocking and employing his hands. The little Bedworth masters, though much past the embryo state of manufacturers, felt this very severely, and some in Foleshill parish on the same system failed in 1836. In fact, without more capital than an undertaker has, the resort to manufacturing for himself is merely one from absolute starvation, and he knows that in working for a master of capital he is more secure from distresses than if struggling for himself. He dreads the recurrence of the period of *positive misery*, which was that in which he was manufacturing for himself.

Object of a list would not be defeated by weavers working on their own account.

And the rise of under-paying masters with little or no capital would be prevented.

"If the trade were permanently overhanded, and undertakers and their journeymen could not get work from a master, and could not expect to get it, they would not continue manufacturing for themselves at the miserable maintenance it would afford, but would seek employment in other occupations, as, within the last four or five years, has been very considerably the case; both undertakers and journeymen finding employment in considerable numbers on the railroads and even at the collieries.

"A man (undertaker) manufacturing for himself can in good times make a good living,—any one of them,—and, underselling the master, get a good living; but then he cannot withstand a shock.†

"A trade list, so far from encouraging the undertaker to manufacture on his own account, would be an express detergent; for he would be thereby placed at a disadvantage in becoming an employer of labour, since the moment he employed any one, he must pay him the full list price, which he could not do to a profit; for the little master must always sell cheaper than the regular manufacturer. He is thus limited to the profits of his own hand labour within the limits of a cheaper sale in a depressed market; a position from which he can escape only by becoming a journeyman; and one so low and so hopeless that he will on on account continue in it."‡

* Baddeley, &c., on behalf of the Weavers. † Holmes, &c. ‡ Holmes.

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Mr. Fielden's Bill had only one advocate among the witnesses who appeared before me, and he did not know its provisions.*

The weavers of every class protest that they do not anticipate from a local Board of Trade any mentionable advances in the price of labour, but only a protection from depression. Could the price of labour be advanced in the several departments of the trade, those which are carried on with inferior machinery would be proportionately sacrificed to make way for such as possess the better. Thus it is stated by one of the Nuneaton undertakers that—

Advance of prices would tend rapidly to extinguish the single-hand trade, and extend the employment of steam power.

"The lowness of prices in the single-hand loom brings work into it which would otherwise be performed by the engine loom. To raise these prices by any means whatever would throw more encouragement to the engine-looms. And for supplying this demand for engine-loom work, the present undertakers are most unfortunately circumstanced. They must have not only new machinery but also new houses, for their present shops are quite too small and too low for engine-looms, although the witness, by a fortunate coincidence, has been thrown into possession of premises which will enable him to set up engine-looms; which he is accordingly about to purchase. There are in the single-hand loom no fabrics, except the very heavy goods and the plaids, but might be made in the engine-looms, and except for the want of equal facilities in meeting an instantaneous demand for a particular article, and the smaller loss of time and therefore of money in changing the patterns, all such articles might now be made profitably in it. If, therefore, the prices of single-hand work were much raised, it is probable that the further extension of the engine-loom, notwithstanding these disadvantages, would ensue; and these engine-looms, with the shops for containing them, must be supplied by people with some though it might be small capital. This would uproot in some degree the single-hand trade; but it would benefit all who go to work the engine-looms, upon which the wages now made are double those obtainable on the single-hand loom." †

In like manner the steam engine-loom would gain upon the hand engine-loom. The weavers, however, maintain that the discretion of the proposed Board of Trade itself would be sufficient guarantee against any violent changes; and if it were, as contemplated by the masters, merely a means of giving force to a contract determined by the state of the trade, none would assuredly be attempted.

Constitution of the Board contemplated by the manufacturers alone worthy of discussion.

The plan of *voting* in a common assembly of manufacturers and weavers, upon the terms of a contract between them, is too absurd to be for a moment entertained; but so much of the proposed interference with the contract for labour as receives the countenance of the masters, is a subject of considerable difficulty. This is the enforcing on individuals, whether willing or unwilling, a common contract for labour. It formed the main principle of the Spitalfield's Act; has been the constant object of masters as well as men in many branches of industry besides the ribbon-trade; and was the subject of express application to government from the employers of the hand-loom weavers of Bolton in 1826. That application and the answer given to it by Mr. Huskisson, under whose auspices the Spitalfields Act had so recently been repealed, present a discussion of the principles now advanced by the Coventry masters, which I shall best discharge my duty by extracting from the Bolton Chronicle newspaper of that year:—

Application from the masters of Bolton, in 1826, to Mr. Huskisson, for assistance in procuring the institution of precisely such a board.

Mr. Thomas Brodbelt, Secretary to the Manufacturers' Committee at Bolton, on behalf of the trade generally, requested of Mr. Huskisson, President of the Board of Trade, to aid them in obtaining an Act of Parliament instituting a "Local Board of Trade, composed of the respectable part of the masters and weavers, to have the power of making such alterations, from time to time, in the rate of their wages, as the state of the markets would justify; the resolutions of such Board to be binding on the trade, and the violators of them to be subject to a penalty sufficient to prevent a repetition of the offence." Mr. Huskisson's objections to such a measure, which was precisely similar to the one now proposed, were expressed as follows:—

"*Somerset Place, August 29th*, 1826.

"SIR,

Mr. Huskisson's reply, disapproving of their plan, as vain and hazardous.

"I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd inst., in which, after calling my attention to the lamentable distress which now unfortunately exists amongst the hand-loom weavers in the cotton trade, you request, on behalf of the Committee of Manufacturers at Bolton, of which you are the Secretary, my advice and opinion in respect to their suggestion of fixing, from time to time, by a certain majority of manufacturers, the rate of wages to be paid to the weaver, and of making it binding by law, upon all masters, under a heavy penalty, not to give less than the rate so fixed.

"The Committee will do me the justice to believe that, in common with the other members of his Majesty's Government, I witness with deep concern the severe privations which the hand-loom weavers are now suffering, from the great reduction of wages. If any measure,

* Nuneaton Evidence. † Clewes, 535-6.

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within our power, could prevent this reduction, we certainly should feel it a duty to interfere, and our anxiety to discharge that duty could not but be increased from our knowledge of the orderly and peaceable demeanour with which so large a portion of the manufacturing population continue to bear the difficulties of their situation.

"If the Committee of Manufacturers, and the weavers in whose behalf they make the present application, are disposed to give me credit for these feelings, I am sure they will admit my inability to concur in their views can only arise from a conviction that the plan recommended by them to remedy the present evil would not be attended with that effect. This plan could not, I am persuaded, be effectually enforced by legislative interference, and, even if attempted to be so enforced, would, ere long, aggravate the mischief which it is proposed to obviate. The Committee must be aware that, in the weaving of cotton cloth, the competition is not confined to the hand-looms, but that those looms have to contend with more powerful machinery. Should the effect of that machinery, either in the facility with which the cloth is wrought, or in its superior quality, be such as to render it cheaper than cloth produced by hand-loom, at a given rate of wages, how is the proposed remedy of a minimum to be extended to this machinery?

"If it be not so extended, how can it be expected that the capital which puts hand-looms in motion will continue to give them employment? If it be extended to this more powerful machinery, how can such a restraint be made to reach the like machinery in other countries?

"In turning their attention to these and other questions, which will suggest themselves to the minds of the members of the Committee, as naturally arising out of the view which they have taken of the subject, they will at once perceive that their plan involves the whole consideration, not only of the vain and hazardous attempt to interpose the authority of law between the labourer and his employer, in regulating the demand for labour, and the price to be paid for it, but also of calling in the aid of that authority, to check the progress of those improvements in mechanical and chemical science, by which manual labour is so often abridged and superseded, I am sure that, upon mature reflection, the Committee will be satisfied of the hopelessness as well as of the danger of such an interference.

"That it would be hopeless, as well as dangerous, is my decided opinion; but, at the same time that I state it explicitly to the Committee, I cannot help expressing my sincere regret at the difficulties in which they are placed, and my entire conviction that, in seeking a remedy for those difficulties, they could have no object but a feeling of benevolence towards the persons who look up to them for employment.

"I am, &c.

"WILLIAM HUSKISSON.

"*Thomas Brodbelt, Esq.*
"*Secretary to the Committee of Manufacturers, &c.,*
"*Bolton.*"

Another letter was sent by the same gentleman to Mr. Huskisson, endeavouring to meet some of the objections which he urged:—

"SIR, "*Bolton, September 2nd*, 1826.

Second letter from the Bolton manufacturers to Mr. Huskisson, endeavouring to meet some of his objections.

"I beg leave to acknowledge the receipt of your esteemed favour, and feel greatly obliged by your opinion in reference to the proposed plan of relief for the distressed operatives. Being actuated by feelings of commiseration towards them, in their unparalleled distress, I trust you will not deem me obtrusive in again addressing you on the subject; as to the plan of the hand-loom manufacturers fixing such a rate of wages, from time to time, as the demand for their manufactured cloth will allow. I most respectfully submit, with all due deference, that it will not at all interfere with the power-loom manufacturers, either at home or abroad, inasmuch as those who have already, or may hereafter embark in the hand-loom manufacture, must naturally be actuated by a proper regard to their own interests, and consequently protect their own property, by every proper attention to the mutual interest of themselves and the operatives. The principal design is to get a legislative enactment, empowering a majority of manufacturers to equalize wages, so as to check the destructive tendency of continual reduction *below the fair trader*, to secure to the capitalist nothing more than an equal chance of trade with those, who, in consequence of the facilities of getting into business upon mere credit alone, without any money whatever, and being so numerous, control the respectable part in every point of view; and not only so, but they do and will continue to frustrate the designs of the benevolent, render nugatory everything that may be attempted by the revision of the Corn Laws, &c., and prevent every design for the amelioration of the distressed, by the cruel system of reducing the price of labour. Thus the labouring poor will continue to experience increasing misery, hunger, and nakedness; and the respectable part of the manufacturers will be forced out of business altogether. In short, some plan must be adopted to check this cruel system, for it must be admitted, that if this cannot be effected, ruin must come upon the country to an alarming extent. I have sent you some printed documents that will show you the feeling of the manufacturers in this neighbourhood; and I have respectfully to solicit your opinion, as to whether, if we are first agreed amongst ourselves in Lancashire (I mean the weighty and respectable part), and you are satisfied that we shall not interfere with power-looms, nor yet with the free principles of trade, beyond that of alike protecting the property embarked, and the distressed operative, from this alarming reducing system, we might not succeed in our application to parliament for such a law. I beg leave to say, that such is the state of society with us that it is highly expedient to do something, either in this or some other way, as may appear best in your judgment and that of the other members of his Majesty's government. I shall, therefore, feel greatly obliged

by your reply, and trust you will excuse my importunity, as I am actuated by a wish to prevent all the evils, and do all the good I can.

"I remain, &c.,

"*To the Right Honourable W. Huskisson.* "Thomas Brodbelt."

Mr. Huskisson's final answer was to the following effect:—

Adherence of Mr. Huskisson to his first opinion.

"Sir,—In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant, I can only state, that I retain the same opinion which I have already conveyed to you, respecting the inexpediency of any attempt to interfere, by legislative authority, in regulating the rate of wages in the manufacture of cotton goods. "I remain, &c.,

"*Thomas Brodbelt, Esq.* "Wm. Huskisson."

The following public letter appears to have closed the discussion as to the propriety of erecting such an institution at Bolton:—

"*To the Right Honourable William Huskisson, President of the Board of Trade, &c.*

Reply of a manufacturer, removing some of the objections urged.

"Sir,—A correspondence having lately passed between yourself and Mr. Thomas Brodbelt, secretary to a committee of manufacturers in this town, relative to the establishment of a legal minimum for the wages of weaving (which correspondence has been closed by your deciding against the measure sought to be obtained), I beg leave thus publicly to address you, with a view to answer the objections contained in your first letter, by which you have been led, in my judgment, to an unfortunate and premature decision. The whole difficulty, as stated in the letter alluded to, consists in the effect the power-loom must have to bring down the price of hand-loom weaving to its own level; that if the price of hand-loom weaving is protected, such protection will force capital out of that branch of the trade, on account of the inability of the manufacturer to compete with cloth wrought by machinery, and it will thus diminish the number of employers; and if to cure this evil a similar restraint is laid on the power-loom, such a measure would place the trade altogether in the hands of foreigners. If, therefore, we admit the free exercise of the power-loom, we then meet the difficulty in its fullest extent. In exhibiting this view of the case, I suspect, Sir, that you labour under a mistake, which is scarcely avoidable to any one not practically acquainted with the cotton manufacture; namely, that the power-loom can produce every description of cloth; but this is very far from being the fact. There is a large portion which can at present only be produced by the hand-loom; and to this portion I entertain, in common, I believe, with a large majority of manufacturers, a strong persuasion that the measure sought by us will apply with a beneficial effect. Although you cannot be expected to know the details of manufacture, you will, Sir, be able sufficiently to understand the mass of cloth which is excluded from a competition with machinery, by being informed that the different fabrics commonly wrought are from a 36 to a 90 reed; and that the power-loom is at present very little, if at all, employed above a 50 reed, and that in plain cloth only; leaving the whole of the higher reeds, and the fancy part of every reed, to be produced by hand-loom. Undoubtedly the power-loom, though confined to the stronger fabrics, has had the effect of throwing a greater number of hands on the finer qualities, but then the distinction which exists between the description of cloth which is produced by power and that which is wrought by hand, brings the competition of the latter wholly among themselves; and against the injurious influence of such a competition a price established by law would form a proper and sufficient barrier; and if it should not wholly cure the evil, we do think it would greatly reduce its magnitude by giving something like a competency of wages to a large portion of weavers, *whereby a diminished number would be left to enter on a competition with machinery.* The manufacturers at large appear to be of opinion that there is room for a considerable advance in the price of the wages of that species of cloth which at present is exclusively produced by the hand-loom, without injuring our foreign trade; and it is especially with a view to the preservation of our ascendency in foreign markets that we propose the plan of fixing the prices by a majority of manufacturers, and to be variable, if circumstances should require it. We cannot, indeed, think that any circumstances can require or justify a permanent rate of wages, below what is necessary for the subsistence of the workman; because, when a manufacturer will not supply the labourer with food, it cannot long continue, and if such were the condition on which we should have to maintain our foreign market, it must ultimately be surrendered to those who can contrive to make it furnish the workman with the necessaries of life. Regarding it, therefore, as essential to the preservation of the trade that the labourer should be able to live by his labour, we are most earnestly desirous that a stop should be put to the fatal practice of reducing wages; a practice which our experience satisfies us has not its foundation in necessity, but is wholly produced by the greedy avarice of comparatively a very few manufacturers, and those mostly of inferior consideration, but who, owing to the helplessness of the weaver, have power to do mischief to an amount which may be justly regarded as producing a national calamity. If, then, Sir, the influence of the measure on our foreign trade constitute in your mind the hazard and the danger to which you allude (but which you do not specify), I submit to your consideration whether that danger is to be avoided by suffering the trade to take a course which, left unchecked, can scarcely terminate in anything short of its annihilation. For my own part, Sir, I am at a loss to imagine any danger to arise from the measure that can fairly be placed in comparison with the evil which we propose to remedy: and guarded, as it would be, by the interest of the parties in whom the regulating power would be, I really cannot imagine any hazard in making the experiment. Two ends, at least, would be gained by it: it would satisfy the sufferers, and prove, by the test of experience, whether legislation can remedy such

Power-looms may take their course unrestricted, and yet such a Board would be useful to the hand-loom weaving which is beyond its operation, by improving wages, though it might diminish the amount of employment;

which would be a much less evil than the existing system, to the extension and endurance of which there is no visible limit.

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an evil or not; and thereby set the question for ever at rest. If the evil is left to work out its own cure, it is impossible to say to what an unhappy extent it may go, or how long may be its duration, because the necessitous condition of the weavers has a necessary tendency both to aggravate the calamity, and to prolong its continuance; for the utter insufficiency of thei wages compels them, in a struggle for existence, to do double work, and the like necessity also compels them to bring up their families to the same employment, in order to avail themselves of their earliest services, and because they are unable to give them any other trade. Such superfluous labour will, of course, be ultimately checked both by the limit of natural strength, worn down by exhaustion, and by the limit of demand; *but while employment is thus eagerly sought on any terms, it draws capital to its assistance that would not otherwise be so employed,* and sales will be forced on the public by the temptation of cheapness, until the trade is so completely overdone as to be brought to a stand. The period necessary to accomplish such a process, and produce a reaction, if a reaction should follow such a state of suffocation, it is not easy to calculate; but it is sufficiently obvious that such a remedy will be at the expense of intolerable suffering; that it will involve almost the destruction of the weaving population, and greatly injure many collateral interests, more immediately or remotely dependant on the well-being of this class of labourers. Most willingly, Sir, would we give you credit for your professions of deep concern at the miserable condition of the unhappy sufferers; but you must permit me to express my regret and surprise that, under such a feeling, you could so easily dispose of the urgent application made to you, and more especially that you should exhibit such a symptom of impatience and displeasure by the offensive brevity of your closing reply; a conduct which must appear to every one little in unison with those professions, from which it might have been at least expected that only a second expostulation would have met with a less repulsive treatment, however decidedly you might have been disposed to put a negative on the application. The perseverance of the writer rather called for your commendation than for an indirect rebuke. I know nothing, Sir, that is now more incumbent on the attention of a statesman, or more worthy of his ambition, than the attempt to make the growing improvements of the age compatible with the interests of the labouring classes; and he who can devise the means to effect an object so desirable, will render an important service to them in particular, and to the community at large; nor can I conceive that apprehended and indefinite hazards ought to stand in the way of an experiment that is called for by a most pressing and grievous calamity, and which appears to be dictated by prudence, and guarded by all possible caution. I rely on your candour for the effect of any observations contained in this letter opposed to the opinion you have already expressed on the question, and on your magnanimity, that any expressions of censure shall not produce in your mind any hostile feeling to the plan or object desired.

"I have, &c.,
"A MANUFACTURER."

"*Bolton, Sept. 14th,* 1826.

Mr. Huskisson's objections not conclusive.

Were I at liberty to close this question by appealing to authority, I should assuredly rest satisfied with quoting that of Mr. Huskisson. But I shall not discharge my duties to the Board unless I adduce whatever further materials for conclusive judgment I may have been able to collect; since a great part of the objections of Mr. Huskisson are met by the full acknowledgment, on the part of the advocates of the proposed boards, that the trade of weaving *by hand in England* would probably be narrowed by their adoption, which would permit that the price of the manufactured article should be reduced by mechanical improvements, but not by depressing the wages of the labourer; while they maintain that such narrowing would be an evil not comparatively to be mentioned with the perpetuation of a state of depression. Mr. Huskisson's objections are thus reduced to his persuasion that the plan "could not be effectually enforced by legislative interference;" and that it would be "a vain and hazardous attempt to interpose the authority of law between the labourer and his employer." In other words, that it would be impossible to enforce a common contract on individuals; and, were it possible, it would be dangerous: objections, the validity of which, in a subject of this interest to a large body of the poorer classes, requires to be demonstrated.

Illustration of the trade constitution to which the adoption of the proposed measures would tend, afforded by an agreement forming a voluntary association of master cotton-spinners.

As a model of the institutions to which such proposals as those of the Bolton masters tend, and a further evidence of the inclination of manufacturing communities, comprising large bodies of low-skilled artizans, to the voluntary erection of them, I may quote one more piece of evidence, after premising that it is, in fact, in the case of such low-skilled and aggregated populations alone that they are applicable; for all in superior crafts must be successively paid higher according to their superior skill, determined by competition; while among unskilled labourers dispersed with their masters, the immediate moral relations supersede all combination. This evidence is, a trade constitution of the Oldham cotton spinners, communicated to me by R. M. Muggeridge, Esq., one of your assistant commissioners; and that precisely the same principles therein embodied are in tacit operation in other extensive districts of the cotton manufacture, though this particular agreement has probably been long abandoned, I have irrefragable testimony.

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Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

"Agreement for Forming the Cotton Masters' Association at Oldham.

"ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT entered into this day of , 1834, between the Undersigned Persons, being Proprietors and Occupiers of Cotton Mills and Manufactories within the Town and Neighbourhood of Oldham, in the County of Lancaster.

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"Whereas disputes are continually arising between the undersigned proprietors and occupiers of cotton mills and manufactories in the town and neighbourhood of Oldham aforesaid, and the operatives employed by them in their respective mills and manufactories, to the great injury of both parties and the stoppage of trade and manufacture. And in order to protect the said masters against the unjust demands of their operatives, and, at the same time, to provide for a just remuneration to the operatives for their labour, the said masters, proprietors, and occupiers as aforesaid, have agreed to form themselves into a society or association. Now, therefore, the undersigned proprietors and occupiers of cotton mills and manufactories in the town and neighbourhood of Oldham aforesaid, do hereby for themselves respectively, and their several and respective partner and partners, mutually agree with each other that they will form themselves into an association, to be called 'The Cotton Masters' Association,' for the purposes hereinafter mentioned, and that all the members of such association shall and will conduct their business and manufactories, subject to the rules and regulations hereinafter also mentioned (that is to say); That the objects of the Association shall be the mutual protection of its members from unjust aggressions and demands on the part of the operatives employed by them respectively, and also, on the other hand, the protection of such operatives by the establishment of an uniformity of adequate wages to be paid to them. That, in accordance with the foregoing rule, the association shall, from time to time, fix upon scales of wages for the principal branches of the manufacture which shall be written in a book kept for that purpose, and be signed in such book by each member of the association, and each member of the association shall and will pay the prices so fixed, and not less, while the same be in force, except in the case of his adopting any improvements in the machinery or otherwise, when he shall be at liberty to vary such prices under the provisions in that behalf hereinafter contained. That the members of the association shall refuse employment in their respective establishments to every person above the age of eighteen years, who shall not produce a certificate of good character from his or her last employer.

Combination of masters to pay by a minimum list of piece-work wages.

"That support to each member, who shall be deemed entitled to the protection of the association against any strike or turn-out of his workpeople, shall be given by a general stoppage and cessation of working the mills and manufactories of the several other members of the association, until the workpeople so turning out against such member, or such of them as the association shall require, shall return to their employment (such general stoppage to take place after the expiration of 14 days, notice to be given by each member to his operatives); the object of this association being to prevent those who have improperly discontinued and refused to work from being supported by the contributions of those who shall continue their employment.

Turn-outs against a single master to be broken down by a general stoppage of the mills.

"That the association will not give its support to any member in case of any dispute between him and his workpeople, where such member shall not pay the prices from time to time agreed upon by the association; and that, in case of any dispute with reference to any branch of work not expressly provided for, the same shall be referred to the committee for the time being of the association, who shall report thereon to a general meeting to be summoned for that purpose.

Disputed prices to be referred to a committee.

"That the association, not being desirous of checking improvements in machinery, or in the mode of conducting business, will allow every member to adopt such improvements, and to vary in such case the lists of prices: provided it shall appear to the association that the improvement is such as to warrant a variation, but the association will not render its support to compel the workpeople to accept the prices so altered.

Improvements in machinery and system of business to claim a lower rate of wages, on the approbation of the association.

"That every member of the association shall furnish the secretary with an account of the number of mule and throstle spindles and looms worked by him, and that each member shall pay a subscription towards the expenses of the association, to be calculated, as hereinafter is mentioned, upon the number of spindles and looms actually worked by him at the time of making any call, giving notice to the secretary from time to time of any increase or diminution at the time of paying such call.

Payments towards the support of the association.

"That the business of the association shall be conducted at general meetings, to be held quarterly, on the last Wednesday in January, the last Wednesday in April, the last Wednesday in July, and the last Wednesday in October in every year. But special general meetings may at any time be called on the requisition in writing to the secretary by any five members of the association, or by direction of the committee appointed as hereinafter mentioned; and notice of every general meeting, and the time and place of holding the same, shall be sent by the secretary to every member of the association three days at the least before the time fixed for holding it; and if such general meeting shall be special, the object for which it shall be called shall be specified in the notice, and whenever it shall be intended to take into consideration at any general meeting any alteration of the rules and regulations of the association, or of the lists of prices, the proposed alterations shall be specified in the notice.

Mode of transacting business.

"That the general meetings of the association shall have power to alter the rules and regulations of the association and the lists of prices which shall from time to time be agreed upon. But no such alterations shall be made unless carried by a majority of two-thirds of the votes of the members present at the meeting, taken in the manner hereinafter described; and no alterations shall be acted upon until the expiration of three calendar months next, after the general meeting at which the same shall have been decided upon.

Laws and lists to be made at quarterly meetings.

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Admission of members.

Value of votes according to spindles.

Accounts.

Rates.

Committee.

Executive functions of the committee.

New members.

Withdrawals.

Power of expulsion.

Ratification of mutual agreements.

"That all proprietors or occupiers of cotton mills and manufactories in the town and neighbourhood of Oldham aforesaid, who shall sign this agreement and the list of prices on or before the day of next, shall become members of the association, and, after that, all new members shall be elected at the quarterly general meeting by the members of the association by ballot, and each member or firm shall be entitled to one vote only on such ballot.

"That on all other questions to be decided at general meetings, each member or firm shall be entitled to vote according to the amount which he or it shall have contributed towards the last rate which shall have been contributed by the members of the association towards the support thereof; but no member or firm, which shall not have paid all calls which shall have been previously made and become due, shall be entitled to vote at any general meeting.

"That the accounts of the association shall be made up quarterly to the day on which each quarterly meeting shall be holden, and at those meetings all accounts shall be paid and settled, and calls made, if necessary, for preserving a surplus fund not exceeding two rates but calls may from time to time be made at special general meetings when necessary, so that the surplus fund shall never exceed the amount aforesaid, and fresh calls shall forthwith be made whenever the surplus fund shall be reduced to a sum not exceeding half a rate.

"That the sum of 5*s*. for every 1000 mule-spindles, 5*s*. for every 500 throstle-spindles, and 5*s*. for every 20 looms, shall be deemed a rate, and that each call shall be a multiple or proportion of such rate.

"That at the quarterly general meeting, which shall be held on the last Wednesday in January in every year, a committee shall be elected consisting of 12 members of the association.

"That such committee, shall have power to take into consideration all disputes; and when any shall arise, the secretary shall summon a committee-meeting upon being applied to for that purpose, and notice of the time, place, and object of every such committee-meeting shall be sent to every member of the association, three days at the least before the time fixed for holding the same, in order that every member may have an apportunity of attending to give any information he may think proper; and if the committee shall decide that the case is one which calls for the interference of the association, they shall immediately direct the secretary to call a general meeting upon it.

"That each new member shall pay a double rate on entrance, in addition to the call which may be made at the meeting at which he is elected, and shall sign this agreement and the list of prices then in force.

"That any member shall be allowed to withdraw from the association on giving three calendar months previous notice in writing, such notice to be given at one of the quarterly general meetings, at any time before the adjournment thereof; but the member so withdrawing shall pay any call which may be made at the quarterly general meeting at which he shall give notice of withdrawing.

"That the association shall have the power of expelling any of its members at any of the general quarterly meetings before mentioned, at which meeting the votes relative thereto shall be taken by ballot, in like manner as on the admission of a member; and such member shall have three calendar months' notice in writing, of such expulsion, to be given by the secretary immediately after the conclusion of the business, provided that notice of such intended proposition shall be given in the circular calling the meeting.

"That in case of agreement at any general meeting upon the adoption of any notice to the operatives, and such agreement shall be signed by each member then present, the same shall be immediately forwarded by the secretary to the absent members for their signatures. And a general meeting shall be held within seven days after such first-mentioned meeting, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the same is approved of by three-fourths of the votes of the members of the association. And if it shall appear that such agreement is not then approved of and signed by that proportion of the members, the same shall not be binding on those who have signed.

"In Witness, &c."

A slight modification would render such a voluntary association a trade constitution of the nature now sought.

With a committee of men to treat with the masters, and a magisterial sanction to enforce the terms agreed to, not only upon the willing majority of manufacturers who would enter into such an association, but upon the unwilling minority who would not, the articles of the Oldham masters might almost serve as a model for the trade constitution sought by the Bolton hand-loom employers in 1826, and that which would be deemed desirable by those of Coventry at the present time.

Legalized trade corporations would have little success unless national; and, to make them national, a principle of the most destructive nature must be introduced into them.

But the experience of the Spitalfields Act, which gave such a magisterial sanction, showed that it could but very imperfectly attain its object, unless the same list price of labour extended to the whole country, or unless the whole kingdom were divided into manufacturing provinces, each making its own list; for wherever there should be a district exempt from the operations of such an act, there might an underworking population locate itself, as it did in Essex, in Suffolk, &c. But the manufacturers and weavers might not, in every district, come to a mutual agreement; in which case there would in some be no list for the magistrate to enforce; and as their daily industry could not be suspended, the supposed evil of working without a list price for labour would remain unchecked. The magistrate could not *force* the parties to an *agreement*, which is a contradiction in terms; for if either party refused to accede to the terms upon which the magistrate might

wish to negotiate one, there would be no alternative but to allow the trade to take its free course without a list, as at present, or to give power to the magistrate, as under the Spitalfields Act, to fix the list prices himself; a task to the discharge of which he must be manifestly incompetent. Without such power on the part of the magistrate, or some president of the supposed local board, the masters in some districts would be indisposed to make any lists, and they would find hands to work for them without any, just as under-paying masters now do. If there existed such a power, the men would always insist on as high terms as they would think it probable the magisterial authority would sanction; and in whatever form that authority might be administered, the prices of labour would virtually be fixed by it. Without such an appeal, therefore, lists of prices for labour would have no universal existence, as at present, and the trade would seek the place where labour was cheapest. And with such an appeal, an agent of the state interferes between masters and men in the contract, the proper terms of which can be decided only by their mutual interests.

Though a national system of Boards of Trade is unattainable, such incorporation may be claimed for a particular trade and locality, according to circumstances in which it might be placed.

To erect a national system of Boards of Trade for the regulation of wages, then, is obviously impossible; and it remains only to examine as to the effects which would be produced by giving a legalized organization to the trade movements of such places as Coventry separately, with a magisterial power to enforce on the minority the terms agreed to by a certain large majority, so long as such a majority of both masters and men agreed to the adoption of the system, and to payment by list prices under it, alterable on notice from either party, but terminating, together with all the powers for their enforcement, whenever such voluntary agreement no longer existed. This would be giving a legalized and efficient action to principles which are already in daily operation to attain the same end, without ever perfectly accomplishing their object. If these principles are sound, it may be said, they merit a legal recognition and a magisterial agency, in lieu of the "moral" coercion now employed; and if they are not, the conduct of all the parties is highly reprehensible. If the list and the power of enforcing it were equally to terminate, whenever an agreement should no longer exist between the masters and the men, the latter would still be dependent on the good will of a majority of the masters for any list whatever in all ordinary times of trade, with an overstocked labour market; and whenever, under extraordinary excitement, it might be understocked, the existence of a list would then be immaterial to the men, and the masters would be able to continue one only through the habitual preference of the men for the system, which would induce them sometimes to take rather less wages than they might otherwise obtain, as was experienced under the Spitalfields Act. The advantages of such a system to the masters would be, it is supposed, a termination of their mutual fear of underpaying each other in wages, at the same time that they would be almost secure from the bad feelings and disturbances of strikes, and exempt from the imposition of mere journeyman's law, which combinations, as they now exist, often succeed in maintaining. On the other hand, the men, it is maintained, would be protected from many of the struggles and anxieties which now beset them: nor would the public be liable to the encroachments of a monopoly, since access to the rank of employers or employed would be open to the whole world: and the poor's rates would not ultimately be augmented by such a system; for the number of hands would, under it, as under the present, measure itself nearly by the amount of employment. The rates generally would, it is believed, be reduced; for the masters of a given locality, being all called upon to pay the same prices, none would have any object to gain by putting work out at a distance; and a concentration of the hands would gradually take place, which, bringing upon their masters a large share of all the burthens of poor's-rates which they might occasion, would tend to dry up at their source the depressing influences arising from a prevalent habit among the employers of weavers, of keeping, in ordinary times of trade, more hands than they want, in only partial employment, that, on a spur in the trade, they may be able to make full advantage of it. The only circumstances under which it is contemplated that such an institution could be established would be, on petition of the great body of both masters and men, for the benefits of a general Act, which should vest the assigning of territorial limits to such a trade corporation in the Imperial Board of Trade, as also the appointment of the chairman of its council, that there might be security for masters not injuring each other, by refusing to recognise valid mechanical improvements demanding exceptions from the general rate of pay. Branches of trade, distinguished by peculiar machinery or peculiar character, would form separately their own lists, under the chairman's supervision. It is probable that no list for the fancy ribbon-trade would be absolutely necessary;

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for it must be paid higher than plain weaving; and, during the continuance of the Spitalfields Act, the fancy silk trade of London was practically above its operation. The chairman would be conciliator in trade disputes, and magistrate to enforce the observance of the lists. His clerk would be the registrar of all proceedings; and, if mechanical improvements should throw large bodies of men on the community, it would be the chief officer's duty to aid in seeking new vents for their labour, which, in the last resort, might be found in emigration.

But any magisterial interference, however limited, in the enforcement of a common scale of wages appears to be equally unjustifiable in principle, and futile in practice.

The habitual interference of the public at Coventry to enforce upon its manufacturers a uniform rate of wages, which is generally regarded as a most praiseworthy line of conduct, appears popularly to be sufficient ground for introducing in its place this magisterial sanction to the general contract for labour; but such a measure, in the comparatively harmless form which is here described, is open to the fundamental objection that, unless the place adopting it possess extraordinary facilities for the pursuit of a particular trade, the rivalry of others must be thereby aided; and this not only through, perhaps, a slight advance in wages, but through the expulsion to those places of a number of petty masters, by the rigid enforcement of the common list. The manufacturers of Coventry, or any other place, would not voluntarily bring such an Act into force, unless it were contemporaneously adopted throughout the kingdom, which it is vain to expect; and if they alone adopted it, to the unjustifiable injury of the petty masters, it is much to be doubted whether it would be possible to prevent the smuggling of cheap labour into the trade, any more than to enforce the truck act. Whatever, therefore, may be the arrangements under which masters and men may come to terms in a more advanced state of society, I cannot discern any means by which the magistrate can advantageously interpose his authority among its present elements. The moral influences which have heretofore been brought to bear upon the contract for labour in the Coventry trade I shall be glad to see strengthened in behalf of every class of unskilled manufacturing labourers at the base of society, in whose favour they here operate publicly, because of the assemblage of the population in masses. In behalf of the agricultural labourers they ought to operate not less efficiently, though tacitly, and among individuals.

If the moral elements of society were in favour of the magistrate's interference, it would be unnecessary; if against it, unavailing.

Where they are sufficient, they will operate without the aid of the law; where they are insufficient, any law which shall be in advance of them will be violated, and fail of attaining that object which should have been sought by strengthening them. Some of the means by which this may be accomplished, I have already endeavoured to point out; and if ever arrangements at all approaching to those above described shall be recognised by law, it will be on petition to the legislature by both masters and men, when a general moral advancement shall have drawn the ties of society much closer.

Advantages of underpaying masters limited, except in "slack" times.

The underpaying employer does not at present obtain all the advantage which he appears to have. In all occupations he is presently left with the worst hands in every respect; and, as it is commonly the smaller capitalists who pay the lowest wages, this underpaying is, when limited, merely a compromise between inferior capitals and inferior labourers to get an existence beside the larger capitals and the better workmen. Larger capitalists have advantages, whether in machinery, or in merely mercantile arrangements, which secure them from injury by this underpaying, so long as it is confined to the most inferior corner of a trade; but when the facilities presented by an excess of hands, beyond the proportion of inferior and unsteady workmen which is every where to be found, gives such facilities for cheap production to the underpaying masters, that they are enabled to come into the body of the market, the higher-paying employer is compelled to come to some new understanding with his hands. The slack time of trade is therefore best for the little under-paying masters, until they compel the higher-paying also to reduce; and the operation of these principles in the Coventry trade has been fully traced.

Foundation for good feeling between employer and employed.

There is, in fact, in the easier position of the greater capitalists a foundation for good feeling between employer and employed, which there needs only a higher moral culture to produce. The large capitals enable their owners, through the superior economy of their combinations, to give the best wages; and their tendency to raise wages by increasing the productiveness of all labour is unquestionable, whatever other influences may sometimes arise to interrupt the advance. No joint-stock association of labourers can, in fact, give to its members, as wages, nearly so large a sum as the large capitalist; so superior will be the arrangements dictated by his skill, experience, and individual interests. But when the employer and the employed are no longer personally associated, it is requisite that the former should have the feelings of a *gentleman*, and the latter, who is no longer a domestic, those of a *citizen*. Our material civilization has advanced far beyond our moral; the conse-

quent change in the relations of society is familiar to all; in its feelings the alteration has been scarcely less, though less observed; and the insufficiency of its present moral development to cement with Christian peace and charity the high-raised edifice of its industry, is deemed by many to be but too conspicuous.

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Vital importance of sound relations between employers and employed, especially when the latter are the unskilled masses.

Probably there is in the whole kingdom no body of employers superior to the manufacturers of the ancient city of Coventry, in that humane desire to promote the welfare of the men dependent upon them, which characterises every well-trained mind. And it would be gratifying if, in lieu of the prevalent *indifference*, which is the moral void wherein combination hatches its most mistaken plans, we could see among British manufacturers the desire "to preserve to their work-people good and sufficient wages" extended so far in every branch of unskilled industry (from the wages in which those in higher occupations must successively be measured) as to repress the underpaying, by the force of common opinion, within very narrow bounds, which an improved morality and intelligence among the labourers would soon contract still more, by limiting the competition for employment to the partial excess of only a single well-conditioned generation. It is true that some accumulations of capital might thus be prevented; but such further accumulation would have rested on a basis far less secure; *population being left unrestrained in a far greater proportion, and that population in circumstances by no means favourable to internal peace.* An increased intelligence among the men, too, would aid the good-will of the masters in the influence which opinion might exercise; and in all the great branches of more lowly skilled industry at the present moment, there is frequently, in the midst of their mutual suspicion, a tacit combination between bodies of the masters and of the men, unobserved by the public at large or by the magistrate.

Tribunals in the nature of the French *Conseils des Prud'hommes* would tend to a better understanding between masters and men, at the same time that they would form a valuable instrument of police.

To improve this mutual understanding, rather than to countenance mutual suspicions, should be an especial care of the legislature; for it is the keystone of the social edifice, on which every moral element bears; and it is by rendering it much more perfect that we can alone hope to bring the unskilled masses under the ameliorating influence of modern civilization, and secure to all classes the enjoyment of its bounties in peace and contentment. As a nucleus for better feelings than now exist, the institution of courts for the decision of all matters affecting industry, and the relations between master and man, of the same nature as the French *Conseils des Prud'hommes*, would have ultimately the most beneficial effects. They would bring together the masters and men, in a trade corporation, having for its object mutual protection and conciliation, but in no respect interfering with the contract for labour. They would form a moral agent for the cultivation of that mutual confidence between masters and men which in this kingdom is so lamentably defective; and it is mainly as such that I now urge their institution; although merely for purposes of police they are worthy of universal adoption, especially for the protection of property in patterns, which is now exposed to unlimited piracy. To adapt these courts to English manners would be a labour requiring some little time and deliberation; but their nature and their applicability will fully appear from the following abstract of the "*Manuel des Prud'hommes* of M. Leopold, published at Paris, in 1811. It was made by William Felkin, Esq., of Nottingham, with whose permission it is here appended:—

"ABSTRACT OF THE MANUEL DES PRUD'HOMMES.

Purposes of the *Conseils des Prud'hommes*, to settle all disputes in and relating to trades; to repress misconduct; to certify facts to superior courts; to protect property in manufactures; and to give information to Government.

"The Local Councils of Trade (called *Conseils des Prud'hommes*) erected by various decrees and acts of the French Government, issued since 1806, have been established for the following purposes, viz.,

"1. That all disputes or differences arising in manufactories and workshops, between manufacturers, masters, clerks, overlookers, journeymen, or apprentices, regarding any branch of employment whatever, or any agreements or contracts which relate to manufactures or handicraft labour whatever, may be submitted to the judgment and decision of persons of competent knowledge to hear and decide upon them; thereby saving the time, expense, and increased animosity, generally arising from bringing them before the ordinary tribunals; which courts, from the nature of the causes, often found it necessary to obtain the opinion of men conversant with trade before they were finally decided. The proceedings of these courts are simple, expeditious, unexpensive, and guarded by fixed rules against any arbitrary abuse of authority.

"2. To prevent and repress all disorder and insubordination in workshops and manufactories, and all serious misconduct of apprentices towards their masters.

"3. To ascertain and formally state, where necessary, for the guidance of the superior courts, the amount of all neglects, contraventions of agreements, unfaithfulness, and thefts, committed in manufactories and workshops, by persons employed therein.

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"4. To watch over and guard the property employed in manufactures, such as patents, marks, patterns, &c., and to punish those who counterfeit or usurp the same.

"5. To give information to Government, from time to time, of the state of prosperity or decay of each branch of manufacture and commerce.

"The laws regulating these councils divide themselves under the following heads, viz.,

"1. Their composition, mode of nominating and renewing members, formation of committees, and designating the persons officially connected with them.

"2. Their jurisdiction, attributes, and subjects for decision.

"3. Their mode of procedure, and particular legal forms to be used in the course of a process, and giving and enforcing judgment upon it.

"4. The course to be pursued in repressing and punishing disorders and insubordination in factories and work-shops, by journeymen, clerks, or apprentices, and in ascertaining and stating the amount of loss sustained by breaches of agreement, usurping or counterfeiting patents, patterns, designs, &c.

"5. The principles of law and equity, applicable to the questions which these courts are competent to decide, and which are interspersed chiefly through the commercial department of laws in the Code Napoleon.

"1st Head.—*The Situation, Numbers of Members, and Composition of the Council of Prud'Hommes.*

Institution of the Councils and Constitution by representatives of masters and men; the number of the former exceeding that of the latter by one.

"These Councils shall be established upon the recommendation of the Chamber of Commerce of any given place, if the Minister for the Home Department or of Commerce see fit, after receiving an exact account of all the manufactures carried on in that place.

"They shall only be composed of merchant manufacturers, masters of workshops, overlookers, and privileged or licensed workmen.

"No wholesale or retail dealer, if not a manufacturer, or if under thirty years of age, or who has failed in business, can be a Member.

"The number of Members is not fixed, but varies according to the size of the town; and the Members are elected from among the merchant manufacturers of each trade, according to the amount of the trade; and the number elected altogether by the masters, workmen, overlookers, and licensed workmen, is fixed at one less than the number elected by the manufacturers. Members must be elected by an absolute majority of the votes present, and upon an individual scrutiny for each Member.

"The election is by convocation of all the above classes, eight days after public notice, called and presided over by the Prefect. Every one intending to vote must inscribe his name, after showing his privilege patent. Persons who have failed are excluded; or who have not exercised or laboured in the business six years, or who cannot read or write, or who have not returned any materials given out to them to work up. In case of any vote being contested, the Prefect shall decide.

"The President shall choose a Secretary for this election, and two scrutineers, and this not necessarily out of those who are present—he will use his judgment as to those most capable of filling these offices.

Vacancies; place of meeting; election of president, &c.

"One merchant manufacturer, and one from amongst all the other classes together, shall be chosen to fill up vacancies occurring during the year by death, retirement, &c.

"The election being ended, and the members proclaimed, an authenticated statement of the proceedings shall be deposited at the Town Hall. The meeting cannot attend to any other business whatever, but shall be forthwith dissolved.

"The place for holding their sittings shall be furnished at the town's expense.

"The Members take an oath, before the Prefect or Mayor, to fulfil their duties with zeal and integrity.

"They shall proceed to elect their President by a simple majority, who shall be their organ and chief, and take the votes, express the will, and sign all documents in the name of the Council.

"Also they shall elect, by simple majority, a Vice President, to act in the absence of the President.

"The President and the Vice President are chosen from amongst the members who are merchant manufacturers.

"They shall be elected for a year, but always eligible to be re-elected.

Secretary and executive officer.

"Also the members shall elect a Secretary, by simple majority, not necessarily from amongst themselves, but as it is an office of the greatest importance, according to their judgment of the most capable person. The Secretary shall keep a register of the deliberations, acts, and judgments of the council, take care of all the papers deposited with it, make out its warrants and orders, and attend to all those duties which naturally devolve upon this officer. He must be 25 years of age at least, and not related within the third degree to any Member.

"The President shall administer the oath to the Secretary. A clerk may be allowed him, who shall also take oath. The Secretary may be discharged at any time by a vote of two-thirds of all the members of the Council.

"The Council shall have an officer specially appointed for their service, by the magistracy, to carry into execution the acts and judgments of the Council.

Succession; and defrayal of expenses.

"The Council shall be renewed by one member of the merchant manufacturers' class and one of the working class going out each year for the two first years after its formation, if the Council be composed of 5 to 7 members; if 9 members, 2 of each; and if of 10 to 15, 3 of each—but the third and each following year, those shall go out who have been first elected.

The members are always eligible for re-election. All the expenses of the Council shall be paid by the funds of the town in which the sittings are held, and shall be paid after verification by the Mayor. These expenses include pens, ink, paper, salary of Secretary, clerk, boy, carriage, postage, expenses in visiting factories, workshops, &c. &c.

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"Second Head.—*The Jurisdiction and Attributes of the Councils.*

"These councils shall have jurisdiction over all the merchant manufacturers, masters, over-lookers, clerks, journeymen and apprentices, carrying on business or employed in the locality or district in which they are respectively established; and as it regards every matter arising out of or connected with such business or employ, but no other matter whatsoever. Nevertheless, a merchant may lay before these councils any complaint he may have against any manufacturer or master-workman, and *vice versâ*; and they shall investigate it for the purpose of making a statement of facts for the information and guidance of the ordinary tribunals.

Who are subject to the Council's jurisdiction.

"Every person working for a manufacturer in his (the workman's) own dwelling, is within the jurisdiction of the council before which his employer may be citable.

"In 1811, there were 156 trades enumerated as coming under the jurisdiction of the Conseils des Prud'hommes. The primary attribute of these councils was to effect reconciliation—the second to make arbitration; but finally, all disputes arising amongst the classes above named, in reference to their manufacturing operations, were subjected to their decision whatever the sum at issue might be. Subject to appeal if beyond 4*l.* money value.

Subjects usually under its cognizance.

"The following are the matters ordinarily requiring their cognizance, viz., the contravention or breach of general laws or new or revived regulations affecting the factories, workshops, or masters or work-people employed in the manufactories of the empire.

"All deficiencies in lengths, widths, quantity, size, weight, preparation, quality, or solidity of any work performed, or goods made of cotton, silk, thread, wool, hair, leather, skin, gold, silver, brass, tin, lead, iron, earth, wood, and generally of all materials, animal, vegetable, and mineral, prepared in shops, factories, forges or laboratories.

Frauds, defects, injuries to goods, breaches of trust, defective work, breaches of contract, disputes as to wages, &c.

"All defects in work done for an employer in any of the above trades or matters whatsoever.

"All complaints of want of solidity and quality in bleaching, dyeing, or printing, arising from not having used the necessary ingredients for production of good colour, or fine impression.

"All injuries of goods by bleachers, dyers, &c., arising from the use of corrosive or otherwise destructive matters.

"All questions of responsibility of clerks, under-masters, over-lookers, &c., arising from the operations of the factory or workshop, relative to making goods, purchase of materials, using these materials, or distributing them to work-people; making-up or preparing work, payments to work-people, keeping accounts, the finish and expedition of goods to market; and disputes as to wages, appointments, &c., between masters, manufacturers, and their under-masters, over-lookers, and clerks.

"All questions as to bad preparation of materials, defective work, delay or refusal to work or deliver up work when finished, on the part of work-people, advances of wages or of materials to them by the manufacturers; the prices of labour of work-people; and all engagements entered into between the masters and their work-people whatsoever.

"These courts shall estimate all work begun, or abandoned, or finished, if disputed by manufacturers or work-people, whether there may have been any or no agreement as to the price to be paid for the labour to be put into them.

"All questions as to work destroyed or injured, while in the hands of work-people, whether by accident, violence, or other cause, where no fault is attributed to the workman.

"As to the quantity and quality of raw materials, looms, harness, fittings, tools or instruments, delivered to work-people, either to be used at their residence or in the shop or factory of the employer; as to the refusal to pay the wages, in whole or in part, by masters, over-lookers, or clerks; or refusal to receive work from work-people by the masters or their clerks or agents.

"As to the fulfilment or otherwise of indentures of apprenticeship. And, finally, as to all damages and loss resulting from disobeying the laws or contravening the trade regulations, or not executing agreements amongst the above-named parties; or from any inferiority, defects, delays, or loss of goods on the part of any of these classes, arising from the neglect or misconduct of another.

Breaches of indentures, insubordination, &c.

"Every complaint of misdemeanour, act of insubordination, or want of obedience on the part of workmen or apprentices towards their masters in their business, workshops, or factories, shall be heard before the Councils of Prud'hommes; if they were of such a nature as by the old law might have been punishable by five days imprisonment or less, or ten shillings fine or less, then the council may punish the offender by three days (of twenty-four hours each) imprisonment or less. If the matter prove to be more serious, then they shall send the accused before the ordinary criminal court, and, if necessary, place him in custody of an officer.

"These councils shall not interfere with any matter of ordinary general police affecting work-people or factories, this being the duty of the mayor exclusively.

"The judgment of these councils is without appeal as to imprisonment, and shall be executed by the ordinary police.

"The Councils des Prud'hommes cannot take cognizance of the following matters with a view to giving any decision upon them; but they are authorized to do so with a view to drawing up a statement of the facts, and preserving the things necessary to be offered in evidence before the competent courts, from abstraction, destruction, or alteration,—viz.

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To report to higher courts on combinations, fraudulent practices, frauds, outrages, breaches of confidence, thefts, &c.

"Any combination of masters tending unjustly to lower wages; against which crime the law pronounces imprisonment of from six days to a month, and a fine of from 8*l.* to 120*l.*

"Any combination amongst those who hold stocks of goods, with the intent of not selling below a certain price; or any fraudulent practices, having for their object to raise or lower the prices of merchandise above or below the height at which they would be fixed by the natural and free competition of commerce; against which the law pronounces the penalty of from one month to a year's imprisonment, and a fine of from 20*l.* to 400*l.*

"Any deceit or fraud in the title under which any merchandise whatsoever may be sold; be it by false weight, false measure, or false quantity—against which the penalty is three months to a year's imprisonment, and a fine not exceeding a quarter of the sum restored, nor less than 2*l.*

"Any combination of work-people, having for its object to stop work altogether in any factory or shop, or to hinder from going in or continuing at work at certain hours, or to suspend or hinder labour, or to raise its price—against which the law decrees from a month to a year's imprisonment.

"Any outrage, violence, menaces, or injuries, on the part of masters or workmen towards each other—against which imprisonment is decreed by the criminal law, proportioned to the offence.

"The communication by masters, workmen, overlookers, clerks, or apprentices, of any secrets in the manufacture in which they may be employed, to any foreigner or Frenchman residing abroad, against which the law declares solitary imprisonment, and a fine of from 200*l.* to 800*l.*—or to any Frenchman living in France, against which there is the penalty of three months to two year's imprisonment, and a fine of 10*s.* to 8*l.*

"The pillaging or injuring goods in shops, factories, &c., by combinations or riotous assemblies of work-people—the penalty for which is hard labour, and a fine of 8*l.* to 200*l.*

"Voluntary injury done to merchandise or materials, by work-people or other persons employed in trade, applying corrosive liquor or other means—or the abstraction of any materials from the factory, shop, or place of employ, incurring for the former, imprisonment of from two to five years, and a fine not exceeding the quarter of the damage, nor less than 10*s.*; and for the second, imprisonment of from two months to two years, and a fine not exceeding the fourth of the sum restored, nor less than 20*l.*

"And finally, Thefts committed in factories, shops, forges, laboratories, &c., by work-people and others employed—against which the law pronounces sentence of solitary confinement.—Upon a verbal or written request to that effect, or in cases where it is necessary, in order to ascertain the facts connected with a complaint, or to secure things necessary in evidence, or to seize objects illegally possessed, the council shall have power to send two at least, of their number, one of whom must be a merchant manufacturer, the other an overlooker or workman, accompanied by a public officer, to visit and search the premises of manufacturers, overlookers, and work-people; and in case of emergency, may take such measures as may appear necessary to secure the course of justice and the conviction of offenders, in all cases which have reference to manufactures.

"Third Head.—*Proceedings of the Prud'hommes.*

Committee of conciliation.

"The council shall appoint a private committee composed of two members, the one a merchant manufacturer, the other a master workman, overlooker, or privileged workman. These two shall hold a sitting every second day, where the council is of 5 to 7, and every day where the council is of 9 to 15 members, from eleven o'clock until one. Their function is to reconcile parties applying to them; if unsuccessful, they shall send them to the general sitting, which shall be held once a-week at least, and shall be composed of at least two-thirds of the members of the council. At this sitting, cognizance shall be taken of all matters which shall not have been settled by way of reconciliation or agreement before the private committee; and the decisions of the council shall be final, provided they be not to a greater amount than 4*l.* in any one case; all decisions affecting larger sums may be appealed from to the tribunal of commerce.* All the decisions of the council shall be by the votes of a simple majority of the members present.

System of protecting patterns.

"The council is required to take cognizance of complaints of infractions of patent rights, of marks or stamps upon goods, and of designs or patterns.

"Patents being registered in the Bulletin des Lois, are sufficiently public without being registered by the secretaries of these councils; the councils have therefore only to ascertain the fact, and amount of damage by the infringement, and state it for the use of the ordinary tribunals.

"Every manufacturer has a right to mark or stamp his goods, so as to distinguish them from all others; to counterfeit this mark, subjects the person doing so to pay the damage he has caused, and to the penalty imposed upon the forgery of the hand-writing of a private individual.

"A mark shall be considered forged, when there are these words, *made by* . . . . . though followed by the name of another manufacturer, or of another place. But it is previously necessary that this mark be one totally distinct from any other; also that it be placed in the hands of the tribunal of commerce, and of the secretary of the Council of Prud'hommes, sitting in the town where the manufacture is carried on; in each case it is preserved for re-

* A court held in almost every department or county at which persons expert in commercial and manufacturing affairs preside, appointed of course by the Government.—In case there is not a Tribunal of Commerce, the appeal must be to the civil tribunals.

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ference, and a stamped copy of the entry and description is handed to the party owning the mark, to enable him to proceed against counterfeits.—5*s.* shall be paid for the entry, to discharge the expense of keeping the copies of these marks always safe and accessible, and 2*s.* 6*d.* for the delivery of the stamped copy of the entry.

"The Council of Prud'hommes are authorised to judge of the sufficiency and distinctiveness of marks, and to arbitrate regarding them; and in case of counterfeits, to punish for the first offence with a fine of 12*l.*, and for the second 24*l.* and imprisonment for six months. —The articles counterfeited shall be confiscated to the use of the owner of the mark, and he shall also pay damages and interest, and the expense of printing and advertising the judgment against himself.—An appeal, with or without sureties, according to the case, is allowed to the Tribunal of Commerce.

"Any pattern or design invented by a manufacturer is his property: to counterfeit which incurs a penalty of 4*l.* to 80*l.*, confiscation of the goods, and indemnity to the injured party.

A manufacturer, desiring to secure a pattern or design, must put it folded in an envelope, sealed with his seal, into the hands of the secretary of the Council of Prud'hommes, who will seal it with the seal of the council also. The packet will be registered, and certificate, with number and date thereof, given to the party. In case of dispute, the council shall break the seals of the packets in question, and give a certificate of priority of date. When a pattern is brought to the council, the owner shall state whether he desires to secure it for one, three, or five years, or in perpetuity, of which a note shall be made. If for a limited period, at the expiration thereof, the sample shall be sent to the nearest collection of objects connected with arts and manufactures. The owner of the pattern shall pay 9*d.*, 2*s.* 6*d.*, 4*s.*, or 8*s.* for the deposit, according as he may wish to have the use of the pattern, exclusively for one, three, or five years, or in perpetuity.

"The Council of Prud'hommes judge in matters of counterfeiting patterns as before described, in reference to marks; and an appeal may be had to the Tribunals of Commerce.

Surveillance of factories, and of the condition of the workpeople.

"The Prud'hommes are charged with the duty of visiting, once or twice a year, the workshops and factories in which any kind of goods are made, to inspect and take an exact account of all the machines at work, and the workpeople employed in them; to obtain all the information which may be useful in manufactures and commerce; to register and make out a statement of the whole, and send it through the chambers of commerce to the government. As the sole object of these visits is to ascertain the amount of machinery, and of the number and state of the work-people employed, no information shall be required of any owner of such shop or factory as to any new or secret processes, or any sight of his books, and two days' notice of the intended visit shall be given to him.—In case of need, the ordinary police shall facilitate the inspection.

"Should any party, appearing before the private or general meeting of the council, indulge in the repetition of insulting or abusive language, after having been seriously admonished, such offender may be fined, or imprisoned not more than three days, and the judgment publicly notified at his expense.

Punishments for abusive language, and for contempt of the court.

"If a party who is cited refuse to appear before the private committee of the council for reconciliation, he shall be cited to appear before the next general meeting of the council, when the affair shall be decided in an open sitting.—Should he not then appear, judgment shall pass against him by default, unless reasonable cause of absence be shown, when he may be represented by a relative or friend, if a manufacturer or merchant, and authorized with a procuration given for the occasion. The defence may be read, but a lawyer may not be employed.

"When the parties have been heard on each side, and all the proofs have been received which may be offered, a judgment agreed to by the majority of two-thirds of the members of the council shall be forthwith given.—If judgment have been given by default, on its being notified to the defendant, he may, within three days, signify his opposition to it, and obtain its suspension until he has appeared at the next general sitting of the council, when it shall be definitely decided.

"Should any written document be produced, of which the hand-writing or signature is denied or alleged to be forged, the proceedings in the cause shall be suspended, and the question of forgery shall be sent for decision to the proper court.

Judgment and appeals; challenge of members of the council.

"The members of this council are rendered incapable of acting in a cause, when they have a personal interest in the subject-matter for decision; or if related to either of the parties within the degree of cousin-german inclusively; or if within the year preceding the time of accusation, they have been concerned in a criminal process against either of the parties, or his partner, or any of his relations in the direct line; or if a civil process exist between them and one of the parties or his partner; or if they have given written advice in the affair.

"Either party challenging a Prud'homme, shall do it in writing, stating his reasons, and a copy shall be sent immediately to the member in question. In two days the member shall signify in writing upon the challenge, whether he acquiesces or not; and if the latter, what is his reply to the reasons assigned. In the latter case, the papers shall be sent to the Chamber of Commerce, when the challenge shall be decided within eight days, without calling the parties before them.

Preliminary inquiries made on the spot by agents.

"The council has power to order preliminary inquiries, to visit personally the places where the subject in dispute may exist, accompanied by their secretary, who shall report the result; to cite and compel the attendance of witnesses under a penalty of 4*l.* and damages and expenses, and to administer an oath to such witnesses as to their relationship or service to the parties, &c. Witnesses are heard separately, and, if the council see fit, in the absence of the parties. If they cannot sign their deposition, a note of that fact must be made upon it. The president may interrogate the witnesses respecting their deposition. In cases subject of

appeal, the evidence shall be written down and signed by the witnesses, the president, and the secretary. In cases where there is no appeal the judgment shall contain the evidence on which it rests, the names of the members present, and shall be signed by the president or vice-president, and countersigned by the secretary. In either case the judgment shall not be postponed beyond the next sitting. The notification of the judgment must be made within twenty-four hours of its being signed, and notice of appeal lodged within three weeks. The minutes of the judgment made by the secretary upon stamped paper, shall be signed by all the members present, and countersigned by him.

Expenses; execution of judgment.

"The expenses shall fall, in every case, upon the party against whom judgment is given.

"The judgment given shall be executed within twenty-four hours of its being signified by the proper officer and the party.

"The judgments up to the amount of 12*l.* shall be executed provisionally (if appealed against,) without requiring bond from the successful party; beyond that sum they may be executed provisionally on his giving bond to abide the issue of the appeal.

"A small tax is laid on the party for citation, for judgment, and for copies of the proceedings; and the witnesses may be paid according to the judgment of the court.

Modes of proceeding in each class of cases.

"In case of insubordination in a factory or work-shop, the council may appoint one of its members to visit the place, and take an account of the facts, and cite the culpable parties to appear before the court immediately.

"In case of a disobedient apprentice, the statement of the master being supported by the evidence of two witnesses, the president may order the attendance of the apprentice, and, if necessary, may commit him to prison. The expenses shall fall upon his relatives.

"In case of counterfeiting marks, or usurping patterns, or infringing patents, the injured party may require the council to order the seizure of the counterfeit goods, or infringing machines, and may require the attendance of one of the members at the seizure. But if an unjust and unfounded seizure be made, the party shall obtain damages proportionate to the trouble and loss which he may have sustained.

"The legal forms under the *4th head* we entirely omit as unnecessary to be given here.

Obedience to legal principles.

"Under the *5th head*, Mr. Leopold has cited, from the Code Napoleon, the commercial principles of equity and jurisprudence, which have been embodied in the law of France, and which must form the basis of the decisions of the Conseils des Prud'hommes. These are divided under the heads of agreements, obligations, damage sustained, stipulations, damages caused, unforeseen and unavoidable events, contracts and payments for labour, and the duties and responsibilities of overlookers, clerks, work-people and apprentices.

"Although these general principles necessarily regulate more or less the transactions of all commercial communities, yet as their application must be greatly modified by the peculiar laws and usages of each country, it is not necessary to give a translation of them here.

Number, constitution, and duties of Chambers of Commerce in France.

"Chambers of Commerce are established in about thirty cities in France; and as they have been referred to in the preceding analysis, and form a material step in French commercial arrangements, we shall also give an abstract of the laws by which they are authorised.

"Twenty-two cities are named in the original law, as those in which they shall be established.

"They shall be composed of fifteen merchants or dealers, where the population of the place exceeds 50,000 souls, and of nine, where the population is below that amount. The prefect of the department, or the mayor where there is no prefecture, shall be a member by virtue of office, and preside at all the meetings of the Chamber. Each member must have actually traded ten years. The duties of these Chambers are to offer their views upon the means of increasing the prosperity of commerce for the consideration of government, and instruct it as to what may be the causes of its decline, and point out the resources available for its improvement. Also to superintend the execution of public works connected with commerce, such as harbours, river or canal navigation, and the enforcing laws against smuggling. They shall correspond directly with the Minister of Commerce or the Interior. The members shall be elected by ballot, upon obtaining an absolute majority of the votes present, in a meeting convoked by the prefect or mayor, or from forty to sixty of the principal merchants and traders of the place. A third shall go out every year, but be eligible for re-election. Every nomination must be approved by the minister of commerce or the interior. Their expenses shall be audited and paid by the government.

Council General of Commerce in Paris.

"There shall be a council general of commerce in Paris, acting under the eye of the minister.—Each Chamber of Commerce shall present two names, and out of the whole number the government shall name fifteen, who shall meet as the general council once or twice each year in Paris, three to be a quorum. Each member must be actually engaged in commerce in the city by which he is deputed, and be present at the nomination.

Deliberative chambers of manufacturers, arts, and trades.

"In addition to the council general, the Chambers of Commerce, and the Councils of Prud'hommes, about one hundred and sixty Chambres Consultatives de Manufactures, Fabriques, Arts et Metiers (Consulting Chambers respecting manufactures, labour, arts, and machines), have been instituted by law, each composed of six members, elected from amongst the manufacturers, masters, or superintendants of work-shops or factories, who have been thus engaged five years at least; and whose only duty it is, to inform government through the prefecture of what they consider necessary to the improvement of manufactures, machinery, and the situation of those engaged in commercial industry.—Their mode of election and renewal, &c. exactly resembles that of the Conseil des Prud'hommes."

VI.—PECUNIARY AND PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THE RIBBON WEAVERS.

I. Earnings of Individual Hands, and of Families.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Regulations—Deductions.

The following handbill describes with exactness the regulations under which work is given out and taken in at the warehouses generally, as settled soon after the commencement of the journeywork system, and as they still remain.—

Rules and Regulations to every Undertaker and Journeyhand Weaver that works for this Warehouse.

Regulations as to giving out and taking in Work.

"1st. That for all silk delivered to undertakers they shall be wholly accountable; and when manufactured into ribbons, the waste allowed is one ounce in every twenty ounces; for any deficiency over the said one ounce in twenty they shall be accountable, and a deduction shall be made at the time of bringing in the work to the full amount of the deficiency.

"2nd. That for all silk delivered to any journeyhand weaver to manufacture into ribbons, if delivered unwound, the same waste allowed, viz., one ounce in twenty. If the warp is delivered wound and warped, and the shute to wind, one ounce in twenty is the waste allowed on the weight of the shute. If warp and shute is wound and warped, one quarter of an ounce in twenty is the waste then allowed, any deficiency above these allowances for waste shall be made good at the time of bringing in the work.

"3rd. That if any undertaker or journeyhand weaver manufacture up silk in an unsaleable or unworkmanlike manner, he shall submit to take the work back and pay the amount of the value of the silk so spoiled at the time.

"4th. That all journeyhand weavers are expected to take the same care in the manufacturing of the articles delivered to them upon the journeywork system as the undertaker, they having the same power and care upon their hands.

"This notice informs them that it is not the practice of this warehouse to go personally or by deputy to the journeyhand weaver to see in what manner he is executing his work; but he is expected to make his work in a good and workmanlike manner, or submit to an abatement in proportion to the defects of the work, at the time of bringing it into the warehouse.

"These rules and regulations to take effect and be in full force on or after *Saturday*, December 16th, 1820."

"Docking." Alleged hardships inflicted by deductions from wages under this name.

"The best workmen are sometimes liable to deductions when they have to manage so delicate an article as silk; but this is the means which the master employs to secure the goodness of his work, and its freedom from damage by dust, smoke, heat, &c. Deduction is called by the weavers '*docking*,' and they consider it is sometimes cruelly practised upon them." *

"The weight of silk will often unavoidably decline in the weaver's hands through the system of dyeing. The dyer's credit being at stake to make the silk a certain weight, it sometimes contains, besides the material with which it is weighted, some degree of damp, of which the former escapes in particles of dust, while the latter exhales; and the weaver must bear the deficiency."† But the heaviest complaints of *docking* were made by the single-hand weavers in the country against some of the masters in the city. "It is quite arbitrary on the part of the master, and the first notice the weaver receives is information from him that the pieces are imperfect, and that he has therefore deducted 1*s.* or 2*s.* When a ribbon is so inferiorly made that the manufacturer chooses to reject it, he says to the weaver, that he must take upon his own hands the ribbon he has made, on paying him for the materials, in the price of which he charges his profit; and the ribbon is then on the hands of the weaver, who sometimes cannot get the price of the materials for it. Some stoppages have been appealed against at the Mayor's parlour by the weaver, and decided in his favour, though some against him."‡

Sets of Grosses.

The first-hand journeyhand in the engine-trade, and the undertaker in the single-hand trade, receive their work in *sets of grosses*, each gross consisting of two *warps*

* Weavers' Committee. † Ib. ‡ Nuneaton Committee.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

FORMER AND PRESENT EARNINGS AND HOURS.

Length of warps, pieces, cuts, &c.

for each shuttle, and each warp containing respectively two *pieces* of 36 yards each piece.

The ribbons, as the set of warps are woven, are cut out in *pieces* of 36 yards, if they be satin, but in *half-pieces*, of 18 yards, if they be sarcenets or gauzes, excepting only the narrower breadths of the two latter, which are cut out in *pieces* like the satins, when they do not exceed a 6*d.* breadth in sarcenet, or a 12*d.* breadth in gauzes. A set of pieces cut out of the engine-loom, as the warps in it (varying in number with the number of shuttles,) are worked up, is called a *length;* a set of half-pieces, a *half-length ;* and either, according as it is the custom to cut them, a *cut;* while in the single-hand loom, the words *piece* and *length* are identical in their signification, because only one breadth is made at a time.*

Mode of giving out, taking in, and paying for Work.

The manufacturer usually gives out at once as much shute as will serve to work up the whole set of warps. In the single-hand trade, the winding and warping are done by the undertaker, and are paid for in his share of the price of the weaving; but, in the engine-loom, the price of weaving includes neither of these processes, and though the shute is given out unwound, the manufacturer pays separately for the winding of it upon the bobbins, when the last portion of the set of warps is brought in. The winding of the shute, from the bobbins, upon the quills which are inserted in the shuttles, is deemed part of the process of weaving, and is paid for in the price of the weaving. It is called *filling*, and in the single-hand trade is done by each journeyhand weaver for his own loom; but, in the engine-trade, the weaver has it done for him; paying commonly 2*s.* per *length ;* in extreme cases as much as 4*s.*; and frequently 2*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* 9*d.* It is seldom that the weaver can get the shute *winding* done for the price paid him by the master, unless it be done in his own family.† A ticket is commonly given with the work by the master to the weaver, written or printed. It describes the warps and the shute, states their weight, and sometimes contains conditions as to texture (as, how many shoots to the inch; that strict attention shall be paid to the slays; that the shute and warp shall be well cleaned; or that shute, if too coarse, shall be returned); but makes no provision as to time, for which the interests of the workman are supposed to be sufficient guarantee. When a length of pieces, or a half-length, according to the fabric, is completed, which is known by working up to a stain previously made in the warps by the warper, it is cut out, taken to the warehouse, and paid for. Work is given out every day in the week, but generally is taken in only on one, which, for the town weavers, is usually Thursday or Friday, but sometimes Saturday; for the country weavers it is commonly Saturday.‡ The time required to set a loom going, when once the materials are obtained, is not great. The twisting in is not very heavy; and when the pattern or nature of the fabric has not to be changed, the fancy weaver loses no more time than another, unless it be occasionally in gauzes. The delays to which the workmen are subjected in slack times have already been described.§

Construction of the lists of prices for weaving, in reference to amount of labour, and nomenclature in each kind of work.

The lists of prices for weaving take as the test for payment merely the breadth of the ribbon, without any reference to the quality; but this, as regards the plain sarcenets and satins, is a defect far more apparent than real. In fact, it was not alluded to voluntarily by any of the masters whom I examined, who said that they regarded the list prices as minimum prices, *above* which any one might pay extra who wanted work of remarkable fineness; but below which none ought to pay. "In fact," state the Weavers' Committee, "when a master wants an article for a cheap market, it costs the workman as much labour to make that inferior article as though it were superior; indeed, rather than make such goods at the same price, they would make rich articles, so that they were not extremely rich. Generally, when a master wants to get up an article for a cheap market, he uses a thinner warp, and wants a *greater* number of shoots in the inch, to make it a stiff and saleable commodity,—to make it *handle.* Very rich articles and very poor are much the same to the weaver, at least in regard to sarcenets. To satins this would not apply so generally, and to gauzes still less."‖ "Satin gauzes are regulated, by a tacit understanding among the manufacturers, by the list prices for eight-leash satins. Of whatever quality they are made, the price is the same, although to shoot in fine silk requires a much greater amount of labour. There is, therefore, a strong disinclination to take the finest work at the list prices. Unaware of any master who has offered to pay more than the list price for the shooting of

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* Weavers' Committee. † Ib. ‡ For the country weavers it is commonly Saturday.
§ Weavers' Committee. ‖ Ib.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Former and Present Earnings and Hours.

exceedingly fine shute.* It has always been the practice of the trade that the same breadth should be paid the same price; and whatever variations there may be between the prices paid by one master and another, *such master, in his own warehouse, pays the same price for the same breadth of the same description of work, whatever its quality.* The labour required even on gauzes by all the principal houses in the town, is *practically* pretty equal; but there are cases of a very light article got up for cheap sale by some small manufacturers," and these undoubtedly pay less than others, as the Bedworth factory masters do as a class. "Between very fine and very coarse work in satins there may be a day's difference in the course of a week, as to the amount of labour required to produce a given length, of the same breadth, for the same price. *Practically*, the qualities given out are pretty equal."† This evidence was given by plain engine weavers, but must largely apply also to the fancy trade, which was without a list or a committee at the period of my examination. It exhibits the difficulty of *accurately* describing the *proportions* and *quality* of labour in any list of the prices of labour; aggravated in the present instance by the varying power and excellence of the looms, and of the jacquard machinery employed in figure weaving. But both masters and men in the Coventry trade urge that by the old nomenclature, or by an improved one, they have described labour, and they can for the future describe it, with sufficient accuracy for all practical purposes, and even with as much accuracy as any individual master practically seeks within the limits of his own trade.

Difficulty of attaining accuracy in the description of portions and qualities of labour in a list system of payment by the piece.

Asserted accomplishment of the object with sufficient accuracy.

The lists which were framed in 1816 were, it has been seen, little other than an enunciation of very old customary lists of prices, which were the rule of payment at the commencement of the present century, in 1804 or 1805, for instance;‡ and those of 1819, which were, in the main, maintained until 1824, were little other than a re-enactment of them.§ Notwithstanding, therefore, the period of distress ensuing on the cessation of the war, after still higher prices had been paid, there was, down to this period, no decline from the old price of labour paid to the *journeyhands*, who, on the contrary, with improved skill and machinery, and gradually becoming owners of their own looms, as the manufacturers encroached upon the undertakers, must, when in full work, have gradually augmented their money earnings, which had increased, on the restoration of peace, in their *purchasing power*.

No permanent decline in prices of labour from commencement of the century until 1824.

It was stated by Abraham Herbert, Esq., the mayor, that—

"The journeyhands working in the engine-loom for undertakers generally did earn, early in the present century, when in full work, 16*s*. or 18*s*. per week. They seldom worked on a Monday, and it was never expected by the master. They came 'a little out of order' on Tuesday morning. This was their 'dusting day,' and probably they would make half a good day's work. On Wednesday they began to think of Saturday night, and worked well. They had finished their money on Monday. On Thursday they still worked on, with Saturday before them. On Friday, too, and on each of these days they worked until ten at night, when the shop of the undertaker, as it then was, was shut up. They came for the key early in the morning—sometimes very early, but the hours varied. On Saturday they continued their work until six or seven o'clock, and until they had finished they received no pay. Some, employed on narrow goods, would do a length a-week, and others, on broader goods, two-thirds of a length. They had 'tick' from the master (undertaker) on Saturday night, according to the work they had done. There was a constant running account with the master, which was settled on each piece; but the hand was always in debt to him." ‖

Earnings and hours of labour about the commencement of the present century in the engine trade.

Precisely the same habits prevailed, contemporaneously, in the single-hand trade, where they yet have great sway, the highest class of earnings being then 6s. and 6*s*. 8*d*. per week: these sums, 40 years ago, were thought good earnings for a journeyman weaver; ¶ and Mr. Herbert thinks that the earnings in the single-hand loom averaged about the same then that they are now.** It was only from some of the oldest weavers that I could get evidence as to the actual earnings in the single-hand trade at that period. The preceding abstracts of the successive lists show very conspicuously the total alteration of circumstances effected by the gradual progress of the trade from a few simple articles to a great variety of finer goods, during which the engine-loom has constantly been compelling the single-hand loom to resort to broader and finer articles. Mr. Stephens, one of the oldest undertakers in the single-hand trade, brought to give evidence to me by the Nuneaton Committee, "thinks he may venture to say that the average of journeymen's wages during

Earnings and hours, about the commencement of the present century, in the single-hand trade.

* Peake. † Weavers' Committee. ‡ Poole, Evidence before Committee of 1832, Q 1056
§ Ib. ‖ Herbert. ¶ Cantrill, at Foleshill.
** Herbert.

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his apprenticeship—which extended from 1805 to 1812—was about 4*s.* weekly, in the single-hand loom. He himself, as a half-pay apprentice, got 3*s.* per week, which was more than the average; the generality getting only 2*s.* 6*d.* The difference between the journeyhand and the apprentice then, as now, in regard to pay, was that the journeyman received two-thirds, and the apprentice only one-half of the price given by the master. The unmarried single-hand journeywomen would get nearly as much as the men. Can hardly say whether the weavers of that day were better off than those of the present. Thinks that the present weavers are rather more industrious, and, in the same proportion that they are more industrious, they are somewhat better off—that they earn somewhat more, viz., about 5*s.* per week. Thinks that the weavers now work more hours than they did then; they are better workmen than they then were; they can make finer works than they then could, and they can make as much of the present finer works as they then could of the coarser."* Of this the witness gave numerous examples from his own experience.† Thus, "In figured satins, to make a piece of twenty-penny breadth, at the present day, which is considered a week's work, the journeyhand must work full eight hours longer than it formerly took to make a piece and a-half of plain twelve penny breadth, which was also thought a week's work."‡ "The undertakers took the work to the masters' warehouse in Coventry, when finished, and there received the prices stated, which were considered satisfactory by both undertakers and journeymen. There was no thought or expectation of reduction or advance, until the increase of prices in 1813." § Yet "a third of the hands were yearly out of employ during the flat season." ‖

Earnings in 1818, after the decline from the excess of the "big-purl time."

Before the Committee on the Coventry Petitions in 1818, the earnings of journeymen are represented by all the witnesses to have been, under the ill-observed list of 1816, 10*s.* per week per loom in the engine trade, and 5*s.* 6*d.* per week per loom in the single-hand trade; having declined from 20*s.* in the engine, and 10*s.* in the single-hand loom, which earnings appear to have been made during the "big purl time." The decline was attributed partly to the increased use of Bengal silk, which was of a worse quality, and less rapidly woven than the Italian organzine, upon which the trade had before been more extensively employed.¶ There was then no scarcity of work; ** and it is obvious that, under the better observance of the lists in the still brisker times which shortly ensued, the earnings must have continued somewhat increasing beyond any amount that they had before attained, except under the extraordinary excitement from 1813 to 1815.

First permanent decline of prices of weaving on the shock given by the proposal to open the ports to foreign silks;

The shock to confidence in the trade given by the repeal of the prohibitory system certainly commenced some reductions in the prices of labour, accomplished by the unchecked action of competition for employment; but their extent must not be estimated by comparing the engine list of 1826 with that of 1819; for, in the engine trade, it must be remembered, the manufacturer had in the meantime assumed part of the business of undertaker and given the rest to the journeyhand; so that the prices of the latter year, though "first-hand" prices, represent the same scale of payment as *two-thirds* of the prices under the former lists, two-thirds only being paid by the undertakers to the journeyhands. Benjamin Poole, a highly intelligent weaver, estimated the difference, in his evidence before the Committee of 1832, at only 15 per cent., which it is probable was counterbalanced in the earnings by the improvement in skill, in machinery, and in industry, which was contemporaneously taking place. Previous to 1824, there had been no general reduction from the prices paid at the commencement of the century, and down to 1826 it cannot be considered that there was any positive *decrease* of earnings; but the list of 1829 made a marked reduction of fifteen per cent., to meet the foreign competition, without any countervailing advantages; and it was only temporarily recovered in the year following. Yet, before the Committee of 1832, the evidence of Mr. B. Poole, to show the depression of the trade under foreign competition, states the average weekly earnings, in the fancy branches of the trade, which may be said to have been created within the preceding ten years, at from 14*s.* to 16*s.*; this branch having risen to occupy the same place, as the first class in the trade, which the plain engine branch held in 1818, when the earnings of the latter were stated at 10*s.* per week. "In the plain branches, from 9*s.* to 12*s.* 6*d.* per week," it is stated by the same witness, "was the

about 1824, only 15 per cent.; probably counterbalanced in earnings, compared with earlier periods, by improved skill, machinery and character.

Another 15 per cent. lost under the depression resulting from foreign competition in 1829, and but temporarily regained in 1830.

Earnings in 1831 when jacquard weavers had become the first class, higher than those of the first class in 1818.

* Nuneaton Evidence. † Ib. ‡ Stevens. § Ib. ‖ Ib.
¶ Dalby Minutes of Evidence before Committee on Country Petitions, 1818, p. 22. ** Ib. p. 25.

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EARNINGS.

general rate of earnings when in full employment; * and he afterwards averages it at 10*s.* 10*d.*, after deducting 1*s.* per week for loom-hire, although the journeyman now finds his own looms. The earnings in the single-hand trade were still averaged at 5*s.* 6*d.*†

Character and limited extent of more modern reductions of weaving prices.

In the plain-engine lists some small reductions have since been made, as already described, to meet the competition of the North in black sarcenets, and to meet the neighbouring competition in the single-hand loom, estimated by the weavers at seven per cent. on the whole list, though many of the staple articles have not been touched. It was after reckoning for this reduction, that Edmund Goode, a weaver, stated the average earnings in the plain engine loom to be 10*s.* per week, in his examination before the Commons' Committee of 1835, on the condition of the hand-loom weavers. Without any lists, the prices of labour in the fancy engine trade, and in the whole of the single-hand trade, both plain and fancy, have experienced a proportionate decline, as will appear by a comparison of the list of 1831, with the prices now paying. And the reductions made in each branch of the trade on account simply of their mutual competition, and of the competition of employers and men in each, justify an observation made by the mayor, himself one of the oldest manufacturers in the city.—

"For ten or twelve years back," he states in summing up the subject of wages, "there has been a competition in the payment of *low* wages; it scarcely was previously attempted, though now it is difficult to keep some of the largest houses up to the rate of their neighbours. In the early part of the present century, and for long previously, there was an unwritten, but unchanging set of prices. Afterwards printed lists were resorted to. But the hard and unscrupulous competition in the reduction of wages has existed only for a few years; and the adherence to any list, though voluntarily formed, it is scarcely practicable by the power of mere opinion to enforce. Docking for faults, or mere imputed faults of manufacture, has, in fact, been in some instances extended to such an oppressive system, as to form part of the manufacturer's profit." ‡

Present earnings per loom, as stated by the largest manufacturers on the experience of their own warehouses.

The following statement as to the earnings of the present weavers, was given in by one of the largest manufacturers in the plain trade (Mr. Cope), from the experience of his own warehouse, as to the prices paid, and the amount of work usually produced from each loom, when in full work. Mr. Ratliffe, and other principal manufacturers, confirm the general accuracy of this statement.—

PLAIN ENGINE LOOM.

Shuttles in each Loom.	Fabrics and Breadths.	Price per Piece.	Price per Length.
		s. *d.*	£. *s.* *d.*
24	2 Sarcenets	0 7	0 14 0
20	4 ,,	0 9	0 15 0
16	6 ,,	1 0	0 16 0
14	8 ,,	1 3	0 17 6
14	10 ,,	1 6	1 1 0
12	12 ,,	1 10	1 2 0
12	14 ,,	2 1	1 5 0
10	16 ,,	2 4	1 3 4
8	20 ,,	3 3	1 4 0
24	1 8 leash Satins	0 10	1 0 0
20	2 ,,	1 0	1 0 0
20	4 ,,	1 3	1 5 0
16	6 ,,	1 6	1 4 0
14	8 ,,	1 11	1 6 10
12	12 ,,	2 6	1 10 0
10	16 ,,	3 0	1 10 0
8	20 ,,	3 6	1 8 0
Amount of two lengths, . .			19 1 8 19 1 8
Which, upon an average, a weaver will make of each of the above, in three weeks			38 3 4

Amount of 3 weeks' work of 17 looms	£38	3	4
17 Looms for 1 week	12	14	5¼
Say, for each loom per week . .	0	15	0
From which deduct for filling, 2*s.* Loom standing or hire, 1*s.*	0	3	0
Average Weekly Earnings in the Plain Engine Loom . . .	0	12	0

The Engine Fancy Weavers, when in full employment, will average about 18*s.* per week. This remark applies to our own weavers:—there are many articles which we do not make.

* Q. 955, 956. † Joseph Marston, Q. 1363. ‡ Herbert.

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EARNINGS.

PLAIN SINGLE-HAND LOOM.

Fabrics and Breadths.	Price per piece. £.	*s.*	*d.*	Observations.
20 Lutstring.	0	4	6	
24 ,, ...	0	5	6	
30 ,, ...	0	6	6	
16 Sheath Satins . . . . ,	0	4	3	
20 ,, ...	0	4	9	The single hand-loom makes only one breadth at a time.
24 ,, ...	0	5	6	
30 ,, ...	0	6	9	
12 Pads	0	3	6	The single-hand fancy weavers can earn upon an average from 6*s.* 6*d.* to 7*s.* per week, journey-work.
16 ,, ...	0	4	0	
	2	5	3	
Have reckoned that a weaver will make 1½ piece per week	1	2	7½	Mr. Ratliffe considers that their earnings cannot exceed 6*s.* per week.
A week's work for 9 looms . .	3	7	10½	
Per loom to undertaker . . .	0	7	6½	
From which deduct one-third .	0	2	6	
Earnings per week of the single-hand Journey-weavers . .	0	5	0	

Correction of this statement to agree with the several classes into which the workpeople are divided.

In the preceding statement, as applying to the trade at large, it will be seen that there is one error which I was unable at the moment to perceive, from not possessing the census of looms which was afterwards made. This census shows that the plain sarcenet looms are 75 per cent. more numerous than the plain satin looms, in which the higher earnings are made, while the statement of earnings assumes that their number is equal, and that the number of looms on each breadth is about equal. The accuracy of the latter assumption I am still unable to determine, but the former is obviously mistaken; and a correction of this error alone would make the average weekly earnings of each loom scarcely more than 11*s.* 6*d.*, being 14*s.* for the satin looms, and 10*s.* 2*d.* for the sarcenet looms.

To agree also with previous statements by the weavers.

The earnings of the "first-hand" journeyman, including the interest for the capital in his loom, which he commonly owns, calculated on these data, should, while in full work, be at least this; for in lieu of the 1*s.* deduction made for "loom standing or hire," he would be subject only to a deduction of 6*d.* or 8*d.*, which would be the average on each loom, for extra house-rent, fire, and candles, the year round; leaving the earnings of the first-hand about 10*s.* 6*d.* per loom on sarcenets, and 14*s.* 6*d.* on satins, or 12*s.* on the average of both, as was originally calculated by Mr. Cope. This is, in effect, only 1*s.* higher, than the statement given by the weavers before the Commons' Committee of 1835, since which there has been no reduction; the 10*s.* average there given may have 1*s.* added to it, in reckoning the earnings of the loom, on account of the deduction for supposed loom hire; an addition which I feel myself compelled to make after closely examining the evidence before the Silk Committee in 1832, to which the weavers have ever since referred when questioned on the subject of earnings, and calculating from which alone would they give me evidence at the time of my local investigations. It is obvious from the evidence of Benjamin Poole, the weaver then principally examined, that his average of 10*s.* 10*d.* per week for the plain trade, is given after deducting both the loom hire and every contingent expense of rent, fire, and light.

Cost of looms, and loom-rent.

The cost of *new* looms for sarcenets and for satins respectively, (gauzes being made in the satin looms,) are thus stated by one of the principal manufacturers:—*

	£.	£.
Plain engine-loom for sarcenets, about	8	
,, ,, satins, about	12	
Jacquard engine-loom (400 machine) for sarcenet figures .	16 to 20	
,, ,, ,, satin figures . .	20 to 24	

"Old or second-hand looms may perhaps average about half price, but it depends so much on whether the goods made in them be in demand." The cost of new plain engine-looms, with all their gearing, was stated by the weavers' committee at least 30 per cent. higher. The hire of a plain sarcenet loom is

* Mr. C. Ratliffe.

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sometimes only 9*d.* per week; the common hire of all plain looms, 1*s.*; of jacquard looms, 1*s.* 6*d.*, and sometimes 2*s.* This is the hire which the "first hand" journeymen's journeyhands have to pay to the "first-hand" for the loom, together with 1*s.* or 1*s.* 3*d.* per week for loom-standing, and for "fetching and carrying." The cost of extra house-rent, fire, and light, per loom, will be found carefully stated in the evidence of a jacquard weaver, quoted below.

Extra rent, fire, and light.

The data given to me by the largest masters furnish, it is seen, for the plain engine trade, an average 1*s.* higher than that given by the men, a difference which I am disposed to halve, since, though there have certainly been reductions in prices since 1832, they do not amount to one penny in every shilling, as would appear in reducing the average from 10*s.* 10*d.* to 10*s.* The earnings in the plain trade will now, therefore, average in each loom to first-hand journeymen, 11*s.* 6*d.*; to the same, after deducting loom-rent, or interest of his capital, 10*s.* 6*d.*; and to the journeyman's journeyhand, after deducting loom-rent, and standing, and fetching, and carrying, 9*s.* 6*d.*

Average of the present earnings per loom, 10*s.* 6*d.*

The Weavers' Committee, referring to the statement of their weekly earnings made before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1832, and corroborated by the masters, who were seeking a re-enactment of the prohibition of foreign ribbons, say,—

Evidence by Weavers' Committee as to earnings, based wholly on evidence of 1832, already examined.

"The manufacturers had the statement laid before them in Coventry at a meeting of their sub-committee, and admitted its justice. Moreover, they corroborated it in evidence. In the present instance the weavers have not gone through the laborious process which they then did in forming the averages on well-ascertained facts. The evidence then given was, that including both satins and sarcenets, the average on plain goods was from 10*s.* to 11*s.* per week. The prices of work have since been reduced 7 per cent., as will appear by a comparison of the list of 1831 with that now in use. They, therefore, consider that the earnings of weavers at the present time are 7 per cent. less. The rate of earnings given to the Committee in 1832, did not calculate on the time any man might be positively *out of work*, but only on the usual trade amount of *play*, which would be about the same then as now, but they are unable to state how much it would be. Baddeley considers that the present earnings are at a point insufficient for the decent maintenance of a family; *but never knew a continuous period when they were otherwise, but only temporary periods of prosperity.*"* . . . "The figure weavers have been so long working without a list, that it would be almost impossible to make a statement of their average earnings. Do not know whether there be much variation in the prices paid for figure work; there is certainly some; and thinks that it would be very difficult to state them, especially in the case of masters having factories of half-pay apprentices." †

Difficulty in striking averages of earnings.

On the grounds above stated, these men give the present weekly earnings per loom in the plain trade, at from 9*s.* to 10*s.* They truly observe, that "there are great variety of earnings, depending partly on the individual skill, and partly on the prices of the several fabrics, their difficulty, and the quality of the materials. There is a great difference in expertness from natural causes and from habits; but the regulations of the master enforce a tolerable uniformity of quality, and the difference of skill falls therefore chiefly on the workman himself, in the quantity which he turns off." ‡ Averages can, in fact, serve only for very general purposes, whether in this trade or any other paid by the piece; but I have given above the nearest approximation that a careful examination of the testimony and the circumstances of it will enable me to make.

Various prices paid for figure-weaving in disregard of Lists.

In the jacquard, or figure engine trade, the last list of prices is ostensibly adhered to, but variously departed from in practice. The following statement of the prices paid by himself, and those usually paid in the jacquard trade of Coventry, were given in by Mr. Richard Hands, a considerable loom-owner as well as manufacturer, and confirmed by Mr. C. Bray and others.—

PRICES of WEAVING JACQUARD FIGURED RIBBONS.

Average Shuttles.	Width.	Per Piece.	Say per length.
	d.	*s.* *d.* *s.* *d.*	*s.* *s.* *d.*
14 to 16	8	3 0 to 3 3	42 to 45 6
12	12	3 3 to 3 6	39 to 42 0
10	16	4 6 to 4 9	45 to 47 6
8	20	5 6 to 5 9	44 to 47 0
7	24	7 0 to 7 6	49 to 52 6

* Weavers' Committee. † Ib. ‡ Baddeley.

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"The average produce of each loom, without a separate picker-up, would be half a length per week. If the weavers hire the looms from Mr. Hands, they are let for 1*s.* 6*d.* per half length. The filling they get done for themselves at about 2*s.* the half length; the *steady* hands do not make half a-length per week on the average, *including the time lost in mounting new work.* Every *sixth* week is lost in mounting, and this will deduct one-sixth per annum from their earnings. Deduct further 1*s.* per week each house for extra rent, and 8*d.* per week per loom, during half the year, for light and candles: these data will give the average earnings. This is the only ready way of making an estimate of the earnings in the figure trade."

Net weekly earnings of figure-weavers, in full work, after reckoning for stoppages to change pattern 14*s.*

The calculation for a year of full employment on one of the commonest breadths would, with these data, be as follows:—

Gross payment for 43 half-lengths of 16 dy. figures at 22*s.* 6*d.* per half-length					£47	5 0
Deduct:—43 cuts loom hire	£3	4	6			
43 cuts filling	4	6	0			
52 weeks' rent, fire and light, at 1*s.* per loom per week, on the average	2	12	0			
	10	2	6	——	10	2 6
Net annual earnings, in full employment, on full looms works					37	2 6
Net weekly earnings						14 3

This calculation would make the earnings of first-hand journeymen, working on their *own* looms, 15*s.* 9*d.* or 16*s.*; and those of their journeymen, paying them for loom, room, &c. 13*s.* The Foleshill figure weavers reckon their loss of time at one week in four, which would make a further reduction of full 1*s.* per week; leaving the nett earnings 13*s.* 3*d.* or 13*s.* where the first hand journeyhand hires the loom; 14*s.* 6*d.* where it is his own; and 12*s.* where the weaver is a journeyman's journeyhand.

Present good trade.

For the last eighteen months there has been in the figure trade more constant employment and better earnings than Mr. Hands has known during the fifteen years that he has been in the trade.

Evidence analysing the economy of a weaver's workshop, taken at the request of the weavers' committee.

The earnings above stated are those of men not only in full work, but having in their looms the work for which they are most fully adapted, which, however, is not always the case, as will appear by the following summary of the examination of David Bradbury, taken at the express petition of the fancy weavers, to rectify the statement given in by Messrs. Cope and others. It is useful as containing a detailed statement of the economy of a weaver's shop, and as showing that, to obtain the nett wages, from 6*d.* to 1*s.* per week, for extra house rent and sundries, must always be deducted from the gross earnings, besides the cost of filling and loom rent, even where the loom-shop is full of looms, and all are in employment, which is seldom the case.—

"Has kept no exact record of his own receipts for any length of time, nor much noticed those of others. Can tell precisely his earnings on the figure loom on which he is now engaged, for the last eight or nine months, and that is all he can state with precision. On the 22nd of February, had out a satin figure of the same nature he now has from Mr. Brown, and has continued making the same kind of goods ever since; the same widths, but different patterns. Has from that date to last Thursday (November 8) received 23*l.* 8*s.* being for working up 3 sets of grosses, which is 6 warps, 12 lengths, and 24 half-lengths or cuts; a 6 shuttle loom, 24 dy. breadth; and 6*s.* 6*d.* per piece, or 19*s.* 6*d.* for a half-length; the weaver finding the filling, at 1*s.* 6*d.* a half-length, which reduces his pay for a half-length to 18*s.* The time occupied in producing these 24 half-lengths was 37 weeks, which, but for one week over, is at the rate of 2 half-lengths in 3 weeks, or 12*s.* per week. The average cost of lights and fires for the shop, in which there are two looms, will, the year round, be 7*s.* 2*d.*; being, in fact, 8*d.* for a cwt. of coals, and 7*d.* for a lb. of candles, for the winter half of the year; half this will be 3¼*d.* for each loom. The rent of a house which has a shop for three looms was stated by the Weavers' Committee at 9*l.* or 9*l.* 9*s.*; and the rent paid by Bradbury for a house of two small rooms and a shop above is 8*l.*, and deducting only 2*l.* 12*s.* for the shop, this gives 1*s.* per week; the shop would contain three looms, but having only two; the rent upon each will be 6*d.* per week for standing. This gives a total deduction on each of the two looms of 9½*d.* for shop rent, fire, and light; leaving a nett earning, after filling also has been deducted, of 11*s.* 2¾*d.*

"Bradbury has his loom from Mr. Brown without paying any rent for it; he has worked

for the same master many years; and cannot say whether he does or does not charge others for the use of the looms. Some masters certainly charge 8*d.* and 1*s.* for the use of plain looms, and 1*s.* 6*d.* for the use of figure looms, with jacquard machinery. This is the least sum so charged, so nearly as he can understand by hearsay. His own working on the master's loom, without paying any such rent, will partly account for the lower terms at which he is working.

"There are, however, in this case only six instead of eight shuttles, which the 24 dy. looms commonly contain, as now made; and as the only additional labour would, in such a loom, be picking two more warps, the weaver might, with some additional trouble, get through the same number of lengths in the same, or nearly the same time, and the gross earnings would in that case be 16*s.* subject only to the same deduction of 9¼*d.*, with the exception of 6*d.* a half-length, or 4*d.* a-week more paid for filling. This 13¼*d.* would leave the nett earnings 15*s.*, or, allowing for rather longer time in making, say 14*s.*

"The silk upon which Mr. Bradbury has been working has varied, but has been perhaps as fair in quality as other people's silk. The patterns have varied in length; the cards being sometimes few and sometimes more than a hundred; the average being the ordinary run of charges which have of late years much increased. Mr. Bradbury considers himself a weaver of at least average skill and quickness. The above may therefore be taken as respectively the earnings on an average article in the figure branch, with an average hand, and respectively in two looms, one not exactly adapted to the article in make; it being impossible always to have in a loom the article for which it was most fully and profitably calculated."*

So that in the looms best calculated for the work they contain, the average earnings, regarding the case of Mr. Bradbury as a test, will be, as nearly as possible, the estimate of about 14*s.* given in by Messrs. Bray, Hands, &c. The able weavers will make this, but the second-rate hands are often put upon a narrower-breadth article in a wider-width loom, as is Mr. Bradbury's case at the present moment.

Earnings of jacquard-weavers in highest paying factories apparently less than those of the first-hand journeyman only by the interest on machinery.

Between the earnings of the weavers in the highest-paying factories, and those of the weavers working on their own looms, there can be little difference, except in the interest of the capital employed in the loom and the jacquard machinery. In the factory of Messrs. Cox, who make the best goods in the fancy trade, the men are precisely on the same terms as the out-door weavers, subject only to a deduction of 1*s.* per week for loom and room. Mr. Odell, their highly intelligent agent, struck the average of the earnings of twenty men during two years, ending in October 1838, in as regular employment as their business could supply, and was himself surprised to find that it was no more than 13*s.* per week; being induced, by the circumstance of their obtaining considerably more while uninterrupted, to suppose that their earnings were several shillings higher. These men, as I afterwards learned, on going among them, consider this estimate considerably too high, because of the great and frequent delays to which they are subject in changing troublesome patterns, although 24*s.* and 25*s.* were their common *gross* earnings, while the looms were going; out of which they would have to pay 1*s.* loom hire, 2*s.* for filling, and various sums for assistance in picking up; and from the remainder would then have to be taken the proportion of their time which was unprofitable. One said he thought the average could not exceed 10*s.* "For some classes of fancy articles," says Mr. Odell, "there might be a best price; for others, it is impossible, so various is the trouble. The price *generally paid* in the trade is the guide in paying for fancy articles; and the payment for each is settled with the weaver on comparison of one article with another. When trade is *flat*, weavers will take out work at almost any price from underpaying houses; but when it is good, these houses are compelled to pay full prices."† For the smaller underpaying masters a good time of trade is, in fact, almost ruinous, and the proprietor of one factory told me that owing to the present briskness in the trade, the prices in his factory would be no guide for their ordinary amount in it. Messrs. Cox, even while the lists of prices were maintained, generally overpaid it, to get the finest work done, for which they had a market, out of which they are now beaten by French competition.‡ In making the previous estimate of the factory-men's earnings, deduction has been made for occasional assistance in picking up, which, however, Messrs. Cox's men find of little practical advantage in the heavy goods which they usually have in their looms. The journeyhands in Messrs. Dresser's factory pay 2*s.* per half-length for loom-rent and standing, and 2*s.* for filling, after deducting which, at the lower rates which were here paying, as compared with Messrs. Cox's, the journeyhands were making from 11*s.* 6*d.* to 15*s.* 6*d.*, *while uninterrupted* by alterations of the patterns, which sometimes occupy a month together.

Variety of prices paid for fancy articles, and depression through underpaying masters in slack times

* Minutes of Evidence. † Odell. ‡ Ib.

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Some of the factory masters, in lieu of charging loom-rent, pay a lower rate per piece; the Bedworth masters do both; and it is towards this under-paying in the factories that the higher-paying masters naturally evince a great jealousy.

Under-paying in one class of factories, instead of charging loom-rent, as also is practised by the "first-hand" jacquard weavers towards their journeyhands.

"Mr. Browne is paying in the factory," says one of his hands, "two-thirds of the out-door prices, but he supplies filling, which would cost a man 2*s.* the half length, if he had to get it done himself. Mr. Browne pays, for instance, for 20 dy. figures, which are 5*s.* 6*d.* a piece out of doors, only 3*s.* 8*d.* in the factory, and half a length per week, without a picker up, is extra good work, with the ordinary number of shuttles, viz., eight. * * * Has been for the last two years on the two-thirds plan, to which Mr. Browne was compelled to resort by the competition of other manufacturers, many of whom, in their factories, were giving only half pay. * * * But something near a full price is paid by all manufacturers to their out-door hands. It is better for any journey-hand to work for a two-thirds paying master, than to be a journeyman's journeyman out of it; because in neither case has he a loom of his own. He would be better off were he a first-hand journeyman, with his own looms, than in either of those cases. Many first-hand journeymen give the men working on their looms only two-thirds the warehouse price, in like manner as the factory masters; and when trade is bad, perhaps only half-pay, besides being less able to ensure constancy of employment, for which they are dependant on the head employer, who, whenever there is a slackness, will throw empty his own in-door looms the last."*

Two-thirds pay to journeymen's journey-hands at Foleshill.

The evidence of the Foleshill Committee is precisely to the same effect. "The lower-class journeymen on the jacquard loom are employed by the 'first-hands,' at about two-thirds pay; the 'first-hand' finding machinery, wear and tear, filling, fetching and carrying, and firing. Above one-half of the jacquard looms in the parish are worked by the journeymen on this system of two-thirds, which is the same that prevails in the single-hand trade. When there is a picker up this assistance is paid for by the lower-class journey-hand, and the looms generally are worked with pickers up. There are instances (as of two persons present) who pay their journey-hands only *half price*, finding the picker up, as well as every service already enumerated. The earnings of the weaver will be about the same on either system; and the Committee consider that in the City, some are paying the fixed proportion of two-thirds."

Bedworth Factory Prices.

The Bedworth factory masters, by common agreement, pay the following prices for jacquard weaving, of the breadths which they commonly make:—

PRICES paid by the BEDWORTH ASSOCIATION of MASTERS.

Common Breadths.	Shuttles in each Loom, making these Breadths.	Prices per Piece.		Prices per length of the *fullest* loom's work.		Prices per half-length, on the *fullest* loom's work, being a usual week's work.	
		On Master's Looms.	At First-hand on Journeymen's own Looms.	On Master's Looms.	At First-hand on Journeymen's own Looms.	On Master's Looms.	At First-hand on Journeyman's own Looms.
dys.		*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*
12	8, 10, and 12	2 4	2 8	28 0	32 0	14 0	16 0
16	6, 8, and 10	3 0	3 6	30 0	35 0	15 0	17 6
20	6 and 8	4 0	4 6	31 6	37 0	15 9	18 6

These, it will be seen, are considerably below the Coventry prices.

If the first-hand journey-hand working for these masters be employed on a loom belonging to one of them, which is commonly the case, 2*s.* 6*d.* per half length is deducted for loom rent. The decrease of price paid in the manufacturers' shop is in lieu of any such deduction for loom or for shop rent, and is reckoned to be 25 per cent.† Whether in or out of the shop the journeyhands must find their own filling, which costs 2*s.* per half length, and pay for their own coals and candles, which will variously cost, to each loom, from 4*d.* to 8*d.* per week the year round, according as fewer looms are collected together, or as extra candles may be wanted where a picker-up is employed. The masters are desirous that pickers-up should be employed on these looms, and contrive to put out looms into families where this can

* Joseph Bunney, in Browne's Factory. † Williams.

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be accomplished; the average produce of each loom being then three half lengths in two weeks, in lieu of half a length per week. It is generally by the half length that these manufacturers reckon to pay for work, whether it be to *half-pay hands* (youths generally from 16 to 20, newly brought to the engine-loom), or *three quarters-pay hands* (as the journeyhands in their factories describe themselves, though they are commonly called *half-pay*), or the *full-pay hands*, as the first-hand out-door journeymen are considered.

System of regulating wages among Bedworth masters.

Mr. Peake, formerly resident at Bedworth, but now at Foleshill, who still considers himself one of the Bedworth Association, states:—"In fixing the lists of wages, the men never take any part. The masters simply determine to offer only so much per piece. No master, he thinks, ever pays over the list; and no one, either, pays under it. Follows this list himself. Has not this list, but knows what it is by conversation with the masters of Bedworth. Cannot say whether he has talked with them within this month, but thinks it was as much as six weeks ago; it was with some three or four of them. Met with them in Coventry, where they generally meet on a market day, though not all at one inn. The meetings to settle wages are, however, held at Bedworth. One of the firms keeps a public-house there, at which they meet. Formerly it was fortnightly that they met, and they do the same now for anything that he (Mr. Peake) knows." It was not without prevarication that this witness commenced his evidence, in which he states that he pays only 2*s.* 6*d.* per piece for 16 dys. worked on his premises, and 3*s.* when given out at first-hand, which is obviously an underpaying even of the Bedworth list.

Bedworth prices partly lower in reality, and partly only in appearance; the ribbons being of a description containing less work.

When, at the period of the strike, the Bedworth masters were asked by the inhabitants why they paid less than the Coventry masters, they answered, that unless they did so they could not, with their smaller capitals, compete with them; and that if they were unable to compete with them, they would be unable to afford any of that employment in their loom-shops, which, though remunerated lower than in Coventry, was far superior to anything that a mere journey-hand could obtain in the single hand-loom, which was his only alternative, unless he could, and would, resort to the collieries. This is evidence that for the same work precisely their prices would be lower than the Coventry prices, though to me they assigned only the fact that in the floret gauzes, which are their staple article, there is about *one-fourth less labour*. "The Coventry masters require from 110 to 120 shoots in an inch in gauzes, while the Bedworth masters reckon to put in only 80 or 90; and although there is little difference as regards the number of threads in the warps, yet these being less chafed by the fewer shoots, come out, or break much less; to such extent, indeed, as to make the labour one-fourth less in a given quantity, than in the gauzes manufactured in Coventry by Messrs. Hands, Newsome and Bray, and Mrs. Dresser."* "The Bedworth masters, therefore, learn from the undertakers and others, what the Coventry masters are paying, reckoning their prices so much lower as that with their quality of work, they believe that the workman would have as good a bargain. Is sure that their profits would not allow them to pay more." † "Journey-hands, working both in and out of the factory, have tried Coventry work, but returned to Bedworth masters, saying that they could earn more at it." ‡ It is obvious, however, whatever may be the quality of the work, that, since they make no more of it in a week than is produced of many better paid articles by others, their earnings must be less.

Quantity per week of work done by the Bedworth factory weavers.

"Half a length a week would easily be made by any regular straight-forward weaver, who should also fill his own shute, in six days, of twelve hours each. This is, therefore, a good week's work; and when the man has his shute filled for him, which he commonly has, paying usually 1*s.* 6*d.*, he liberates one whole day of twelve hours out of the six, which it would otherwise have occupied him." § "The filling for the married weaver is commonly done by his wife or children." "The fire and light expenses on the average of the whole year would be, at the outside, 6*d.* per week per man, which, with 1*s.* 6*d.* for filling, makes a total deduction of 2*s.* from the prices per half length already given, before they represent the weekly earnings; and those prices per half-length, suppose that the looms are occupied to the fullest, which, very commonly, they are not. Considers that if he do not fill his own shute, the man ought to earn something more than the nett price

* Williams. † Ib. ‡ Ib. § Ib.

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of the half length; but he usually does not. Some men work on without reference to how much they have done, but others reckon, when they have completed a half length, that they have finished their week's work, and do no more."* This is apparently a fair statement of the case; but this half length is not constantly being produced; for, in the Bedworth factories, as in every other part of the figure weaving, there are four seasons of the year when the work is inevitably interrupted by the changing of patterns for the seasons respectively approaching; but in these changes the same witness does not reckon that more than five weeks in the year are lost to each loom.

Earnings of each class of the Bedworth factory-weavers.

"Has in his shop four or five men who are paid the same prices as the men working out of doors on their own looms. These are old and superior hands, and earn from 13*s.* to 14*s.* per week nett, while uninterrupted, by their half-length. The other journeyhands, who are commonly called half-pay journeymen, though they receive more than half-pay, will average as much less, as it is seen that the in-door price is less than the out-door, per half-length, viz., 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.*; their earnings, therefore, being from 10*s.* 6*d.* to 11*s.* 6*d.* per week. The half-pay apprentices are paid half the price the first-class journeyhands receive, while half their fire and candles is paid by the master. They do their half-length per week, and earn at the outside 6*s.* per week. But there are very few half-pay apprentices; the young hands brought in from the single-hand trade being paid at once as half-pay journeymen."† Some of the journey-hands of this and other firms, and several impartial witnesses, give the average nett earnings of the first-class of hands at 13*s.*, and of the second-class 10*s.* Allowing for five weeks' interruption in each year, this would leave about 12*s.*, and 9*s.* nett. Some of the half-pay apprentices were getting as little as 5*s.* 6*d.* or even 3*s.* 6*d.* nett per week, whether in the factories of masters, or in the shops of jacquard engine undertakers.

Earnings of half-pay apprentices.

Mrs. Dresser's factory, in which light figured goods are made, is one of those which has, perhaps, half its looms worked by apprentice-boys, receiving, like those just mentioned, *half* the usual pay, and who, with some overlooking, turn out pretty good work. The greater number are in one large shop, with a single man instructing and overlooking them. They nearly all turn out their half-length per week, the work being generally light; and one little fellow (quite a child), who was pointed out to me, frequently finished his three half-lengths in two weeks. The wages earned by these boys, about 8*s.* the half-length, from which 1*s.* is deducted for half the filling, are paid generally to themselves. The half-pay apprenticeship earnings are elsewhere analogous, except that, when the apprentice is bound on these terms to a first-hand journeyman, he is more liable to be thrown a burden on his friends, or on the parish, whenever his master shall not have work for him.

Nuneaton jacquard weavers' earnings.

The jacquard engine looms at Nuneaton were making floret gauzes and figured satins, and belong chiefly to the manufacturers, though some are worked at the homes of the weavers. The earnings of the hands vary from 7*s.* to 11*s.* nett per week, and are commonly 8*s.* or 9*s.*, though varying with the quality of the silk and the style of goods. There is no acknowledged list of prices whatever among the Nuneaton masters.‡

Hours of work in the Engine-Trade in the city and suburbs of Coventry.

It is exceedingly difficult, in a domestic manufacture, to ascertain the hours of labour. "The men," say the Weavers' Committee, "work more hours when they have work to do, than those in any other handicraft, unless it be the tailors. On Monday morning they do not begin before breakfast, and leave off at "club-time;" but on other evenings they work until 9 o'clock, which is reckoned the weavers' giving-over hour."§ The daily working hours, after deducting those for meals, were represented by one of the masters, before the Committee of 1835, as 12 in summer and 10½ in winter. The men stated them at 12 hours. Mrs. Dresser, a factory proprietress, states that she "knows hundreds of weavers, who, if they had work, would work incessantly for their families, either in the factory or out of it. They would be always at their work, as some of them are, and this she considers the general character of the weavers."‖ This is the opinion of the manufacturers generally. It is in the factories that the habits of the engine-weavers as to the hours of labour are alone tested in numbers; and they do not afford a fair test, since so large a proportion of the factory hands are the young people who have neither the habits nor the motives which make them untiring labourers, while

* Williams. † Ib. ‡ James and others. § Weavers' Committee. ‖ Minutes of Evidence.

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others are of the least respectable class of the community, and the whole are under mutual incitements, which the domestic weaver escapes. "The men are not tied to very close hours; being paid by the piece, they are at liberty to idle a little at the commencement of the week, and to make it up towards the end; but both Mrs. Dresser and her son consider that they work sufficiently hard—as hard as men well can—namely, at least 60 hours per week, they think about that, of working hours.* But, as they are paid by the piece, and there therefore needs no very strict surveillance, they cannot say precisely what the hours are. Although there is little *necessary* delay in getting to work on Monday, the men are satisfied if they make a yard of their weekly half-length of 18 yards on that day, and two or three yards on Tuesday. They then make four on Wednesday, and work hard until they finish their half-length on Saturday, after working on Friday night until 10 o'clock."† "Young single fellows," says another factory master, "can scarcely be got together on Tuesday; but a few steady men set an example of working hard on Monday, which is little followed."‡ "Apprentices and journeymen all work irregular hours."§ This statement agrees precisely with the analysis of the time of the factory hands already given by Mr. Williams, of Bedworth, and confirmed by his own men, one of whom says, "We are not confined to hours, but are not allowed to work past 10 o'clock at night, except when work is very much wanted, and then not past 11 o'clock. The hour for opening the doors in the morning is 6 o'clock. On Monday most come to work in the shops; but, going out to lunch about 11 o'clock, they sometimes make an idle day. On Tuesday, for the most part, they are fully at work. On Saturday the work is sent to Coventry, and the week's work is done by 10 A. M. In this mode the quantity made by good hands is half a length per week."‖ Since each loom in the figure trade generally is reckoned to produce only the same quantity, it is fair to presume that it is worked only the same hours—about 60 weekly; which I should be inclined to consider as customary throughout the trade, although there is, of course, in the workmen at the weavers' homes every gradation from the most assiduous industry downward. But it must be borne in mind that, if a first-hand weaver be 60 hours per week in the loom, this is by no means the whole of the hours that he is working, since those which are occupied in getting and taking in the work and in errands to the master's warehouse, ought also to be included. It is important to bear in mind also the fact that, reckoning for the slack times, in a succession of years, the average of full employment yearly has not, at most, exceeded ten months.

Sixty hours per week in the loom the usual work of a Factory hand, but not of a First-hand journeyman.

Forced loss of time in slack periods.

In describing the earnings of each class in the engine-loom, it will be observed, that I have everywhere assumed that the weavers "pick up" for themselves; and in fact, throughout the trade, the separate picking up is practically deemed of little importance, and is very partially resorted to. There being already employment for the women in looms by themselves, or in other processes of the manufacture, the wages which a *good* picker-up must be paid (7*s*. 8*s*. or 9*s*. per week at the least), render the advantage to be derived from employing one, of such limited amount to the weaver, that he does not generally deem it compensation for the greater labour in constantly shooting down. Could the women or youths, who are required to do the picking up well, be all as profitably employed on other looms by themselves as in picking at the same loom with an able-bodied weaver, it is obvious that the only saving by the separate picking up would be that of loom-rent, or interest of the capital embarked in looms; and it is the approximation to this state of things which limits the extension of the separate picking-up system. It is very commonly resorted to when delay has occurred, whether through idleness or any other cause, which a man wants to recover, so as to complete a certain amount of work. There is no economy in employing children as pickers-up for the engine-loom at lower prices, because of their inferior competency. In the figure trade, with an ordinary loom's work, and without extra time, the clear advantage to the weaver might, *with a full loom*, which he cannot ensure, be about 3*s*. per week. If the men are to "work harder," this harder work must be a separate calculation on its own merits. Some of the factory proprietors and master loom-owners make the employment of a picker-up by the workmen in their looms an express condition, for the obvious purpose of making their capital as productive as possible.

Separate picking-up not reckoned in previous statements; and reasons of its limited practice in the trade.

Mr. Day, with looms frequently above the average power, such as 20 dy. looms of ten shuttles each, and 24 dys of eight, was, at the period of my visit,

Weekly wages system, and assertions before Commons' Committee.

* Memoranda of Examination of Hand Factories.
† Dresser. ‡ Browne. § Squires. Dewis.

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paying the weavers upon those of his factory looms to which he had not applied power, at weekly wages of 1*l.*, with pickers-up at 9*s.* per week, while work was in the loom, who were expected to produce, by their united efforts, a length per week from each loom. Of course, under this system, the hands were kept rigidly to factory hours, and worked harder than any others, on which conditions alone did they here obtain any work whatever. A length of a very full and heavy loom's work for 29*s.* is obviously what no other manufacturer could obtain; and the fruits of the excess of labour were therefore largely shared by the employer, who, of course, took care, by most effective assistance and superintendence, to reduce delays to a minimum. Mr. Day, it has been shown, extended his plans to the introduction of steam power, and the concern has recently failed; but it appears to have been on the ground of his experiment of weekly wages that it was asserted, by a Mr. Jenkins, of Coventry, before the Committee on the condition of the hand-loom weavers in 1835, that at Coventry all the jacquard weavers might get from 30*s.* to 40*s.* per week, and that there was work for thousands of weavers at 20*s.* per week.* After the evidence which has already been adduced, this testimony need not be characterised. On examination by me, this witness made an attempt to justify it by some extreme cases in the figure trade, without making any allowance for delays; showing that "the men might, *in some instances, do it*, not that it really was done. Does not consider that this was a matter of his concernment at the moment."† And again, "so great a number, with the silk of various quality given out, could not get that sum." . . . The assertion that thousands might earn 20*s.* a week was made on the supposition that they might offer inducements to the master to give out a better quality of silk, *by accepting lower wages*;‡ certainly a curious method by which the *body* of a trade should raise their earnings. "But even in good time of trade, as it now is, the masters will keep the hands waiting to suit their convenience, *and they therefore could not, if they were inclined, earn so much.*"§

Difficulty of ascertaining weekly earnings of journeyhands in the single-hand loom.

David Shaw, the undertaker sent from Nuneaton to give evidence before the Commons' Committee in 1835, appears to have stated the average earnings of a man in the single-hand loom, "with full employ, and working from 13 to 14 hours per day," at 4*s.* 8*d.*, from which the expense of lights must be deducted;‖ yet nothing could exceed the inability of the undertakers, assembled in the Town Hall of that place for the purpose of giving me evidence, to come to any common understanding as to what the individual earnings of their journeyhands generally would be. The only mode of approaching to accuracy I found to be ascertaining the prices of labour, the amount of work really done, and the hours within which it was accomplished, as in the case of the engine weavers. The preceding memorandum of Mr. Cope shows the best prices paid for plain ribbons in the single-hand loom, and estimates the earnings of the journeyhands at 5*s.* per week, when making each a length and a-half per week. But all manufacturers do not pay prices so good; and if this be taken as the average in the whole single-hand trade, for both plain and figured articles, the statement will be more nearly correct.

Prices paid and quantity made by each hand weekly.

"With regard to single-hand work in the fancy branch," states Mr. C. Bray, a manufacturer, whose testimony was confirmed by Mr. R. Hands, "the price varies exceedingly, according to the different amount of work in the several patterns and styles. The prices paid to the 'best-hand' (the undertaker) might approximately be stated as follows:—

Breadths.	Varying Prices per Piece of 36 yards.	Prevailing Prices per Piece of 36 yards.
12 dys.	4*s.* 0*d**.	
16 dys.	4*s.* 0*d.* to 6*s.* 0*d.*	5*s.* 0*d.*
20 dys.	4*s.* 6d. to 9*s.* 6*d.*	8*s.* 0*d.*
24 dys.	7*s.* 6*d.* to 14*s.*	9*s.* 6*d.*
30 dys.	9*s.* 6*d.* to 16*s.*	11*s.* 0*d.*

* Perhaps ours is the only house in the trade making this breadth in the single-hand loom: it is in gauze.

* Q. 4278, 4279, 4102. † Jenkins. ‖ Q. 3829. ‡ Ib. § Ib.

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The average earnings per week of the journeymen employed on those works, who receive from the undertaker two-thirds of the above prices, will be about 6*s.* 6*d.*, in good times, with full employment, and, in the plain trade, they will be 5*s.*, as stated by Mr. Cope." "A good hand will make a piece of 24dys, or a piece and a-half of 20dys. in a week; and a superior hand, a piece of 30dys. The narrower breadths are made by children."* The prevailing breadth is the 24dys. Mr. Odell calculates that on Messrs. Coxe's works, which are among the finest, the average earnings of the single-hand journeyhands will be only from 5*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.* "About three-fourths of the journeyhands," say the Nuneaton undertakers, "make a piece per week; of the remaining fourth, one-fourth make a piece and a half, one half only half-a-piece, and the remainder next to nothing."†

Earnings per week on the better paid fancy and plain goods respectively, 5*s.* and 6*s.* 6*d.*

Clewes, one of the most intelligent of these men, stated the earnings in his shop, on shaded satins and orientals, during the last six months, at 6*s.* for the men and 3*s.* or 3*s.* 2*d.* for the women; but others, considering that the plaids which are commonly given out when nothing else is urgently wanted, and the lutestrings, are both generally paid very low, and often occupy a large portion of the looms, stated them, for the whole trade, at 5*s.* for the men, and 3*s.* for the women; while others made the earnings of the women be 4*s.*; and Clewes was inclined to state the average for the whole of the single-hand journeyhands, men, women, and youths of both sexes, at 4*s.* 9*d.* or 5*s.*‡ Except the women who are interrupted by domestic duties, the female hands must, if they turn off their length per week of work nearly the same in quality as the men, earn nearly the same wages; and, therefore, between young unmarried journeyhands, male and female, the earnings cannot vary very greatly, perhaps not more than 20 per cent. Mr. James, an agent of one of the Nuneaton masters, considers that during the last year the earnings of the male journeyhands in that town and neighbourhood have averaged 5*s.* and of the female 3*s.* 9*d.* This agrees also with the statements made at Bedworth and Foleshill.§ The journeyhands, in the single-hand trade, each fill their own shute, and pay for their own lights, which latter item amounts, in the winter half-year, to about 6*d.* per week.

Attempts to form an average of the weekly earnings of single-hand journeyhands.

To give a fair *average* of earnings, amid such endless individual variations, is obviously very difficult; and the varying system of payment is thus well described by a very intelligent undertaker at Bulkington, Mr. Slingsby. "The manufacturers for whom I work, Messrs. Coxe and Co., always pay one price for goods of the same breadth, whatever may be their quality, but allow for figures, shading, &c., more or less. But there are not half-a-dozen houses in Coventry that do not take the liberty of altering the price of work while it is in the loom. The prices actually paying are very various, and therefore they are very jealous of each other on the subject of under-paying. This irregularity came on gradually."‖ Some of the Nuneaton masters get their work done at lower prices, on the ground of the greater constancy of their employment of hands.¶ "Formerly there was an extra allowance, according to the number of tyers used in producing the figure; now there is none; and frequently more is now paid for a ribbon of less labour than is contained in another making at the very same time for less money, as at the present moment (Nov. 28, 1838), in the work newly put out for the market of next spring."**

Endless variety and alteration of prices paid for work.

The gross profits of the undertaker, in return for his machinery, and its wear and tear, his labour, and his responsibility, are, of course, one-half those of all his journeyhands together; being one-third of the warehouse price paid for the goods made by them. The single-hand plain looms cost only about 1*l.* 15*s.*, and fancy looms 2*l.* 5*s.* each; and they are commonly sold second-hand for 10*s.* or 12*s.*†† In the case of shaded goods, which require extra trouble on the part of the undertaker alone, an allowance is made to him by the manufacturer, in which the journeyhand has no share.

Profits of the undertakers.

The irregularity in the hours of labour, which always attached to the habits of the weavers, and is still continued in the engine-loom factories, prevails to a greater extent throughout the single-hand trade of the country districts, and is a fruitful source of other disorders. "Monday is a day of some preparations, which chiefly occupy the undertaker, and need be no great hinderance to the journeyhand;

The old irregularity of hours of labour continued in the single-hand trade.

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* Bray. † Evidence given in the Town Hall of Nuneaton. ‡ Evidence.
§ Burney; Holmes and others. ‖ Slingsby. ¶ James. ** Holmes.
†† Ratliff.

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but everywhere among the single-hand weavers this day is 'shackled away.' They begin to be really earnest at work on Tuesday morning after breakfast. They then work hard, and on Friday *nearly all, if not all night.*"* The week's work is finished by about 11 o'clock on Saturday morning, that it may be taken to Coventry. "The masters have weekly taking-in days, on which they receive the work done and pay for it. It is therefore the object of the weavers to get the work done, whether it be three half pieces, a piece, or only have a piece, by 11 or 12 o'clock on this day, after which they consider their week's labour is over. The weavers generally work all the night preceding the taking-in day, which is generally Saturday, though sometimes Friday and other days of the week. The journeyhand weaver considers that, so his work be done, he is at liberty to work what hours he pleases. About half the undertakers would allow the hands to work in their shops the whole, or nearly the whole of the last night before the taking in. Many insist upon their leaving the shop at 11 o'clock, but allow them to return as soon as they please in the morning, which is at one, two, three, or four o'clock. This is almost universal. The custom on other nights is to allow the hands to work until 10 o'clock at night, if they choose, and this they do generally, except on the Monday nights, and the taking-in days. After the week's work is finished, Saturday is regarded as a cleaning day. Time has been when the looms would be going on Sunday, but now the looms are always silent on that day. Nobody would now do it. The magistrates would not allow it, nor the neighbours either. On the Saturday the weaver can go into his garden, for between this and the commencement of his next week's work he can get his hands smooth again for the silk. On Monday they do everything in preparing the loom for a "good start" on Tuesday. For meals, half-an-hour is taken at breakfast, from half-past eight o'clock to nine; an hour at dinner on the average, though it is not so much on the two last days; and half-an-hour for luncheon at five o'clock.†

This absurd and injurious system of working has, in fact, resolved itself into a proverbial taunt in the mouths of the children of people in other occupations. Supposing the weavers to commence work after breakfast on Tuesday, to work until 10 o'clock on that and the three succeeding nights, and the whole of the hours on Saturday from midnight until 11 A. M., the working hours would be 64½ per week, after deducting for meals; and I am inclined to state it at 60 hours, as in the case of the jacquard factory hands.

Facilities for truck not in use.

All wages I believe to be faithfully paid in money throughout the trade. Truck is at present unknown in it, the demand for hands being remarkably brisk: although "Messrs. Smith and Williams, one of the Bedworth firms, keep, contiguous to their public factory and partly under it, a public-house, a butcher's shop, and a grocer's shop. They say to their hands that they will never use any compulsion over them to purchase from them, but that, while they sell as good and cheap as others (which they do), they might as well come to them. Most of their hands do go to their shops; though some do not. The butcher's and grocer's shops originated in a *co-operative society* among the undertakers of Bedworth, who endeavoured to establish those shops as a joint-stock property. Messrs. Smith and Williams were among the co-operators, and the place is still called '*the co-operative.*' The concern did not succeed in the hands of the association, and at length it was wholly bought up by Messrs. Smith and Williams. The undertakers said to their journeyhands as Messrs Smith and Williams say to theirs, but never used compulsion. The association was set up some time after there was such a bother about political unions, when the men had some meetings here."‡ There yet exist several of these co-operative shops at Foleshill, in the same very dubious relation between employers and employed.

Necessity and difficulty of comparing present and former earnings in the ribbon-weaving, and in other trades respectively, with the present and former prices of the prime necessaries of life.

I have thus endeavoured to state the money earnings of the weavers, and the amount and character of the labour by which they have been acquired, during the last half-century; but these data are of little value without some others by which to estimate the relative purchasing power of earnings at each successive period, and by which to measure the advancement, or the decline, in the reward of ribbon weaving, as compared with other handicrafts. The scantiness of accurate information both as to prices and wages during past years reduce my means of making this estimate within very narrow compass. The few notes on Coventry, made by

* Ralphs, Relieving Officer of the Nuneaton Union.
† Nuneaton Weavers. ‡ Dewis.

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Sir F. M. Eden, in 1795, the prices of wheat averaged from the inspectors returns, the Greenwich Hospital prices of food and clothing, the few historical memoranda of ribbon-weavers' wages which I have collected, the laborious work of Mr. Tooke on Prices, the information contained in Mr. G. R. Porter's Revenue Tables, in regard to the progress of wages and prices in several of the largest manufacturing towns in the empire, and some further data kindly communicated by this gentleman, enable me to throw together the subjoined tabular memoranda, which, though unworthy the extent of the subject, are the best which the means placed at my disposal enable me to offer.

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APPROXIMATE STATEMENT OF COVENTRY WEAVE

Artizans earning the Wages below stated.	1795.	1805.	1813.
Undertakers in the single-hand trade, supposing each to have on the average 7 looms, and to receive from each half a journeyman's wages.	About 15*s.* 9*d.*	About 15*s.* 9*d.*	1*l.* 15*s.* 0
Journeymen weavers in the single-hand trade.	Probably 4*s.* 6*d.*	Probably 4*s.* 6*d.*	10*s.*
Half-pay apprentices in the single-hand trade.	About 3*s.* 0*d.*	About 3*s.*	About 7*s.* 6*d.*
"First-hand journeymen" in the plain engine-loom, owning their looms, as they now commonly do, after deducting every expense, but without making any deduction for loom-hire, since the commencement of the journeywork system.	. .	. .	. .
Journeymen weavers in the plain engine-loom (deducting loom-rent, since they have been owners of their looms, as being profit, and not wages.)	8*s.* to 12*s.*	17*s.*	20*s.*
"Journeymen's journeymen" in the plain engine-loom, in the same position under the "first-hand" journeymen that the latter formerly held under an undertaker, and consequently the first that are thrown out of work at a slack time.	. .	. .	. .
"First-hand journeymen" in the jacquard engine-loom, owning their looms, as in the plain engine trade.	. .	. .	. .
Journeymen weavers in the jacquard engine-loom (deducting a loom-rent, which they have to pay when not proprietors of their looms).	. .	. .	. .
"Journeymen's journeymen" in the jacquard engine-loom, if at two-thirds pay.	. .	. .	. .
Factory journeymen in the jacquard engine-loom, in the highest-paying factories.	. .	. .	. .
Factory journeymen in the jacquard engine-loom in the Bedworth and in the Coventry lower-paying factories.	. .	. .	. .
Factory journeymen in the jacquard engine-loom in the Nuneaton factories.	. .	. .	. .
Half-pay apprentices in the engine-trade.	. .	. .	. .
Winders	. .	. .	. .
Warpers	. .	. .	. .

F CENTURY; SHOWING THEIR RELATIVE PROGRESS.

LY EARNINGS, WHEN IN FULL WORK.

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18.	1823.	1831.	1838.	Observations.
3*d.*	19*s.* 3*d.*	19*s.* 3*d.*	18*s.* 6*d.*	The proportion of deduction for fire and light, to which the earnings of the journeyhands have been subjected, multiplied, allows for the current shop expenses of the undertaker; and his apprentice looms compensate for any deficiency of profit out of looms worked by women.
6*d.*	5*s.* 6*d.*	5*s.* 6*d.*	5*s.* 0*d.*	These earnings are the groundwork of the preceding statement, and the authorities for them have been given in the text.
out 0*d.*	About 4*s.* 0*d.*	About 4*s.* 0*d.*	About 3*s.* 9*d.*	Half of the warehouse prices paid to these learners is one-fourth less than the journeyhand pay which is two-thirds.
.	. .	11*s.* 10*d.*	11*s.* 6*d.*	These earnings doubled, for the two looms which are on the average worked by each family, ought properly, in estimating the journeyman's condition, to supersede those placed next below them, since they would then contain the profit which the journeyman of late years derives from being proprietor of his own looms, with the addition of rent paid him for other looms, and therefore show his present income, as compared with the prices below, which show his former income.
0*s.*	17*s.*	10*s.* 10*d.*	10*s.* 6*d.*	These earnings and those of the single-hand journeymen are the proper comparative tests as to the price of mere labour, in contrasting one period with another, and looking at prices generally.
.	. .	9*s.* 10*d.*	9*s.* 6*d.*	These are the earnings of a class approaching in position the journeyhands under the undertakers in the single-hand trade; and like them, among the first thrown out of work at a slack time.
.	.	16*s.* 6*d.*	15*s.* 6*d.*	These earnings properly take the place of those formerly obtained in the plain engine-loom, in a comparison of earnings at successive periods; the plain engine-loom being formerly as much the sole superior class of work over the single-hand loom as this now is over the plain engine loom.
.	. .	15*s.* 0*d.*	14*s.* 0*d.*	These figures are inserted to compare with previous *mere wages* in the plain engine-loom, which are hence seen to have declined from their money rate in the steady times of trade of 1805 and 1823, although the money *income* of the workman differs much less.
.	. .	. .	About 10*s.* 6*d.*	These are the hands first thrown out of work at a slack time.
.	. .	. .	13*s.*	The difficulty of obtaining approximate estimates of these and of all earnings in the figure-branch was exceedingly difficult.
.	. .	. .	9*s.* to 12*s.*	
.	. .	. .	8*s.* to 9*s.*	
.	. .	. .	Say 5*s.* 6*d.*	These are chiefly in the figure-trade.
.	. .	. .	From 5*s.* to	11*s.*; averaging 7*s.* or 6*s.* 6*d.*
.	. .	. .	From 8*s.* to	18*s.*; averaging 10*s.*

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WAGES—*continued.*

OTHER ARTISANS' AND LABOURERS'

Artisans earning the Wages below stated.	1795.	1805.	1813.
Common labourers	6*s.* in summer, and 4*s.* in winter, with victuals.	. .	. .
Carpenters	15*s.*	. .	. .
Masons	14*s.*	. .	. .
Masons' labourers	10*s.* with two pints of beer per day, and no victuals.	. .	. .
Watchmakers:—			
Motion-maker	. .	. .	. .
Finisher, on plain vertical movements	. .	. .	. .
Finisher, on detached escapement movements	. .	. .	. .
AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS' WEEKLY WAGES IN ENGLAND GENERALLY	8*s.* 11*d.*	11*s.* 5*d.*	14*s.* 6*d.*

ARTISANS' WEEKLY WAGES AT

Artisans earning the Wages below stated.	1795.	1805.	1813.
	£. *s.* *d.*	£, *s.* *d.*	£. *s.* *d.*
Carpenters	0 17 0	1 7 0	1 13 0
Bricklayers	0 18 0	1 8 0	1 12 6
Masons	0 17 0	1 10 0	1 14 6
Plumbers	0 19 6	1 7 0	1 14 6
Tailors' weekly wages in London	1 5 0	1 7 0	1 16 0

AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES of LABOUR in the TOWN of MANCHESTER, and other Principal seats of the

Artisans earning the Wages below stated.	1795.		1805.		1813.	
	s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*
Spinning:—						
Spinners, men	. .	. .	. .	. .	20 0 to 28	0
Spinners, women	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	14 2
Stretchers	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	11 8
Piecers (boys and girls)	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	8 8
Rulers	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	8 2
Weaving by power:—		. .				
Men	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
Women	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
Dressers, men	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
Weaving by hand:—						
Nankeens (best) men	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	12 6
Nankeens (common) children, or women						
Cambrics, all ages	. .	. .	. .	. .	10 8 to 11	1
Quiltings, men and women	. .	. .	. .	. .	11 5 „ 14	0
Supplementary to the cotton manufacture:—						
Fustian cutters, all ages	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	14 0
Machine-makers, men	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
Iron-founders, men	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	31 6
Dyers and dressers, men	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	15 0

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Earnings.

Weekly Wages at Coventry.

1818.	1823.	1831.	1838.	Observations.
. .	. .	. .	15*s.* without victuals.	The memoranda of these wages in 1795 are derived from Sir F. M. Eden's work on the State of the Poor; the memoranda for present time were kindly collected for me by Mr. C. Bray.
. .	. .	. .	23*s.*	
. .	. .	. .	21*s.*	
. .	. .	. .	14*s.*	
. .	. .	. .	21*s.*	
. .	.	. .	18*s.*	
. .	. .	. .	30*s.*	
12*s.* 0*d.*	10*s.* 0*d.*	11*s.* 0*d.*	10*s.* 0*d.*	State of the labouring classes by W. Barton.

Greenwich Hospital.

1818.	1823.	1831.	1838.	Observations.
£. *s.* *d.*	£. *s.* *d.*	£. *s.* *d.*	£. *s.* *d.*	
				The artisans' wages at Greenwich Hospital are contract wages, but will afford a general indication as to the progress of such wages in the metropolis; the subjoined notes are appended to the return for 1838.
1 11 6	1 10 0	1 12 6	1 12 6	Subject to a deduction of 10 per cent.
1 10 6	1 9 0	1 8 6	1 9 0 1 8 0	From April to October, Subject to a deduction From October to April, of 7½ per cent.
1 11 6	1 10 0	1 11 6	1 11 6	Subject to a deduction of 7½ per cent.
1 14 6	1 13 0	1 13 0	1 12 6	Subject to a deduction of 12 per cent.
1 16 0	1 16 0	1 16 0	1 16 0	F. Place, Esq.

Cotton Manufacture in England.—From Porter's Revenue Tables, Part III., p. 402–8.

1818.	1823.	1832.	1838.	Observations.
s. *d.* *s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.* *s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.* *s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.* *s.* *d.*	
20 0 to 32 0	. . 25 6	20 0 to 25 0	. . . .	
. . 17 0	. . 16 9	10 0 15 0	. . . .	
. . 14 0	. . 17 6	25 0 26 0	. . . .	
. . 9 0	. . 7 0	4 7 7 0	. . .	
. . 10 0	. . 10 0	7 0 9 0	. . . .	
. . . .	. . . .	13 0 16 10	. . . .	
. . . .	. . . .	8 0 12 0	. . . .	
. . . .	. . . .	28 0 30 0	. . . .	
. . 9 6	. . 6 6	10 0 13 0 6 0 8 0	. . . .	These are nett earnings.
8 0 to 8 10	. . 7 6	6 0 6 6	. . . .	
9 8 „ 11 0	7 0 to 9 0	9 0 12 0	. . . .	
. . 14 0	. . 16 0	10 0 12 0	. . . .	
. . . .	. . . .	26 0 30 0	. . . .	
. . 35 10	. . 30 0	28 0 30 0	. . . .	
. . 1 0	. . 16 9	15 0 20 0	. . . .	

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

EARNINGS.

WAGES—*continued.*

WAGES in

Artizans earning the Wages below stated.	1795.		1805.		1813.	
	s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*
Various handicrafts:—						
Tailors						18 6
Porters						18 0
Packers						20 0
Shoemakers						16 0
Whitesmiths						25 0
Sawyers						25 0
Carpenters						25 0
Stonemasons						22 0
Bricklayers						22 6
Bricklayers' labourers						15 9
Painters						22 0
Slaters						21 0
Plasterers						19 0
Spademen						15 0

AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES of LABOUR in the CITY of

Artizans earning the Wages below stated.	1795.		1805.		1813.	
	s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*
Weavers of cambrics, jaconets, pullicates, checks, ginghams, &c., working, per day hours. 12					9 9 to	13 9
Warpers						21 0
Calenderers						15 0
Mason 9						18 0
Bricklayers 9						17 0
Plasterers 9						22 0
Slaters 9						20 0
Plumbers 10						22 6
Painters 9						17 0
Joiners and house carpenters 10						18 0
Sawyers 10						24 0
Labourers employed about buildings 9						11 0
Shoemakers 12						15 0
Bootmakers 12						20 0
Bootclosers 12						22 6
Blacksmiths 10						15 0
Tailors 12						19 6
Cabinet-makers 10						19 0
Coopers 10						16 0
Fleshers 10						15 0
Gardeners 10						15 0
Porters in shops and warehouses 11						14 0
Machinists 10						19 0

AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES OF LABOUR in the LEICESTERSHIRE

Artizans earning the Wages below stated.	1795.		1805.		1813.	
	s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*
Nett Weekly earnings of 5-7ths of the frame-work knitters of Leicestershire; the others earning from 20 to 50 per cent more, when in full work						
Woolcombers						
Women spinners (first class)						
Women spinners (second class)						

Manchester, &c.—*Continued.*

1818.		1823.		1832.		1838.		Observations.
s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	
. .	18 6	. .	21 0	. .	18 0	. .	. .	
. .	18 0	. .	15 0	14 0	15 0	. .	. .	
. .	20 0	. .	21 0	. .	20 0	. .	. .	
. .	16 0	. .	16 0	15 0	16 0	. .	. .	
. .	25 0	. .	27 0	22 0	24 0	. .	. .	
. .	25 0	. .	25 0	24 0	28 0	. .	. .	
. .	25 0	. .	22 0	. .	24 0	. .	. .	
. .	22 0	. .	22 0	18 0	22 0	. .	. .	
. .	22 6	. .	21 0	17 0	20 0	. .	. .	
. .	15 9	. .	14 0	. .	12 0	. .	. .	
. .	22 0	. .	20 0	. .	18 0	. .	. .	
. .	21 0	. .	18 0	. .	22 0	. .	. .	
. .	19 0	. .	20 0	19 0	21 0	. .	. .	
. .	15 0	. .	13 0	10 0	15 0	. .	. .	

Glasgow.—From Porter's Revenue Tables, Part III., p. 411.

1818.		1823.		1831.		1838.		Observations.
s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	
6 0 to	10 0	. .	. .	5 6 to	8 0	. .	. .	
. .	18 0	. .	. .	. .	16 6	. .	. .	
. .	15 0	. .	. .	. .	15 0	. .	. .	
. .	19 0	. .	. .	. .	14 0	. .	. .	
. .	17 0	. .	. .	. .	15 0	. .	. .	
. .	21 0	. .	. .	. .	20 0	. .	. .	
. .	20 0	. .	. .	. .	19 0	. .	. .	
. .	22 6	. .	. .	. .	21 6	. .	. .	
. .	17 0	. .	. .	. .	16 6	. .	. .	
. .	18 0	. .	. .	. .	14 0	. .	. .	
. .	24 0	. .	. .	. .	19 6	. .	. .	
. .	9 0	. .	. .	. .	9 0	. .	. .	
. .	15 0	. .	. .	. .	15 0	. .	. .	
. .	20 0	. .	. .	. .	20 0	. .	. .	
. .	22 6	. .	. .	. .	22 6	. .	. .	
. .	17 0	. .	. .	. .	17 0	. .	. .	
. .	20 0	. .	. .	. .	20 0	. .	. .	
. .	19 0	. .	. .	. .	15 0	. .	. .	
. .	16 0	. .	. .	. .	16 0	. .	. .	
. .	15 0	. .	. .	. .	15 0	. .	. .	
. .	15 0	. .	. .	. .	15 0	. .	. .	
. .	14 0	. .	. .	. .	14 0	. .	. .	
. .	19 0	. .	. .	. .	19 0	. .	. .	

Trade.—From Porter's Revenue Tables, Part III., p. 413.

1818.		1823.		1831.		1838.		Observations.
s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	
	12 9		9 5½		7 8½	. .	. .	
20 0 to	27 0	18 0 to	25 0	14 0 to	21 0	. .	. .	
9 0	13 0	9 0	11 0	8 0	10 0	. .	. .	
7 0	9 0	7 0	9 0	7 0	8 0	. .	. .	

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

EARNINGS.

PRICES AT SIX SEVERAL PERIODS WITHIN THE LAST

Articles of Provision, Clothing, Fuel, &c.	1795.	1805.	1813.	1818.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
PRICES of PROVISIONS, CLOTHING, FUEL, RENT, &c., at COVENTRY.				
Bread, per 4lbs.	0 1 0	. .	. .	. .
Flour, per stone	. .	. .	. .	. .
Oatmeal, per bushel	. .	. .	. .	. .
Pease, per quart	. .	. .	. .	. .
Potatoes, per cwt	. .	. .	. .	. .
Meat (beef and mutton)	0 0 5	. .	. .	. .
Bacon, per lb.	9*d.* to 10	. .	. .	. .
Butter, per lb.	0 0 10	. .	. .	. .
Cheese, per lb.	. .	. .	. .	. .
Milk, per quart	0 0 1½	. .	. .	. .
Malt, per bushel	0 7 0	. .	. .	. .
Tea (black) per lb.	. .	. .	. .	. .
Sugar (moist) per lb.	. .	. .	. .	.
Soap (mottled) per lb.	. .	. .	. .	. .
Candles, per lb.	. .	. .	. .	. .
Coals, per cwt.	0 0 8	. .	. .	. .
Rent of houses in the town	6 0 0 to 10 0 0	. .	. .	. .
GREENWICH HOSPITAL PRICES of PROVISIONS and CLOTHING.				
Bread, per lb.	. .	. .	. .	0 0 2 5/12
Flour, per sack	3 5 8	4 2 3	4 13 0	3 8 5½
Flesh, per cwt.	2 2 10	3 0 4	4 5 0	2 17 1
Butter, per lb.	0 0 8¼	0 0 11¾	0 1 3	0 0 11
Cheese, per lb.	0 0 5¼	0 0 7¼	0 0 8¾	0 0 6
Pease, per bushel	0 7 6	0 7 9	0 13 8¼	0 9 3¾
Oatmeal, per bushel	0 6 4¾	0 12 0	0 13 3	0 13 5½
,, or per cwt.	. .	. .	. .	. .
Salt, per bushel	0 6 1¼	0 16 10½	0 19 9	0 19 9
Malt, per quarter	2 8 3	4 5 7	4 16 6	4 1 8½
Hops, per cwt.	7 7 10	6 11 6	11 11 8	12 12 0
Beer per barrel	0 10 4½	0 17 9½	1 1 10¼	0 19 11½
Candles, per dozen lbs.	0 9 2	0 10 7	0 14 2	0 11 5½
Shoes, per pair	0 4 0	0 5 9	0 4 8	0 3 10
Coals, per chaldron	1 19 9	2 11 8¾	2 16 7¼	2 8 6
Stockings (woollen) per pair	0 1 6	0 2 2	0 2 6	0 2 10
Hats, each	0 2 3	0 3 0	0 3 0	0 3 0
Blankets, each	0 6 6	0 8 9	0 8 9	
Suits of bedding, viz., bed, bolster, pillow, 3 blankets, and one coverlit	..	..	..	2 19 10½
Suits of clothes, each	..	..	..	2 1 0½
ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL PRICES of BEEF and MUTTON, at Michaelmas each year.				
Beef, per stone	0 3 4	0 4 6	0 6 4	0 4 4
Mutton, per stone	0 3 8	0 4 4	0 6 4	0 5 0
ASSIZE of BREAD in LONDON.				
Bread, average each year per quartern loaf	0 0 10½	0 1 2	0 1 4¾	. .

HALF CENTURY SHOWING THEIR RELATIVE PROGRESS.

1823.	1831.	1838. Foleshill Union.	1838. Nuneaton Union.	Observations.
£. s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	
. .	. .	0 5½	0 7	The prices of provisions, &c., at Coventry, in 1795, are derived from Sir F. M. Eden.
. .	. .	3 1	3 3	The prices of 1838 are the average contract prices, during the quarter ended December 22nd, of provisions, and other articles, used in the union workhouses of Foleshill and Nuneaton (the former contiguous to the city), and are those of articles of good quality, obtained on the most advantageous terms, at least 10 per cent. below the retail prices.
. .	. .	7 0	7 0	
. .	. .	0 2¼	0 2⅝	
. .	. .	2 9½	2 8½	
. .	. .	0 3¾	0 3¼	
. .	. .	1 3	0 10½	
. .	. .	0 6	0 7¼	
. .	. .	0 1	. .	*** In the Folehill Union the average weekly cost, per head, of the indoor poor is stated at 3*s.* 6*d.*, being 2*s.* 5¾*d.* for food, and 1*s.* 0½*d.* for clothing. In the Nuneaton Union it is stated at 3*s.* 2½*d.*, being 2*s.* 9*d.* for food, and 5¾*d.* for clothing.
. .	. .	3 6	3 4	
. .	. .	0 7	0 6	
. .	. .	0 6	0 5½	
. .	. .	0 6	0 6½	
. .	. .	0 6	0 4½	
. .	. .	£6 0 0 to 10 0 0		
. .	. .			
				Observations attached to the Greenwich Hospital prices for 1838.
0 0 1½	0 0 $2\frac{2}{8}\frac{6}{6}\frac{1}{0}$	0 0 $1\frac{1}{2}\frac{2}{3}\frac{4}{6}\frac{5}{0}$		Calculated on the price of flour and manufacture, at the rate of 360 lbs. the sack.
2 2 5	3 0 5¼	2 6 1		Supplied from Her Majesty's Victualling Yard. Average of 4 quarters' prices.
2 2 7¼	2 4 3¼	2 2 5		Average of two contracts.
0 0 7¼	0 0 9¾	0 0 9¾		Contract for the year.
0 0 4	0 0 4¾	0 0 5		Ditto.
0 5 6	0 9 0	0 7 9		Ditto.
0 8 3	. .	. .		
0 15 6	0 17 6	0 15 0		Ditto.
0 4 10	0 1 8	0 1 3		Ditto.
2 19 11	3 10 5¼	3 0 11¼		Average of 4 contracts.
14 18 6	5 11 0	3 19 0		Supplied under contract.
0 12 5¼	0 16 0½	0 13 0½		Cost price, brewed at the Hospital.
0 5 6	0 6 0	0 5 3		Contract for the year.
0 4 7¾	0 3 6	0 3 2½		Contract for 1838 and 1839.
2 6 7	1 7 0	1 0 11		Contract price, and 2*s.* 6*d.* for delivery.
0 2 2	1 6 $3\frac{1}{1}\frac{5}{2}$	0 1 $10\frac{6}{1}\frac{}{2}$		Contracts for 1838 and 1839.
0 3 0	0 3 0	0 3 0		Contract price, 1804.
2 19 10½	1 17 10¾	3 0 9¾		Contract for 1838 and 1839.
1 19 11¼	2 0 11¼	2 5 5½		Average of the 4 quarters' prices; the value of the cloth being regulated by the price of wool in each preceding quarter. Trousers substituted for breeches in 1835."
0 3 4	0 3 4	. .		These are not contract, but market prices. "The pieces of beef are two rounds, chucks, clods, and leg-of-mutton pieces. The pieces of mutton are legs and loins. The average quantity is about 32 stone per day. The extra quantity of mutton fat is returned. The beef is delivered without bones, the weight of which was 6 stone and 6 lbs., in making the 32 stone and 4 lbs. of meat sent to the hospital."
0 3 8	0 4 2	. .		
. .	Best-Price Bakers. 0 0 10½*	Best-Price Bakers. 0 1 0		* Porter's Revenue Tables, Part III., p. 390.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

EARNINGS.

PRICES—*continued.*

Articles of Provision, Clothing, Fuel, &c.	1795.	1805.	1813.	1818.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
MANCHESTER PRICES OF PROVISIONS.				
Bread flour, per 12 lbs.	..	..	0 4 2	0 3 5
Beef, per lb.	..	..	0 0 8½	0 0 8
"Coarse pieces," per lb.	..	..	0 0 6½	0 0 6
Bacon, per lb.	..	..	0 0 11	0 0 10
Cheese, per lb.	..	..	0 0 9	0 0 8
Potatoes, per 20lbs.	..	..	9*d.* to 15*d.*	0 0 8½
GLASGOW PRICES OF PROVISIONS, &c.				
Oatmeal, per peck	..	..	0 2 2	0 1 10½
Potatoes, per peck, of 40 lbs.	..	..	0 1 2	0 1 0
Beef, (coarse pieces,) per lb.	..	..	0 0 6½	0 0 6
Bacon, (previous to 1827 of 22½ ounces, since of 16,) per lb.	..	..	0 0 8	0 0 8
Bread, (wheaten,) per quartern loaf.	..	..	0 1 5	0 1 2
Ditto, (household or brown,) per quartern loaf	..	..	0 1 0½	0 0 10
Sweet milk, per Scotch pint of 2 quarts	..	..	0 0 6	0 0 6
Salt herrings, per lb.	..	..	0 0 4	0 0 3
Salt ling, from Barra, per lb.	..	..	0 0 3	0 0 3
Scotch cheese, per lb.	..	..	0 1 0	0 0 11
Irish butter, per lb.	..	..	0 1 4	0 1 4
Common wick candles, per lb.	..	..	0 1 1	0 1 0
Brown soap, per lb.	..	..	0 0 11	0 0 10
Coals, per 12 cwt.	..	..	0 6 3	0 5 6
Black tea, ordinary, per oz.	..	..	0 0 5	0 0 5
Brown sugar, ordinary, per lb.	..	..	0 1 0	0 0 8
Instruction of children in reading, each, per week	..	..	0 0 3	0 0 3
House-rent, of two apartments, per annum	..	..	5 0 0	4 15 0
LONDON PRICES OF VARIOUS ARTICLES, FROM AUTHENTIC DATA.				
Wheat, average in England and Wales, per quarter	4 6 3	3 16 0	3 14 11	4 0 8
Superior plantation coffee, in December of each year, per cwt.	5 12 0 to 6 12 0	7 0 0 to 8 10 0	5 16 0 to 6 12 0	7 6 0 to 8 3 0
Congou tea, in the Company's warehouses, per lb.	0 2 11 to 0 4 0	0 2 11 to 0 3 8	0 3 3 to 0 3 9	0 2 10 to 0 3 5
Muscovado sugar, per cwt.	3 3 0 to 3 15 0	2 1 0 to 3 0 0	3 15 4½	2 7 0
Cotton wool (*Bowed Georgia*) per lb.	0 1 9 to 0 2 3	0 1 2 to 0 1 4	0 2 0 to 0 2 2	0 1 4 to 0 1 6
Flax, (St. Petersburgh,) per ton	54 0 0 to 56 0 0	72 0 0 to 75 0 0	83 0 0 to 90 0 0	70 0 0 to 72 0 0
Silk (Bengal raw, in per lb. bond)	0 6 0 to 1 10 0	0 8 0 to 1 6 0	0 12 0 to 1 5 0	0 16 0 to 1 0 0
Wool (Spanish) per lb.	0 3 6 to 0 4 0	0 6 7 to 0 6 9	0 8 0 to 0 9 0	0 6 0 to 0 6 9
Tallow (Russia) per cwt.	3 3 0 to 3 4 0	3 8 0 to 3 10 0	4 18 0 to 5 0 0	4 2 0 to 4 3 0
Cheese (Cheshire) per cwt.	0 0 0 to 0 0 0	0 0 0 to 0 0 0	4 0 10 to 5 0 5	3 0 4 to 3 14 0

1823.	1831.	1838.	Observations.
£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	
0 2 9	0 2 6	..	* Infirmary contract price, but all the other prices are the average retail prices of each year, according to the best information that could be procured. — Porter's Revenue Tables, part III., pp. 402-3
0 0 5	0 0 6*	..	
0 0 3¾	0 0 3¼	..	
0 0 6	0 0 7	..	
0 0 5¼	0 0 8	..	
0 0 5	0 0 4	..	
..	0 1 2†	..	† "When a labourer's wages are equal to the price of a peck of oatmeal, it is considered that he can support his family."—Note to table in Porter's Revenue Tables, Part III., p. 411.
..	0 0 10	..	
..	0 0 4	..	
..	0 0 6	..	
..	0 0 8½	..	
..	0 0 6½	..	
..	0 0 5	..	
..	0 0 2½	..	
..	0 0 3	..	
..	0 0 6	..	
..	0 0 10	..	
..	0 0 7	..	
..	0 0 6⅛	..	
..	0 4 6	..	
..	0 0 4	..	
..	0 0 5½	..	
..	0 0 3	..	
..	4 5 0	..	
2 12 0	21 8 3	3 18 1	Tooke's Prices, and papers of the Board of Trade. The prices are those at the end of the year, except of the articles after wheat, in 1838, which are those of the beginning.
4 7 0 to 6 2 0	4 1 0 to 4 19 0	4 10 0 to 6 4 0	Tooke's prices.
0 2 7 to 0 3 8	0 2 1¼ to 0 3 2	0 1 6½ to 0 3 3¾	Tooke's prices.
1 12 9¼	1 3 3¼	1 13 3	Gazette prices, as given by Mr. Tooke.
0 0 9 to 0 0 10½	0 0 5¼ to 0 0 6¾	0 0 7 to 0 0 8	Tooke's prices.
54 0 0	51 0 0	35 0 0 to 39 0 0	Tooke's prices.
0 14 1 to 1 1 3	0 11 2 to 0 16 2	0 14 0 to 1 1 0	Tooke's prices.
0 3 9 to 0 4 6	0 2 3 to 0 3 0	0 2 3 to 0 2 8	Tooke's prices.
1 14 6	1 19 0 to 1 19 3	2 7 0 to 2 8 0	Tooke's prices.
2 12 0 to 3 10 0	2 0 0 to 3 10 0	.. to ..	Porter's Revenue Tables, Vol. III., p. 391. These are the prices in the markets of London in January of each year.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

EARNINGS.

Positive advancement in condition shown by these Tables.

To reduce the proportionate purchasing-power of wages at the above periods to a decimal statement, would be a vain attempt. But from a casual inspection of the figures here given, it will be seen that the highest class of ribbon weavers of the present day are earning nearly as much money as the highest were obtaining thirty or forty years ago, engaged on different works; while the great and respectable body of the plain-engine "first-hand journeyhands" have been, within this period, a new creation, emerging from the dissolute misery of the old journeyhands, chiefly in the single-hand loom; while the earnings on the latter have also somewhat advanced. That the *purchasing-power* of the present earnings is far greater than that of the former earnings, a slight inspection of these tables will also fully prove; and that there has been a *positive* improvement in the condition of the Coventry weavers, as a whole, during the last fifty years, cannot for a moment be doubted, and is perfectly familiar to all the old inhabitants of the place.*

Relative decline as compared with ordinary handicrafts,

But that the Coventry weavers feel increasing alarm on the subject of their wages, an alarm which is not unjustified by the character of the modern reductions in their earnings, is also well known. And, in fact, the general progress of their circumstances has held a course more nearly parallel with that of the agricultural labourer than with that of the ordinary domestic handicrafts.

Former relative position of handicrafts, weavers, and agricultural labourers, altered during the war.

During the last century, while nearly all industry was much more domestic than at present, the agricultural labourers, the Coventry weavers, and the handicraftsmen, held permanently much the relation to each other, in regard to wages, which the first column in the preceding tables of wages exhibits. But during the war, while the wages of the two latter rapidly rose, those of the former were kept down, in part by an abused system of poor-laws. Artisans' wages, it will be seen, have not since declined in anything like the proportion that prices generally have and their condition must therefore be greatly improved, as also is that of the Coventry weavers as a whole, in nearly the proportion that prices are now lower than they were early in the present century. The condition of the agricultural labourers must, in a great part of the country, be also positively *better*, though relatively *worse;* but, in much of the south of England, where they get only about 8*s*. per week, their condition must be as low as ever, with advancing notions of comfort, derived from the contiguous classes, little conducive to their contentment. The condition of the cotton-weavers appears to be reduced much lower; a result which the immigration of Irish, and their own internal competition, would alone have sufficed to accomplish, without the rivalry of machinery, which has hastened it. The framework-knitters, with whom no steam machinery or Irish immigration have extensively interfered, and who have been affected only by internal causes of depression, are in circumstances precisely similar to those of the cotton-weavers.

Greatly improved condition of the handicrafts,

especially when compared with the agricultural labourers,

and the cotton-weavers.

The tendency to depression checked in the cotton-spinning.

Influence of modern progress in wealth and civilization on the wages of the skilled and unskilled labourers of Great Britain respectively.

As our means of production have been rapidly developed by improved knowledge and extended accumulation, the demand for the artisans of the ordinary dispersed handicrafts has augmented so as to aid the tendency of their moral improvement to keep up the money-rate of their wages, which has generally been maintained, notwithstanding the enormous increase in their purchasing power. On the other hand, the very growth in the community at large of wealth and civilization has loosened the personal connexion between the employer and the employed in all the less skilled occupations of agriculture and of manufactures, in which the relative reward of mere labour depends most on the moral constitution of society, as it has grown up under various influences. The great classes of the low-skilled are the agricultural labourers, the factory-hands, and the hand-loom weavers and framework-knitters. The effect of the alienation upon the former I have no sufficient data to estimate; among the factory-hands, it affords room for an incessant war, by which wages are on the whole maintained for the present; and upon the hand-loom weavers and framework-knitters it appears to have had various effects, according to the efficacy of countervailing influences, some of which I have endeavoured to trace. The general effect in Great Britain, is, however, that of depression, aggravated by immigration from a part of the empire where the employers and the employed, even throughout rural society, have too long hereditarily regarded each other as natural enemies, and where, consequently, the latter are one fermenting mass of poverty.

Inevitable discontent arising from the earnings of the several classes of

We thus see the several classes of labourers far more widely separated from each other, in amount of reward for their labour, than ever before was known, while

* Herbert, Cantrill, Stevens, &c.

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Earnings.

the social distance between them and their employers is also increased. There needs little research, therefore, to discover the origin of convulsive efforts, mistaken as their direction may be, of the low in condition to raise, and of the higher among the labouring classes to maintain, if not to improve, their existing standard of comfort. Those who get good wages feel that their position is endangered by the relative condition of those below them; and the lowest, in their turn, inevitably contemplate only their *relative* position, which is undoubtedly one of depression.

labourers themselves, differing so much more widely in amount than formerly.

That the condition of the Coventry weavers generally does not exhibit *positive* deterioration in the amount of their *real wages*, but the contrary, is obvious, although it is absolutely impossible to state what the earnings of each family are. The circumstances of each differ exceedingly; and, in the engine trade, the fact that, on the average, *two looms are worked by each first-hand journeyman's family*, besides the looms of his journeyhands, is one of the most important data to which I can refer. The filling for all his looms is usually done by the family of the "first-hand journeyman," on the terms which have been deducted in describing the nett earnings of each loom. The children, too, earn something at winding; and there are various employments in warping, weaving, filling, &c., for the women of the families of the married journeyman's journeymen also. This applies to the engine trade; the great body of the journeyhands in the single-hand trade being themselves women and children, as already described. I examined every one of the men in several factories most minutely, as to the occupations of their families; and, whenever they had families, found the total wages obtained by them sometimes considerable, but exceedingly various. I cannot, therefore, undertake to give any fallacious *average* of family earnings; but must generally report that, whatever may be the defective condition of the weavers in the Coventry trade,—and unsatisfactory it is,—it was never *positively better, unless for a very transient period*, and has, until recently, been long slowly improving, as their skill and their property in looms have increased, as prices have declined faster than wages, and as the men generally have improved in their notions of comfort and propriety.

Difficulty of attempting to average earnings of families in the Coventry trade; but condition not one of *positive* distress as compared with former times.

2.—Physical Condition of the Weaving Population.

Physical Condition.

The pecuniary circumstances and the moral habits of men are alone a faithful index to their physical condition; and, in stating the weekly earnings and the character of their application among each class of weavers, I have given a statement of their condition beyond which detail is almost needless amplification. Some few circumstances were, however, brought before my notice, especially in comparing the former with the present condition of the weavers, which demand to be stated. The mayor thus graphically describes the condition and habits of the city weavers forty years ago, under the old undertaking system:—

Physical condition easily inferred from pecuniary and moral circumstances.

"The mass of the trade were journeymen, who possessed nothing but the few sticks of furniture at their homes. They did not generally, he believes, marry very early, for he remember there were many single journeymen. The young men did not think much of sotting in a public-house, but took much active exercise at bowls, skittles, &c. For bowls they had an open park of 300 acres, along which they would bowl a given distance in the fewest bowls. This is now enclosed, and forms the property of the Marquis of Hertford, still under the name of the Park. They were not to any great extent cricket-players, though there were matches between one town and another. Quoits were pretty much in use. These, with skittles, were the principal amusement. Bull-baiting, especially in the surrounding villages, was very common. Duck-hunting and dog-fighting were also resorted to, as well as cock-fighting; and the duck-hunt was good sport. The result of this kind of life and amusement was a large amount of animal strength and spirits; the return to home from the fields was a return to rest; and, whatever might be the rudeness of the amusements, they produced robustness of body and hardiness of habits. The young men of that day, with these habits of activity, did not make sexual attachments so early as they now do. The instances of a youth marrying before his time was out were very rare, and they seldom were out of their time until 21, sometimes not till after. There were no such things as children's marriages. The only one of his father's apprentices whom he remembers to have been married before he was out of his time was at the age of 23. The age

Former compared with present habits of life.

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Increased appreciation of comforts, and decrease of out-door amusements.

of marriage has become much earlier with the increase of in-door habits."* "The life which has been described produced a race of men possessing bodily strength and energies far superior to the present race of weavers, though with domestic comforts of so low a character."†

"Since the commencement of the present century the city weavers, at the same time that they have so largely become loom-proprietors, have made vast progress in their appreciation of comfort, and would now feel the same condition with which they were formerly contented one of suffering. There is among them considerable pride of decency in habitations, and in their Sunday clothing especially, which was formerly very slight."‡ In fact, "the great difference between the trade 50 years ago, and the trade in its present state, is the remarkable fact that the journeymen operatives of the present day have the notions of living which the undertakers had in that."§

"The great improvement is in the domestic comforts and habits of the steadier classes of the first-hand journeymen; but there is a decline among them of that out-door hardiness which formerly gave them a much superior physical character, while the dissipated are still more degenerate in person, having increased in habits of sottishness and dissipation, as they have abandoned the hardier amusements." ‖ "Is certain that the decline of active bodily exercise among the youths has been accompanied by the earlier development of sexual attachments; their whole purposes being now centred on the enjoyments of the family man, and the age of marriage being now consequently much earlier."¶

The following details as to the present physical condition of the city weavers, from a most intelligent and public-spirited observer, well qualified by his opportunities of observation to give them, will not, I think, in the general absence of such evidence, be deemed too minute :—

Feebler constitutions than possessed by artisans generally.

"The weavers are, as compared with the dyers, for instance, persons of much inferior physical character, smaller in stature, of less muscular development, and enjoying lower animal spirits. They are, in fact, small in size, not averaging perhaps more than five feet six inches, and pale and phlegmatic in countenance. They are, however, more intelligent, and any of them can explain the nature of their machines. They have courage and activity with their intelligence, and the difference between them and a body of navigators was seen most conspicuously in a mob-fight at an election not long ago. The navigators expected to fight a pitched battle with fists, but the weavers broke their ranks, closed in upon them, and completely beat them by numbers. The town-born women are small, being early confined to winding, filling, or some part of the business. There is an attraction in the trade which brings into it women from the surrounding country in preference to going to service, and this accounts for some of the women being much larger; but the Coventry-bred weavers of both sexes are small. The indoors and shop habits of the weavers are certainly such as to induce an early development of the sexual passions, and, whatever may be the amount of illicit intercourse, marriages generally are very early.

"The character of diseases among the weavers differs very materially from that of the diseases affecting such operatives as the dyers; being chiefly diseases of the digestive organs and of the lungs, indigestion and its consequences in various forms, and consumption. Of the weavers in the self-supporting dispensary it is the experience of Mr. Nankivell, that about two in every five that are attended are labouring under diseases of the digestive organs, while among the watchmakers, dyers, labourers, and those of other occupations who have required aid, the proportion affected by such diseases is only about two in seven. Scrofula is very frequent among the weaving population. They are less liable to acute diseases, and the town appears to be particularly free from fever generally. The cholera was by no means severely felt. In acute diseases they have to be much more cautiously dealt with than the dyers, who are a fair specimen of the hardier class of artisans. There is also in Coventry an intermediate class as to health—that of the watchmakers. The weaver is very much more frequently indisposed than the dyer or the watchmaker; but he is much less liable to acute disease. Cannot say what is the state of longevity among the weavers, but does not see many old men amongst them. Not many now enlist as soldiers, but many old weavers have been soldiers. The physical depression of the weavers shows itself in their mental character. Anxiety

* Herbert. † Ib. ‡ Poole.
§ Herbert. ‖ Ib. ¶ Ib.

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as to the circumstances of their families and their trade is very conspicuous, and insanity is most frequent among them. The anxiety is greatly aggravated by the fluctuating nature of the trade. When work is pretty constant, they have to labour, if possible, to clear off the debt incurred in a previous bad time; and even badness of material much harasses them."

"In the institution to which I am attached as a medical officer," states Mr. Nankivell, surgeon to the self-supporting dispensary, in a lecture addressed to the members of the Mechanics' Institute, "it frequently falls to my lot to witness the effect of anxiety and depression of mind on the public health, consequent on the fluctuating trade of this city. No sooner does a bad state of trade occur than there is generally an immediate increase in the number of dispensary patients, and this takes place long before the physical causes of disease—the privation of food and of the comforts of life—have had time to operate. In individual cases, the influence of the same cause is still more painfully evident—often leading, by long-continued care and mental distress, to the complete destruction of health and to death itself. Did time permit, I could relate many instances of this kind, in which poor industrious men have fallen sacrifices in their struggles to supply their own wants by their own means rather than suffer the degradation of begging charitable or parochial assistance."*

"The weavers generally are a moral set of men, exceedingly attached to their homes, their families, and their domestic duties. The period of life when they encounter the greatest difficulties is in the first years after marriage, when the wife is bearing a family of children, who are yet too young to earn anything at winding, filling, or the other branches of the trade.

Injurious trade influences on health.

"The resting of the breast against the loom, the constrained position, the want of air, and the frequent over-exhaustion, are the chief bad influences in the trade-occupations of the weaver; these are very serious in their effects. There is another injurious circumstance which affects also the watchmakers, viz., that they make supper, with beer, their principal meal, because to make a hearty meal in the earlier part of the day they find to make the sight rather less acute for their business, and they therefore continue their labour on insufficient nourishment to the end of the day, when a hearty meal is injurious. Such is the effect of all these influences that, without any influx of country population, the race of weavers would assuredly terminate. But a fact, proving that the weaving is to the young women of the surrounding country a seductive occupation which brings in a constant flood of superior health, is, that not only the inhabitants of the town, and those of the rural weaving districts, but the farmers of the neighbourhood, complain of their inability to get or to keep servants, who prefer the earnings and the independence of the ribbon-weaving. The physical inferiority which the trade gradually induces must obviously be to the great body of town weavers, an insurmountable obstacle to a resort to any other branch of labour with chance of reasonable success. With the great mass it is 'once weavers and always weavers,' whatever may be the fate of their trade.

Influx of country health maintaining the weaving population.

Comfortable homes of the better class of city weavers.

"The homes of the best class of weavers, as compared with the cottages of agricultural labourers, are good, comfortable dwellings; some of them very well furnished; many have nice clocks, and beds, and drawers; are ornamented with prints; and some have comfortable parlours. These are the men who have looms of their own; cleanliness is the prevailing character, though some are slovenly, dirty, and without decent bed clothing; but these instances arise from the misconduct or mismanagement of the parties, unless in the instances of inferior workmen, who really cannot make decent earnings. There are instances of great poverty, in the cases especially of the few single-hand weavers in the city. The general habits of the first-hand journeymen are frugal, but knows many cases of great depression, anxiety, care, and consequent illness, because of the difficulty which they find to live in decency. The first-hand journeymen classes of weavers are generally well-clothed, and there is a great pride of appearance, which seeks to conceal the defects which may exist. They are also, the better classes of them, well fed,—getting meat, potatoes, bread, and puddings of various sorts. But there is a grievously prevalent want of a knowledge of domestic appliances, and consequently of economy and management, resulting from the trade education in lieu of domestic education of the women. The latter are fond of finery; but generally, the cleanliness of the houses is remarkable." My own domiciliary

* Pamphlet, pp. 9 10.

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visits, although made chiefly in some of the lowest parts of the town, enable me to confirm this evidence; nor can I neglect the opportunity of expressing my gratification at witnessing so marked a superiority of domestic habits and general appearance as prevails in them.

Partial positive distress.

"The homes of some of the weavers of the lower classes," says Mr. Prosser, the head of the police, "are in the most wretched state, with only a little straw and a coverlet for a bed; plenty of children, but scarcely a chair to sit down upon. Has known instances when the man has not been a drunkard, and yet his home has been in this state, perhaps arising from want of work, under which he may suffer for seven or eight weeks together."*

Among the outlying parishes, that of Bedworth never was in so flourishing a condition as at present;† and at Exhall, the weavers, having commonly large gardens and low rents, with frequently their own jacquard-looms, are generally a more prosperous people than those of the rural weaving parishes generally. In the neighbourhoods of Nuneaton, Bulkington, and Foleshill, the usual condition of a number of journeyhand families is that of the greatest dirt and misery, sometimes with no bedsteads, but beds of wrappers, stuffed with straw, and without any linen to them. Sometimes the bed consists merely of chaff held together with bricks, and covered with a wrapper.‡ Their food in these instances consists chiefly of bread and butter, potatoes, and a little tea, with occasionally a few poor scraps of bacon.§ This class are commonly in extreme distress, while the wife is bearing a family of young children, who can as yet render them no assistance; and, when want of weaving work comes upon them, they are utterly helpless. The joint earnings of the single-hand journeyman weaver and his wife, if she could continue uninterruptedly at the work, would only amount at most to the wages of an agricultural labourer, whose wife was attending to domestic duties, for the non-performance of which scarcely any amount of earnings can compensate. The condition of the single-hand weaver is therefore far worse. When the children begin to work, the family earnings might rise to those of an agricultural labourer, and set the wife more at liberty for domestic duties, but she has not learned what they are. The weavers working together too, at irregular hours, and with this want of domestic comfort, inevitably mismanage the narrow means they possess. Rudeness and misery seem to be the inevitable condition of the mere journeyhand in the single-hand trade. And even many of the undertakers live in the greatest necessity, especially those burthened with large families. The habits of this part of the weaving population are not cleanly, because, as they assign, cleaning unfits their hands for weaving.‖ Sometimes the journeyhands lodge in the undertaker's house, paying 4*d.* per week, but others rent very poor habitations, where they get their loom home if possible. These almost everywhere exhibit an appearance of wretchedness, which at Bulkington, and other of the most remote places, amounts to positive squalor. The men in the single-hand trade are peculiarly liable to diseases of the chest, and the women are noticeable by their broad backs and stooping over a narrow chest. The young men seek little amusement except drinking, and occasionally cock-fighting and card-playing. Many of the country weavers have small gardens, but the letting of potato-ground by the farmers is not common.

Greater poverty in the single-hand weaving districts.

Still not on the whole *declining*.

But one decisive evidence, that the condition of the ribbon-weavers has not for a long succession of years been one of *general decline*, in the single-hand any more than the engine-trade, is the fact, that the habitations built for them are successively of better and better construction, as the date of their erection approaches the present time. But many such tenements, erected as the property of undertakers, are said now to be the property of lawyers, who have foreclosed the mortgages to which the little owners, in a distressed time of trade, were compelled to resort; and the whole appearance of the single-hand weaving districts, and of their inhabitants, is one of rudeness, poverty, and depression, which belongs rather to the sister island than to the heart of England. That the lawlessness of the district has of late years much increased, the mayor of Coventry, and every other witness, unanimously testified.

Comparative sketch of the Lyonese weavers by an emigrant settled at Coventry.

The following brief sketch of the present state of the silk-trade at Lyons, of the industrial organization of that city, and of the condition and habits of its weaving population, given to me by Mr. Charles, a very intelligent native of its vicinity, resident at Coventry, but who had revisited the former city only six weeks before

* Prosser. † Bunney.
‡ Rev. Mr. King. § Slingsby. ‖ Rev. Mr. King; Slingsby; Cuthbert.

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my arrival at the latter, will not be without its interest as a means of comparison :—

"Trade revived at Lyons about 18 months ago, *at the same that it did at Coventry*, and there is now positively a *dearth* of weavers, those who left the city at the time of the late riots not having returned or been replaced; wages, therefore, advanced. Journeyhands are now getting more than 15 francs per week. For this they work very hard, from seven in the morning to nine at night. They are not all regular; they will have a play; but they decidedly work more hours than the Coventry weavers.

Present Lyonese prosperity.

"Believes that they have now no printed list of prices of weaving. Every manufacturer makes what bargain he can. Each pays the same for the like goods given out by himself, but different prices are paid by different manufacturers for the same goods. Now that the times are good, they are a happy set of fellows.

No common list of prices.

"The journeymen weavers lodge and board with the undertaker or master weaver. They agree pretty well together. Their apprentices are on half-pay, with free bed, but paying for their board. The master weaver will have from five to six, and sometimes more looms in a shop, on the same floor with his dwelling, and on these looms his journeymen and apprentices work. Has never known a journeyman to marry until he should set up master weaver. When they marry, they get a separate home, and a loom or two, and set up for themselves as master weavers.

Undertakers and journeymen.

"In the Faubourg La Croix Rousse, the buildings, for instance, are very large and high, and each flat has perhaps four weavers' families. Each family has its workshop, and one room for the bed-room of the master and his family. The journeymen sleep in the shop, sometimes in souspents. They do not go out much in the fields, but find amusement chiefly in the cafés. They are not so strong as the men working out of doors. They take quite as little exercise as Coventry weavers, but drink no stimulants. Board costs seven or eight francs a-week; and then the weaver has to clothe himself, and the rest he throws away at the café or elsewhere.

Domestic Life.

"This apprenticeship is from 14 to 17 or 18 years of age, and the apprentice is then a journeyhand. He has no thought of marrying under 25; and then to set up master weaver, either with his own earnings, the money of friends, or that of a master advanced, the latter very commonly in a brisk time.

Rise from the period of apprenticeship to being a master weaver.

"Generally the master-weavers and workmen agree; but sometimes the master endeavours to defraud the hand, by saying that he receives from the manufacturer a less price than he really does, and a quarrel is the result. The proportion which ought to be received by the journeyhand is a customary rule, which it is never thought right to violate. The proportion received by the hands on plain goods is rather the greater. The winding and warping of warp is done at the *manufacturer's* warehouse; the shute is given out in hank, and the master weaver or undertaker has to wind and fill it. He has also to mount the loom. The journeyman has merely to shoot down and pick his own work. There is no employment of a separate picker up.

Relations of manufacturers, undertakers, and journeymen; and system of work.

"The Lyons weavers are earning at this moment quite as much as a Coventry weaver, and they are doing more work for it. Living is much about the same there as here; the chief difference is in the Frenchman buying beforehand his wine and his flour, soon after the vintage and harvest; so the things are cheap; and he can do this by having saved something. The Englishman eats more flesh-meat than the Frenchman.

Good earnings.

"Breakfast is thought very little of; bread and fruit that may be in season, or dried grapes; some will have milk. The master will have his coffee; the journeyman having only dinner and supper at the same table, which, of course, is in the shop. At dinner generally two good dishes and soup, meat boiled or roasted, and vegetables of some sort: bread, the journeyman finds. The only other meal is supper, when he sometimes has meat again. The journeyman must supply his own wine.

Living.

"The master weaver will sometimes advance money on work done by his journeyman, but believes he, in turn, never gets advances from the manufacturer.

Advances to journeyhands.

"A Frenchman, if he be ill, flies to the hospitals if he have no friend, saying, 'Qu'il n'est pas pour les chiens.' The friendless old people formerly used to beg, but children or near connexions now generally support them.

Charity.

"When a journeyman takes a day's play it is with his friends at a café or a

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Instruction.

cabaret at some game, and scarcely at all for the drink, so that he is fully prepared for his work the next day, which is not the case here. Certainly the weavers of Lyons are not strong men, but it is from their in-door habits, and not from drinking, that they are made less muscular. Bowling is a favourite pastime.

"The Government has instituted many schools; there is newly instituted a *salle d'asile*, or infant school. The journeymen can generally read and write. The weavers are great theatre goers, but little politicians, except in trade politics.

Local force.

"There is a strong police and a strong garrison; but since the disturbances of 1831 the *garde national* has been abolished."

The similarity between this picture and that given by the Mayor and other witnesses of the *former* state of Coventry, making some allowance for national manners, is very remarkable.

3.—Charitable Efforts directly to ameliorate the Condition of the Ribbon Weavers.

Charities.

All honest income, not the reward of services, personal or by property, simply *charitable*.

That all honest income or subsistence, which is not the price of services rendered by property or by personal abilities, is simply *charitable*, whether given by individuals on their own account or by the agents of a community, is a fundamental principle which a protracted abuse of the Poor Laws was, until recently, fast undermining. A Poor Law is merely such an organization of a community for the administration of *charitable* relief, as shall alleviate as much as possible of the positive miseries resulting from human imperfection, without attacking those main principles of industry and providence which are the life of civil existence. Indiscriminate *almsgiving* merely squanders resources in the creation of a community of beggars and delinquents. Charity, awakened to this fact, seeks an organisation which shall distinguish real from fictitious distress; and hence the voluntary associations for charitable purposes, and the whole system of poor-laws itself. While seeking to alleviate sufferings, more commonly the results of vice than of misfortune, yet as sufferings imploring her relief, she is cautious that this alleviation may not become an inducement to neglect the means of *avoiding* them, and marks her gifts as those of *pity*, which only the utterly helpless or debased can accept. How gross and selfish a perversion of a beneficent system of poor-laws changed these gifts, in the popular mind, into those of *justice;* prevented population limiting its numbers to the means of subsistence; and, instituting a community of property, poured up the full tide of demoralization to overwhelm all society, is too familiar; and well if the bonds which were severed can gradually be restored, and mutual personal reliance be substituted for parochial anarchy!

Former Poor-Law maladministration.

Abundant testimony was here given to the decline in reluctance to resort to the parochial funds within the last half-century; and it is only of late years that their administration in the city has been vigilantly conducted. The extravagance of the churchwardens and overseers led to the incorporation of the city parishes under a board of directors for the purposes of poor-law administration; but all misapplication of the funds did not terminate here. The Report of C. P. Villiers, Esq., Assistant Poor Law Commissioner of Inquiry, shows the former parochial administration throughout the whole district to have been, with little exception, most lax and disorderly.* In the following table it will be seen that there was, in 1830, a great excess in the amount of rates; the relief to casual poor being suddenly increased from 2885*l.*, in 1829, to 9278*l.*, although 1830 was not a year of such distress as either the one preceding or the one after it. "One director," says Mr. Villiers, "in the presence of the rest, stated that in truth nobody could doubt that it had been spent in contemplation of a *general election*, which occurred during that year." The out-door relief they stated to be given to men with large families, "according to a scale which is seldom exceeded, and as much less is allowed as the paupers *can be persuaded to accept*. I observed the scale referred to; it was printed and framed, and placed in a conspicuous part of the board-room. It appeared to be regulated by the price of bread, and to be somewhat higher than that allowed by the justices for the county."† The former theory and practice of out-door relief in the rural parishes is explained with great simplicity by the acting overseer of Bedworth, Mr. John Yates, in a note attached to returns laid before the Silk Committee of 1832.—"The magistrates, having taken into consideration the distressed state of the rate-payers, have considerably reduced the

* Poor Law Report, Appendix (A.), Part II. † Ib. p. 25, a.

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allowance formerly granted to the poor; at the present time each pauper has only 1*s.* 6*d.* per week, formerly they had 2*s.* 6*d.* per week allowed them; but the effect has been severely felt by many farmers, *not less than* 50 *sheep having been stolen within the parish within the last twelve months*, besides numbers that have been stolen from the parishes adjoining, which amount to a considerably greater number than those stolen in this parish during the same period. There are now numbers of families who are obliged to receive relief from the parish, although the man and woman are both in full employment; *their earnings being so very small that it is impossible for them to get as much as the magistrates allow for their earnings to be made up to.*"* No such abuse now has existence.

Vain endeavour to improve the condition of workpeople by parish pay in aid of wages, when the master manufacturers are non-resident.

That their earnings should have been much more than the "magistrates allowed them to be made up to" was much to be wished; but that such a system could only perpetuate distress will be proved by a moment's consideration; for so much as the parishes gave in relief to the employed, was literally in part payment of wages, of which part, *had the employer and the employed been of the same parochial community, the former could not have escaped contributing a share.* Competition for employment in a low-skilled trade was pressing very hard; the community in which the workpeople were locally included, so far as it was represented by the magistrates, considered it unfit that human beings should (where there were extensive resources in society) exist below a certain condition; they attempted to raise them by a direct addition to wages; but such an attempt does but, by the continued competition, offer to the absent manufacturer a still lower bargain, and the funds of the local community are wasted merely in paying the wages of the absent manufacturer, without in the least improving the condition of his workpeople. Neither will even the manufacturer be a gainer, for the competition of others doing the same will throw the whole advantage into the hands of the warehouseman and the public; and in the present instance, perhaps, nobody was benefited, but, with parish pay, the single-hand loom was kept at work where it ought to have been superseded by the engine-loom; the parochial sacrifices being merely a subscription to perpetuate inferior machinery.

Even where manufacturers are resident, an unavailing abuse.

It is, in fact, by this loss of the bonds of community between the capitalist employer and the unskilled labourer, that is opened the gulf for the unfettered competition of numbers, which it is vain for any community, to which the employers do not belong, to attempt to fill up; nor can any poor-law close it, although the masters be of the same parochial community, when the workpeople are exceedingly debased. Coventry, we have seen, like a large portion of the kingdom, undertook to make up the deficiency of wages by its poor's rates, which could have no effect but to extend the manufacture at the cost of that portion of the town community not engaged in it; for the city thus undertook to favour the community at large with goods cheaper than it would otherwise get them, at the same time that the industry and providence of its populace were proportionately undermined. By supporting the journeymen's journeyhands during time of bad trade, the parish communities now simply keep for the service of the national community, a corps of reserve, ready to gratify the next change of fashion. A people of higher morality than the journeymen's journeyhands would not submit to the perpetual danger of having no resort but in the charity of the parish; but, while the manufacturers can, in good times, obtain an influx of hands, notwithstanding this danger, it is not possible in bad times to refuse the surplus number the succour of which they stand in need; although no workhouse can, on occasions of great depression, meet the emergency. But the injury of the public largess system to industry and providence, even when confined to the times of utter want of work, is obvious.

What has been thus accomplished only by assuring fair wages as the reward of daily and hourly exertion.

But if the same public opinion which seeks, by direct charitable aid, to give to the labourer a certain standard and security of subsistence, were directed, as at Coventry it repeatedly has been, to requiring of the employers of unskilled labourers to give to their hands, as the reward of their daily and hourly exertions, wages sufficient for that subsistence, letting the trade be of what extent it might on such a basis, some progress would really be made towards the desired object, without the demoralization which accompanies the direct attempts at its attainment. The proceedings at Coventry show that there is little fear of this opinion exercising a dangerous excess of charity; while, were it generally felt in the wages of the unskilled, instead of being exhibited, as formerly, in parish pay, neither industry nor providence would be undermined; nor would the

* Silk Committee's Report, App. p. 929.

allegiance between employer and employed be broken; nor would the idea of fancied *rights* to public largess corrode the peace of society; nor would morality be scorned for the self-denial of deferring marriage until there was prospect for the permanent support of a family.

Operation of a healthy system of Poor-Laws in raising wages.

It is only, in fact, indirectly through this public opinion, for the operation of which they have, in some degree, presented a local focus, that poor-laws can have any *direct* tendency to *raise* or maintain wages; while their abuse, by enfeebling industry, and removing moral checks to animal passions, has had a direct tendency at once to lessen the revenue of society, and to increase the claimants upon it, and thereby to *lower* them. That they have, when unabused, an *indirect* tendency to *raise* wages cannot be doubted, but in this operation they are merely the instrument of the charity and moral habits of society, which would, in some degree, have effected the same object, had they not resorted to these laws, though by means, perhaps, more imperfect. The charity of the proprietors undertakes (in England by a poor-law) to preserve from physical want the destitute members of the local community. It is thus their immediate interest, in order to make the unproductive burden as light as possible, to limit, to the utmost of their power, the *proportion* of the population to the total produce of the community, through an economy of human labour. Ultimately, the labourers employed in this more economical system, by the moral influences which I have endeavoured to describe, obtain some part of the *proportionate* excess of production in their wages; but according as these influences have or have not an active existence, and the labourers an improved intelligence, may this relative advance in their condition take place or not. It might be supposed that the personal interests of the proprietors were alone sufficient guarantee for adopting the greatest economy of human labour; but where the social charities, or a poor-law, are wanting, the interest in doing so is not immediate, for the proprietor can then get the soil cultivated, or his webs woven, by an overteeming population, whose miserable offcasts he is not bound to maintain, and who will produce to him a higher nett revenue than he could obtain from the best systems of industry in a civilized society. That the peace of a community in which this conduct is pursued throughout by an alienated body of employers or proprietors, can be secure, it is vain to imagine. But that it may be partially pursued with impunity, the British dominions present instances too obvious, of which that of large classes of the hand-loom weavers is one. For when the employer is wholly exempt from the parochial burthens entailed by his hands, it is, to any moral purpose, as though there were no poor-law.

Poor-Laws the legal form of important moral bonds.

The purposes of charity which are pursued by a poor-law are those which ought to form one of the strongest bonds of society; and they offer the main point at which common opinion can exercise a daily influence on the conduct of individuals towards their dependents,—an influence the more necessary as the social distance, and, too often, in consequence of this, even the geographical distance, between the man of property and the unskilled labourer, increases. This greater relative distance, when the condition of the labourer is *positively* advanced by the change, is a subject of no regret; but without such an advance, which *moral* bonds between the low-skilled masses and their employers are necessary to ensure, it is a ground for the deepest solicitude.

Wages sometimes almost as demoralizing in their nature as parish pay.

It is a remarkable, but indisputable fact, that *wages* may, however, have almost as demoralizing an effect as *parish pay*, when, as we see in the single-hand ribbon trade, and in the factory system of the North, they set a premium on bringing to market the industrial services of a wife and children; or when they are employed still more directly in the encouragement of improvident marriages, by the refusal of equal wages to the married and the unmarried labourer, as is largely the case in the agricultural districts. These arrangements produce every moral evil attendant on a public largess system, short of those accruing from the positive dissociation of labour from its reward. The one abuse is, however, becoming a subject for the slow intervention of the State; the other demands a moral development among all classes, the absence of which is truly lamentable.

Modern improvement in Poor-Law administration.

That the poor-law administration of the whole district has of late years been undergoing a rapid improvement, cannot be doubted. The directors of the poor in Coventry are exempted, as an incorporated body, from the superintendence of the Poor Law Commissioners. But all the other parishes of the weaving districts are included in the unions of Foleshill and of Nuneaton respectively, with the exception of Bedworth and the hamlet of Hartshill, which form, with a number of dispersed parishes in Leicestershire and Warwickshire, a union under Gilbert's Act. Beyond ascertaining the extent, and pointing out the operation of the relief

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Charities.

distributed among the manufacturing population of this district, I did not deem it within my province to examine into the details of the poor-law administration, since provision has already been made for correcting its irregularities, which will probably, before long, be extended, in some form, to the places at present exempt from its operation.

Present Poor-Law administration of the district.

It will be seen, from the accompanying Table of the poor's rates levied in the city of Coventry and in the parish of Foleshill for a long succession of years,—the former comprising the best branches of the trade, and the latter a large section of the single-hand branch,—that the rates are now lighter, as compared with the population, than at any former period within the last 40 years—long previous, it will be seen, the city rates had been very heavy. The increase in levies does not tally accurately with the periods of bad trade; but is obviously, as in 1830, sometimes caused by loose management. Indeed, the decrease of late years cannot be supposed to indicate wholly a corresponding improvement in the condition of the people, but rather a reform in the system of management, and a gradual abandonment of payments in aid of wages. I have also subjoined a statement of the annual expenditure in relief of the poor in the city parishes during a more brief period; and the detail of the expenditure in the two rural unions for the quarter ended 22d of December, 1838. The city levies are partly from Sir W. M. Eden's work, and partly furnished by E. H. Woodcock, Esq., one of the directors. The Foleshill levies are from Mr. George Eld's manuscript Statistical History of Foleshill. It should be observed that there is an increasing disinclination among the *freemen* to resort to parish relief, because it disfranchises them.

Table of the Amount of Poor's Rates levied in each Year in the incorporated Parishes of St. Michael and The Holy Trinity, in the City of Coventry, and also in the adjoining Rural Weaving Parish of Foleshill, during the latter portion of the last, and the past Years of the present Century.

Year.	United City Parishes.	Parish of Foleshill.	Years.	United City Parishes.	Parish of Foleshill.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.		£. s. d.	£. s. d.
1606	..	3 7 3	1807	6,952 5 5	2,203 4 5
1700	..	70 16 10	1808	7,647 12 10	2,769 2 3
1750	..	77 12 9	1809	10,557 8 0	2,685 15 6
1754	..	131 18 3	1810	11,159 10 6	2,594 8 2
1760	3,161 6 3	..	1811	11,773 1 9	2,226 17 8
1774	..	694 13 3			
1775	2,099 12 6	577 6 11½	Population	17,923	3,480
1776	2,819 18 6	580 15 7¼			
1777	3,036 3 6	722 6 3¾	1812	12,026 5 0	2,769 12 4
1778	2,802 4 0	828 15 11¼	1813	13,122 18 6	2,601 3 7
1779	2,329 12 6	617 8 1½	1814	10,710 2 0	2,482 18 9
1780	2,751 9 0	602 11 5	1815	9,153 15 9	1,671 4 9
1781	2,083 12 6	653 0 4¼	1816	15,695 17 0	1,655 8 7
1782	3,404 14 6	833 13 2	1817	18,832 9 0	3,863 14 9½
1783	4,007 16 6	..	1818	15,585 19 7	3,637 7 2½
1784	3,805 10 0	..	1819	14,319 4 1	4,039 1 7½
1785	4,412 10 0	..	1820	13,447 3 6	3,300 0 0
1786	3,092 16 0	..	1821	13,983 11 9	3,145 18 10½
1787	3,515 8 0	..			
1788	3,586 4 0	..	Population	21,448	4,937
1789	2,988 13 0	863 2 1			
1790	3,453 16 0	717 13 2	1822	11,207 5 0	2,884 1 1½
1791	3,312 16 9	754 7 1	1823	10,743 10 9	2,406 10 6
1792	3,734 6 0	838 0 9¾	1824	10,020 15 1½	2,640 5 0
1793	5,414 4 6	1,518 14 10½	1825	8,924 16 6	2,625 3 0
1794	4,794 19 0	1,302 19 10½	1826	13,646 6 9	2,663 3 0
1795	..	1,761 17 7½	1827	11,540 3 10	2,780 4 2
1796	.. ..	2,100 18 10½	1828	8,889 0 3	2,730 3 0
1797	..	1,730 4 8	1829	16,089 13 5	3,057 14 6
1798	..	1,465 19 11	1830	20,179 16 9	4,511 18 10
1799	..	1,656 9 0	1831	15,909 18 8	3,751 1 9
1800	..	4,053 9 2			
1801	17,988 7 0	4,650 14 4	Population	27,298	6,969
Population	16,034	3,026	1832	15,000 11 4	4,187 9 9
			1833	18,080 18 3½	4,282 0 11
1802	19,292 3 6	1,862 13 10	1834	11,181 15 10	3,557 16 9½
1803	10,743 7 6	2,613 18 9	1835	10,226 17 10	3,441 0 0
1804	12,076 9 6	2,117 14 0	1836	10,173 0 6	2,263 0 0
1805	9,578 6 0	1,566 12 4	1837	9,687 14 4	
1806	8,920 0 9	2,203 13 2	1838	7,267 16 9	

The following abstracts show the nature and extent of the current poor's-rate expenditure in the two rural parishes.

FOLESHILL UNION. QUARTERLY ABSTRACT, showing the Number of Paupers Relieved, the Amount of

PARISHES.	NUMBER OF PAUPERS RELIEVED																		
	Aged, Infirm, partially and wholly disabled. 1					Orphans, Foundlings, & Children of Widows remarried, age under 16.* 2		Illegitimate Children under 16, without their Mothers. 3		Insane Persons, Lunatics, and Idiots. 4		4		4		ABLE-BODIED. Illegitimate Children under 16, with their Mothers, 5		ABLE-BODIED. Widows, and Women whose Husbands have deserted them, or are transported, having a Child or Children under 16 dependent on them. 6		
	In-door.			Out-door.						In door.		Out-door.				In-door.		In-door.		Out-door.
	Adults.											In Asylum.		Elsewhere.						
	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Males.	Females.	In-door.	Out-door.	In-door.	Out-door.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Mothers.	Children.	Mothers.	Children.	Mothers.
Foleshill	8	7	2	42	86	2	6	2	..	1	2	1	..	..	1	..	..	2	5	12
Ansty	..	1	..	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Exhall	2	3	..	11	26	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Keresley	..	..	..	..	5	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Stoke	3	2	..	5	9	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wyken	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Sowe	2	..	..	3	11	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Binley	..	1	..	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Shilton	1	..	..	2	3	..	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	2
Willenhall	1	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Withybrooke	..	..	..	1	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Total	17	14	2	64	159	2	13	2	..	1	4	1	..	1	1	1	1	2	7	22
As compared with the corresponding Quarter of last Year — Increase	5	..	2	5	7	..	..	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	1	1	1	1	2	3
As compared with the corresponding Quarter of last Year — Diminution	..	3	..	..	..	14	7	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

PARISHES.	EXPENDITURE.												BALANCES.					
	Proportion of In-Maintenance.			Out-relief.			Proportion of Establishment Charges.			Registrar's Fees, under the Act for Registering Births and Deaths.			Total.			Balance due to the Parish.			Balance due from the Parish.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Foleshill	70	16	0	163	14	4	74	17	4¾	21	7	0	330	14	8¾	..			3	6	4
Ansty	0	0	6	7	15	7½	3	14	3¼	0	5	0	11	15	4¾	6	1	6¾	..		
Exhall	11	7	6	49	19	7½	14	14	2½	1	12	0	77	13	4	..			16	5	3¾
Keresley	..			6	9	5	2	11	3¼	1	4	0	10	4	8¼	2	16	6	..		
Stoke	10	17	0	14	18	7	5	6	10¼	2	16	0	33	18	5¼	..			0	9	5
Wyken	5	7	6	8	11	2	3	18	1¼	0	5	6	18	2	3¼	..			1	8	1¼
Sowe	16	13	6	22	10	3¾	13	10	8¾	3	16	6	56	11	0½	..			6	12	9¾
Binley	2	5	6	8	0	11	3	8	6¼	0	11	0	14	5	11¼	1	1	3¾	..		
Shilton	2	5	6	10	15	11½	6	7	5½	1	11	6	21	0	5	6	2	10	..		
Willmhall	2	5	6	2	18	6	2	4	6¼	0	8	6	7	17	0¾	1	8	10¾	..		
Withybrooke	2	5	6	8	9	10	4	0	0¼	1	5	0	16	0	4¼	1	6	9⅓	..		
Total	124	4	0	304	4	3¼	134	13	4¾	35	2	0	598	3	8	18	17	11	28	1	11¾
As compared with the corresponding Quarter of last year — Increase	..			..			50	16	1¾	35	2	0	68	13	4¾	..			3	5	0
As compared with the corresponding Quarter of last year — Diminution	4	15	0	12	9	8½	..			..			..			46	11	10¾			

Average Weekly Cost per Head of the In-door Paupers.	WORKHOUSES NOW IN USE. Houses, where situate.	Classes of Paupers.	Number of In-door Paupers in each, at commencement of the Quarter.	Number of Births in the Quarter.	Number admitted during the Quarter.	Number discharged during the Quarter.	Number of Deaths in the Quarter.	Number of In-door Paupers at the end of the Quarter.
Food 2s. 5¾d.	Foleshill	2, 3, 5, 6. 7.	31	..	23	22	..	32
Clothing 1s. 0¼d.	Exhall	1, 4.	23	..	4	2	..	25

Money Expended, and the Balances due to and from the several Parishes, for the Quarter ending 22nd Dec. 1838.

AS PER RELIEF LISTS.

ABLE-BODIED.																										
On Account of Sickness or Accident. 7					Out of Work and other Causes. 8					Vagrants and Paupers not belonging to any Parish of the Union. 9					TOTALS. In-door.				TOTALS. Out-door.					Number of Cases of Medical Relief.	
In-door.			Out-door.		In-door.			Out door.		In-door.			Out-door.		Adults.				Adults.						
Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Males.	Females.	Adults. Males.	Adults. Females.	Children under 16.	Male.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16 included in the preceding columns.	Children under 16 relieved with their Parents, as per Out-relief List, and not included in preceding cols.	Total.	In-door.	Out-door.
1	1	..	5	7	1	4	10	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	11	16	21	48	50	107	6	73	236	4	29
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	6	..	5	11	..	3
..	..	..	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	2	3	..	5	14	31	2	23	70	..	5
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	2	8	..	..
..	..	..	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	2	..	5	7	10	..	1	18	..	1
..	..	..	3	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	..	..	..	1	5	6	3	7	..	14	24	1	3
..	1	..	3	5	..	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	1	1	3	4	3	10	7	18	..	14	39	1	14
..	..	..	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	1	6	..	7	14	..	2
..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	3	6	5	10	24	..	5
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	2	..	..	2	..	..
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	1	6	..	..	7	..	3
1	2	..	16	20	1	5	11	..	..	1	..	5	4	3	21	28	30	79	86	205	13	149	453	6	65
..	1	..	..	..	1	..	5	..	..	1	..	5	1	1	5	..	1	6	..	..	8	..	..	..	..
..	..	1	12	4	..	..	..	9	19	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14	13	..	17	52	..	..

OFFICERS ON SERVICE IN THE UNION.

Name.	Office.	Salary per Annum.
Richard Dewes	Clerk	80*l.*
James Bray	Relieving Officer	80*l.*
William Wilmot	Auditor	15*l.*
John Chattaway	Master	50*l.*
Sarah Chattaway	Matron, Foleshill House	
Elizabeth Brown	Matron, Exhall House	15*l.*
Ann Brown	Schoolmistress	15*l.*
Edward Press Turner	Medical Officer	4*s.* 6*d.* per case, Foleshill District
		6*s.* do. Exhall do.
Charles Henry Parsons	Ditto	6*s.* do. Sowe do.

	£.	s.	d.
Total Union Law Charges debited to Establishment		..	
Total Medical Expenses debited to do.	17	12	6
Total Earnings of Paupers credited to do.		..	

Average Contract Prices, during the Quarter, of Provisions and other Articles used in the Union.

	Bread.	Meat.	Butter.	Cheese.	Potatoes.	Peas.	Oatmeal.	Candles.	Soap.	Coals.	Flour.	Tea.	Sugar.	Milk.
Quantity	4 lb. of	lb. of	lbs. of	lbs. of	cwt. of	qts. of	bushels of	lbs. of	lbs. of	ton of	14 lbs. of	lbs. of	lbs. of	quart of
Description*	Brown	Beef and Mutton	Fresh	Good		White		Dips	Mottled			Black	Moist	
Price	at 5½*d.*	at 3¾*d.*	at 1*s.* 3*d.*	at 6*d.*	at 2*s.* 9½*d.*	at 2¼*d.*	at 7*s.*	at 6*d.*	at 6*d.*	at 10*s*	at 3*s.* 6*d.*	at 3*s.* 1*d.*	at 7*d.*	at 1*d.*

A true Abstract from the Relief-Books, Medical Returns, and the Ledger of the Foleshill Union, on this the fifth day of January, 1839.

Richard Dewes,
Clerk to the Board of Guardians.

This Abstract has been submitted to me, together with the Relief Books, Medical Returns, and the Ledger, with which I have compared it, and I hereby certify that the items it contains are correctly abstracted therefrom.

Foleshill Union, 12th Jan., 1839.

William Wilmott,
Auditor.

* As set forth in the Contracts.

NUNEATON UNION.—Quarterly Abstract, showing the Number of Paupers Relieved, the Amount of

PARISHES.	NUMBER OF PAUPERS RELIEVED																			
	Aged, Infirm, partially and wholly disabled. 1					Orphans, Foundlings, and Children of Widows remarried,—age under 16*. 2		Illegitimate Children under 16, without their Mothers. 3		Insane Persons, Lunatics, and Idiots. 4		4		4		ABLE-BODIED. Illegitimate Children under 16, with their Mothers. 5		Widows, and Women whose Husbands have deserted them, or are transported, having a Child or Children under 16 dependent on them. 6		
	In-door.			Out-door.						In-door.		Out-door.				In-door.		In-door.		Out-door.
	Adults.											In Asylum.		Elsewhere.						
	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Males.	Females.	In-door.	Out-door.	In-door.	Out-door.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Mothers.	Children.	Mothers.	Children.	Mothers.
Nuneaton	16	12	..	60	108	4	9	4	9	2	5	1	1	..	..	6	8	..	..	33
Arley	..	1	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Astley	1	..	..	3	3	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	3
Bulkington	2	3	..	20	44	..	2	1	2	2	3	..	..	..	..	3	3	..	..	8
Caldecote	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Chilvers Coton	6	6	..	30	40	..	3	1	3	..	1	..	..	..	..	2	3	..	..	15
Weddington	..	..	..	4	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Total	25	22	..	117	200	4	14	6	17	4	9	1	1	..	..	11	14	..	2	64
As compared with the corresponding Quarter of last Year { Increase / Diminution }																				

PARISHES.	EXPENDITURE.															BALANCES.					
	Clothing.			Proportion of In-Maintenance.			Out-Relief.			Proportion of Establishment Charges.			Registration.			Total.			Balance due to the Parish.			Balance due from the Parish.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Nuneaton	18	15	1½	116	12	5½	417	3	4	85	18	6	6	0	0	644	9	5	123	7	3	..		
Arley	0	0	6	2	1	8½	11	8	6	3	15	0	0	3	0	17	8	8½	1	9	11	..		
Astley	0	14	4	6	5	1½	22	19	10¾	7	8	0	0	5	0	37	12	4½	2	1	8¾	..		
Bulkington	2	14	11	30	5	5½	131	5	2	32	4	0	1	10	0	197	9	6½	50	2	9	..		
Caldecote	..			..			4	15	4	1	10	0	0	2	0	6	7	4	3	4	9	..		
Chilvers Coton	9	4	7	41	16	11	163	14	10¼	40	1	0	2	0	0	256	17	4¼	43	10	6½	..		
Weddington	..			..			22	5	8	3	9	0	0	2	0	25	16	8	..			7	12	5½
Total	31	9	5½	197	1	8	773	12	9	174	5	6	10	2	0	1186	1	4½	223	16	11¼	7	12	5½
As compared with the corresponding Quarter of last Year { Increase / Diminution }																								

Average Weekly Cost per Head of the In-door Paupers.	WORKHOUSES NOW IN USE.							
	Houses where situate.	Classes of Paupers.	Number of In-door Paupers in each, at commencement of the Quarter.	Number of Births in the Quarter.	Number admitted during the Quarter.	Number discharged during the Quarter.	Number of Deaths in the Quarter.	Number of In-door Paupers at the end of the Quarter.
Food . . 2s. 9d.	Nuneaton . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Clothing . 0s. 5¾d.	Chilvers Coton .	..	79	51	51	15	3	131
Total . 3s. 2¾d.								

* This only applies to the Children of widows married before the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act.

Money expended, and the Balances due to and from the several Parishes, for the Quarter ending 22nd Dec., 1838.

AS PER RELIEF LISTS.

ABLE-BODIED.															TOTALS.									Number of Cases of Medical Relief.	
On Account of Sickness or Accident. 7					Out of Work and other Causes. 8					Vagrants and Paupers not belonging to any Parish of the Union. 9					In-door.				Out-door.						
In-door.			Out-door.		In-door.			Out-door.		In-door.			Out-door.		Adults.		Children under 16.	Total	Adults.		Children under 16 included in the preceding columns.	Children under 16 relieved with their Parents; as per Out-relief List, and not included in preceding cols.	Total.	In-door.	Out-door.
Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Children under 16.	Males.	Females.	Adults Males.	Adults Females.	Children under 16.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.			Males.	Females.					
..	1	..	11	11	4	3	14	14	15	..	1	3	1	1	22	28	33	83	87	169	18	143	417		
..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	1	5	..	11	17		
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	3	3	8	2	8	21		
..	..	..	8	1	..	..	..	7	4	..	..	..	..	..	4	9	4	17	35	57	4	40	136		
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	4	6		
1	1	..	6	4	5	1	..	11	7	..	..	..	..	..	12	11	4	27	47	66	6	77	196		
..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	7	1	13	26		
1	2	..	26	18	9	4	14	33	30	..	1	3	1	1	39	49	43	131	178	314	31	296	819		

OFFICERS ON SERVICE IN THE UNION.

Name.	Office.	Salary per Annum.
George William Craddock	Clerk	65*l.*
James William Buchanan	Auditor	20*l.*
Edward Nason	Surgeon N.E. District	60*l.*
John Bond	Surgeon Coton District	55*l.*
Thomas Ralphs	Relieving Officer	90*l.*
Thomas Winters	Workhouse Master, N. Eaton	40*l.*
Thomas Adie	Workhouse Master, C. Coton	30*l.*

	£.	s.	d.
Total Union Law Charges debited to Establishment			
Total Medical Expenses debited to do.			
Total Earnings of Paupers credited to do.			

Average Contract Prices, during the Quarter, of Provisions and other Articles used in the Union.

	Bread.	Meat.	Butter	Cheese.	Potatoes.	Peas.	Oatmeal.	Candles.	Soap.	Coals.	Flour.	Sugar.	Tea.
Quantity .	4 lbs.	1 stone	12 lbs.	30 lbs.	1 cwt.	32 qts.	100 lbs.	12 lbs.	12 lbs,	1 ton	14 lbs.	20 lbs.	1 lb.
Description*	of Brown	of	of	of	of	of	of	of	of	of	of	of	of
Price . .	at 7*d.*	at 3*s.* 4*d.*	at 10*s.* 6*d.*	at 18*s.* 1½*d.*	at 2*s.* 8½*d.*	at 7*s.*	at 20*s.*	at 6*s.* 6*d.*	at 5*s.* 6*d.*	at 7*s.* 3*d.*	at 3*s.* 3*d.*	at 10*s.*	at 3*s.* 4*d.*

A true Abstract from the Relief Books, Medical Returns, and the Ledger of the Nuneaton Union, on this the eleventh day of February, 1839.

Geo. William Craddock,
Clerk to the Board of Guardians.

This Abstract has been submitted to me, together with the Relief Books, Medical Returns, and the Ledger, with which I have compared it, and I hereby certify that the items it contains are correctly abstracted therefrom.

Nuneaton Union, 13th Feb., 1839.

J. W. Buchanan,
Auditor.

* As set forth in the Contracts.

A Return showing the Amount Expended in the Relief of the Poor of the Incorporated Parishes

Population in 1831.	Year ending at Easter 1803.	Years ending at Easter.		Years ending on									
		1813	1814	1815	1816	1817	1818	1819	1820	1821	1822	1823	1824
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
27,070	8,662	9,725	8,289	7,202	7,643	14,415	17,572	12,952	14,084	13,857	12,494	10,782	10,725

Midland District.

Report from *J Fletcher*, Esq.

CHARITIES.

Large revenues arising from ancient charitable gifts.

The charities of the city of Coventry are very ancient and numerous, and the greater part of them have been founded by members of the corporation. The mismanagement of the corporation charities, for at least a century previous to 1828, had been very gross. Their redemption from neglect, abuse, and confusion was then commenced by Mr. George Eld, and a few other active corporators; and since the passing of the Corporation Reform Act they have been withdrawn from the custody of the corporation, and vested in three distinct boards of trustees, that of the Church Charities, that of Sir Thomas White's Charity, and that of the General Charities.

The income derived from the Municipal Charity estates between January 1st, 1837, and January 1st, 1838, is thus stated in a parliamentary paper (266, Sess. 1839):—

Charities commonly called the "Church Charities."

"Church charities."

	£.	s.	d.
John Hale's charity, for the support of the Free Grammar School	798	0	10
William Ford's charity, for the support of a hospital called Ford's and Pisford's Hospital, including divers minor charities in aid thereof	414	4	5
Lane's charity, for the fitting of poor scholars for the University, and for their support there, and for the relief of clergymen's widows	214	10	0
Chambers' charities, partly for the maintenance of St. Michael's Church, and partly for relief of poor persons	40	0	0
Cockeson's charity, for the relief of poor persons	16	5	0
Wheate's charity, for the assistance of poor scholars at the University, and for the care of the library at the Free School	6	13	4
Baron's charity, for a sermon, and to be paid to churchwardens to be bestowed in bread	2	0	0
Thomas Bond's charity, for the support of a hospital for poor men and a nurse	1,048	14	11
	£2,540	8	6

No charges have yet been made by their solicttor for this period, nor is any exceeding 10*l.* for this period expected. This board allow their receiver, who is a solicitor, two and a half per cent on the rents collected, on all the sums except the last (Thomas Bond's, 1,048*l.* 14*s.* 11*d.*), which has been paid. The estates belonging to Thomas Bond's Charity are vested in trustees, who let, set, and manage the estates, and pay over the surplus rents to this board.

This board have not published their accounts, nor was it usual for their predecessors to do so.

JAMES BECK, *Chairman.*

30*th November*, 1838.

"Sir Thomas White's Charity."

"Sir Thomas White's charity."

	£.	s.	d.
By rental of real estates	2,228	5	11
Dividends of money in the Funds, which has arisen from the rents of the said real estates, and is still unconverted	201	2	2
	£2,429	8	1
The amount of legal charges made for the same period by the solicitors appointed by this board of trustees is	£143	4	4
The clerk to these trustees is also a solicitor, and his bill for the same period amounts to	£14	15	1

This board have not published their accounts, nor was it usual or their predecessors to do so.

JOHN ROYLE, Jun., *Clerk.*

13*th December*, 1838.

"General Charities."

"General charities."

	£.	s.	d.
Sir Thomas White's charity for loans	650	0	0
Mr. Thomas Wheatley's charity for the support of an hospital, and also for the education and clothing of poor boys, including divers minor charities in aid thereof	588	4	1
Carried forward	£1,238	4	1

in the City of Coventry, in each Year for which Returns have been laid before Parliament.

the 25th March.

1825	1826	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831	1832	1833	1834	1835	1836	1837	1838
£. 9,259	£. 9,917	£. 12,257	£. 10,888	£. 11,624	£. 23,138	£. 15,744	£. 14,771	MSS. destroyed	£. 10,162	£. 9,424	£. 7,712	£. 5,910	£. 6,975

	£.	s.	d.
Brought forward . .	1238	4	1
Mr. Thomas Jesson's charity, for placing poor boys apprentice, for loans to tradesmen, and for distribution amongst poor folk, especially such as have come by hurts or misfortunes in their members at their work, or otherwise by casualty distressed	430	0	0
Mr. Thomas Wale's charity, for the maintenance of a free school, and the residue for distribution amongst poor people	294	19	6
Mr. Thomas Crow's charity, for an allowance of 2*s.* per week to eight poor women, and for distribution amongst poor people	147	0	0
Mr. Simon Norton's charity, for the purchase of bread to be distributed weekly, and for the purchase of waistcoats, and smocks for poor widows	111	7	10
Mr. Samuel Collins's (Fillongley) charity for the binding of apprentices .	60	0	0
Mr. Samuel Collins's (Foleshill) charity for the binding of apprentices .	90	0	0
Mr. William Jelliff's charity, for the purchase of bread, to be disposed of weekly, and the residue for distribution amongst poor housekeepers .	38	0	0
Mr. Richard Barker's charity, for distribution amongst 10 poor widows, the Bablake men, the Bablake boys, and the inmates of Ford's Hospital .	10	0	0
Mr. Joseph Symcox's charity, for the binding of apprentices . . .	6	0	0
	£2427	11	5

The trustees have appointed a clerk (who is also their solicitor), and who is entitled to one-seventieth part of the rents arising from the estates belonging to the trustees of Sir Thomas White's charity, pursuant to a decree of the Court of Chancery, and which amounts to 29*l.* 10*s.* annually, or thereabouts. The board have also appointed a clerk, with an annual salary of 20*l.*, for all the other charities under the management of this board, to be paid by the respective charities, and in the proportions following, namely, Wale's Charity, 5*l.*; Jesson's Charity, 4*l.*; Wheatley's Charity, 8*l.*; and Crow's Charity, 3*l.*; but no payment was made to him, either on account of such salary, for legal charges, or otherwise, during the period above mentioned.

The board have also appointed a receiver of the rents of Wheatley's Charity, at an annual salary of 25*l.* They have also appointed another receiver of the rents of Jesson's, Crows, Collins's, and Symcox's Charities; and another receiver of the rents of Wale's, Norton's, Jelliff's, and Barker's charities, and have agreed to allow the two last above-mentioned receivers two and a half per cent. on the amouunt of rents collected.

The trustees have also appointed a messenger to the board, at an annual salary of 15*l.* from Lady-day, 1838.

The estates belonging to Sir Thomas White's Charity are vested in trustees, who let, set, and manage the same, and pay over to this board certain proportions of the surplus rents, to be disposed of pursuant to a decree of the Court of Chancery made in 1723, and the order of the Lord Chancellor in 1837.

This board of trustees have not published their accounts, nor was it usual for their predecessors to do so, nor has it been done by any other board of trustees in this city.

15*th January*, 1839. R. K. Rotherham, *Chairman.*

Purposes of these funds, and difficulty of distributing them without producing mischief through the too wide anticipation of their benefits.

Some of the charity funds are devoted to purposes of education, but others are wholly of an eleemosynary description; and when it is borne in mind that every exertion of industry or act of providence checked, by the removal of the stimulus of self-interest or self-preservation, is a dead loss to society, it will certainly appear difficult to devise a scheme by which to administer, without incurring much of such loss, large funds which must be applied in gifts to those who can make out the best case as objects of *pity*. It appears exceedingly invidious to attack institutions to the benefits of which the poorer classes have an undoubted right; which the trustees faithfully administer with gratification to themselves; and the claim to which the freemen esteem one of their most valuable rights. But, when it is put upon its best footing, the present system is to a great extent only a mischievous *lottery*, the candidates being more numerous than the prizes, and relying so much and to such an extent on the prospect of enjoying somewhat of these common funds, that the balance of misery induced over the good rendered by them is considered by some of the inhabitants to be most decisive. Whether such funds, with legislative sanction, might not be so administered, equally for the benefit of the poorer classes, and yet so as to invigorate rather than to benumb

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Charities.

Self-supporting dispensary.

the fundamental virtues of civil life, is worthy of the deepest consideration. The self-supporting dispensary embodies a principle capable of great and beneficial extension.

The Coventry Self-supporting Dispensary was instituted in the spring of 1831, on the principles which had been laid down by Mr. Smith, of Southam, about 1822, who proposed that such institutions should consist of three classes of members;—1st, honorary subscribers; 2nd, free members of the labouring classes; and, 3rd, paupers. These principles had in several places been acted upon, but the Coventry Dispensary had no exact model. The talent and perseverance of its founders, however, rendered its success complete; and, in 1834, it was a subject of investigation before a Committee of the House of Commons, before which one of its medical officers was summoned. As uniting an exercise of charity, with an encouragement to industry and providence, it demands especial notice, and is worthy of general imitation. The following is its constitution, as described in the general rules:—

Objects and constitution.

"1. The object of this institution is to enable the labouring classes to insure to themselves and their families efficient medical advice and medicine during illness, by their own small periodical payments during health; and by the contributions of the more opulent, to assist them in attaining this object, and to afford them other comforts in sickness which their own wages are insufficient to procure.

"2. The funds of the institution are derived from the payments of the working classes, who are termed free members, and from the subscriptions of the honorary members, who, on becoming donors of ten guineas at one time, or annual subscribers of one guinea, shall be governors. The subscriptions of the governors commence on the 25th of March, and shall be paid in advance.

"3. The funds shall be kept in two distinct accounts, to be called 'The Free Members' Fund," and "The Honorary Fund." The Free Members' Fund, consisting of the payments of the free members, shall defray the cost of drugs, and the remainder be divided among the surgeons in such proportions as the committee may decide at the end of every half year. The Honorary Fund, which is derived from the donations and subscriptions of the governors, shall be expended in the support of the establishment, and in the supply of such comforts in broth, cordials, linen, &c. as the patients may need.

"4. The general management of the institution, the power of making and repealing laws, and of electing and removing officers, is vested in the patron, the vice-presidents, and governors, who will meet annually on the 25th of March, to receive from their committee a report of the accounts and proceedings of the institution during the year. Five governors, or the committee, shall have the power of calling at any time, through the honorary secretary, a general meeting of the governors, sixteen of whom shall constitute a quorum."

Provision is then made for the appointment of a committee, a sub-committee, a honorary secretary, a clerk, a resident dispenser, surgeons, and a consulting physician, and for various minutiæ of business.

"10. A committee of ladies, appointed at the annual meeting of the governors, shall be requested to promote the general objects of the institution by visiting the sick free members, and superintending the distribution of loans of linen, and of such other comforts in wine, broth, &c. as the medical officers may deem necessary. The surgeons shall leave with the matron a list of those patients whom it may be proper for the ladies to visit."

Rules for the Free Members.

Rules.

"1. The Free Members shall consist of working persons and servants, their wives and children, not receiving parish relief, and who are unable to pay for medical advice in the usual manner.

"2. Any such person wishing to become a Free Member, must leave his or her name, age, residence, and occupation, at the Dispensary, and deposit one month's subscription.

"3. Every Free Member above twelve years of age shall pay one penny, and under that age, one halfpenny a week; except in a family consisting of more than two children, when one penny a week shall be considered sufficient for all under twelve years of age. Servants shall pay five shillings a year, and in not less than half-yearly payments.

"4. The payments of the Free Members shall be made in advance. No one will be entitled to the benefits of the institution, if in arrear, and each family shall pay a fine of one penny for the arrear of every week. If any member shall be more than four weeks in arrear, his or her name shall be erased from the books.

"5. Benefit societies will be received as subscribers to the Dispensary, and their members entitled to all the benefits of the institution. The rate of subscription shall be three shillings a year for each member. The payments to be made by the stewards quarterly, and in advance.

"6. No one actually labouring under sickness can be admitted a Free Member unless two healthy persons above twelve years old enter at the same time, and each pay the whole year's subscription in advance. Any such person unable to procure two others to enter with him shall, by paying ten shillings, be entitled to the privileges of a Free Member for three months; and may afterwards continue a member by paying the usual rate of subscription.

"7. If any Free Member shall be discovered by the committee to be ineligible to the benefits of the institution, his or her name shall be erased from the books.

"8. Every Free Member shall have the choice of whichever surgeon he may prefer; but it will be expected that he do not change his medical attendant during his illness. He may have a consultation of the medical officers, if it be thought advisable.

"9. Those patients who are able to do so, must attend at the Dispensary between ten and eleven in the morning, bringing their admission ticket at the first visit, and afterwards their prescription paper. Those who are too ill to attend at the Dispensary, must send their tickets, before nine o'clock in the morning, to the surgeon whom they wish to call upon them, and he will visit them at their own homes. In cases of accident or sudden illness, they can have the attendance of either of the surgeons, on sending their ticket to his residence.

"10. No Free Member will be visited at his own home if he reside beyond one mile from the institution.

"11. Any married Free Member, being pregnant, may have the attendance of whichever surgeon she may prefer, on depositing, at the Dispensary, ten shillings and sixpence, one month before her expected confinement.

"12. When considered necessary by the medical gentlemen, linen will be lent, and cordials broth, and other comforts given to the Free Members by the ladies' committee.

"13. Patients must find their own bottles, bandages, &c.

"14. The children of Free Members, and of all poor persons, may be vaccinated, *gratis*, on any Wednesday or Thursday morning at eleven o'clock.

"15. The surgeons will attend at the Dispensary at ten o'clock every morning, except Sunday."

No pauper class attached.

It was originally proposed to have a parish pauper class, but there was an opposition on the part of some of the medical gentlemen of the town to a self-supporting dispensary, and the directors of the poor, by the chairman's casting vote, refused to give to the new institution the attendance of the parochial poor; and there is no doubt that this decision, by more completely alienating it from the stigma of pauperism, was favourable to the rapid success of the institution. Its advantages are thus summed up in the Fifth Annual Report of the Committee, made in March, 1836:—

Retrospect of its progress.

"In presenting to its Governors and friends the Fifth Annual Report of the Coventry Self-supporting Dispensary, the Committee have peculiar satisfaction in being able to state that every year adds to its stability and usefulness. When they look back on the origin and early progress of this Institution; when they consider the difficulties which surrounded its commencement; that, with all the valuable assistance in the explanation of his views which the enlightened projector of Self-supporting Dispensaries could afford them, they had themselves the task, without precedent for their direction, of adapting the system to the local circumstances of this city, they cannot but regard the success of their experiment as a complete triumph of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and as a most important proof of the great benefits they are calculated to confer upon the working classes.

Success of the institution.

"The Committee feel likewise assured that, to those who have rendered this dispensary their disinterested support, it will be an extremely gratifying reflection that its benefits have by no means been confined to their own immediate neighbourhood. Since its commencement, especially within the last two years, the publication of its Rules and Reports has led, in various parts of the country, to the establishment of several similar institutions; in framing the constitution of which, the plan of the Coventry Dispensary has formed the chief guide.

"The increasing impression in favour of self-supporting dispensaries; the increased necessity for their establishment created by the new Poor Law arrangement; and the distinguished station in the philanthropic and medical world which this dispensary now holds, seem to require, on the present occasion, a more particular reference to the principles and plan upon which it is formed, than the Reports of previous years have usually contained. In accordance with this object, after due consideration, and after five years' experience in conducting the affairs of the Coventry Self-supporting Dispensary, the Committee confidently offer to the public the following brief summary of the principal advantages of these institutions.

"They render medical aid more accessible to the poor than any other kind of dispensary; and by providing them with medical advice in the earliest stages of sickness, tend to prevent disease among that class of persons, and to mitigate the numerous evils consequent on delay in the application of efficient remedies.

Its advantages.

"The mode of extending medical relief to the sick poor in these institutions, is more satisfactory to the patients than in any other, as they have the choice of their medical adviser, and receive his services without any sacrifice of independence, and without the sense of degradation which attends the reception of gratuitous charity.

"In a moral point of view, self-supporting dispensaries are highly important in assisting the poorer classes to maintain themselves in honest reliance on their own industry, in exciting and encouraging among them habits of prudence, forethought, providence, and mutual assistance, and in thus aiding friendly societies, savings banks, and all other institutions calculated to render them permanently independent, and to elevate the feelings, character, and condition of the working community.

"The financial superiority of these institutions is sufficiently apparent, from the fact that during the past year, in the Coventry dispensary, the sum of 90*l.* 1*s.* 9*d.* from honorary subscribers has supplied the medical wants of 2,500 persons for the whole year.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Charities.

"The Committee are unwilling to close these few observations on the peculiar benefits of self-supporting dispensaries, without alluding to the great advantages they offer to the medical profession. They cannot but consider it far more conducive to the honour and respectability of that profession, and more accordant with the elevated character by which it should be distinguished, for its members to receive from an institution of this kind, a fair remuneration for their time and attention, than to send to poor persons bills for medicine, which, however moderate, are to them oppressive, and often lead to most injurious delay in their application for medical assistance. But it is unnecessary for the Committee further to remark on this point, as they find, that, wherever these institutions have lately been proposed, medical men have been their most zealous and active promoters."

Proportion of weavers who are subscribers, and results of the medical reports.

Of the free members of the Self-Supporting Dispensary, perhaps two-thirds are weavers, and great numbers are watchmakers and dyers, some are servants, and a few are shop-keepers of the little huckster class; but "persons who live by the employment of capital" are not generally allowed to be free members. It is the object of the institution to admit those only who live by manual labour, and the committee have a discretionary power even to reject such of this class as are supposed to be able to pay for medical assistance in the usual manner.*

The Medical Report by the Dispensary officers, presented in June, 1838, confirms the previous testimony as to the character of sickness to which the weavers are most predisposed :—

"The number of patients attended from March 26, 1837, to March 25, 1838, is 1382.

Under treatment at the last Report	60
Admitted since the last Report	1322
	1382
Cured	1234
Relieved	33
Dead	26
Under treatment	58
Midwifery treatment	31
	1382

Classification of the different cases.

Continued fever	62
Epidemic eruptive fever	18
Diseases of the brain and nervous system	45
,, heart and blood-vessels	15
,, pulmonary organs	164
,, organs of digestion	525
,, eye and ear	65
,, skin	63
Dropsical diseases	4
Glandular diseases	13
Rheumatic diseases	105
Accidents	59
Miscellaneous diseases	213
Midwifery cases	31
	1382

"There has been no very prevalent or important epidemic among the patients of this institution since the last Report. The greater mortality in the last than in the preceding year, is therefore to be attributed to a greater number of persons having entered as free members, in a state of sickness, than in former years. Fifty-five patients have been admitted in this way, either by their own means or the assistance of their friends, from March, 1837, to March, 1838.

"In the classification of the patients, it will be seen that there are 59 cases of accident; many of these were cases of fracture and dislocation, in several of which, with others requiring surgical operations, the want of a hospital in this city was much felt."

Plan for the erection of a hospital.

The Report of the Committee of the same date affords prospect of the erection of a hospital for the city and neighbourhood, which is very much needed :—

"The Committee have much pleasure in congratulating their friends and the public, upon the near prospect of establishing a hospital in this city. In their last Report they informed the public, 'That a sum of money was placed in the hands of the trustees, towards accomplishing that desirable object;' they now beg to acquaint them, that convenient premises have been secured by those gentlemen, in Little Park-street, adjoining the Coventry Park—an airy, healthy spot, well adapted for the intended purpose—and they feel assured that it will be arranged upon a plan which will ensure public confidence and support."

The Savings' Bank and the Benefit Societies, which are purely provident, and not charitable institutions, have already been noticed. But there are several institutions for purposes of charitable relief, supported wholly by voluntary contri-

* Nankivell.

butions. One of these is a Charitable Dispensary, which will have for its clients those who, on the one hand, cannot afford to enrol themselves in a self-supporting dispensary, or are too migratory to enter into fixed institutions, while, on the other, they are deemed to have such claims to respectability that it is well to save them from the degradation of a resort to parochial aid. It may well be doubted whether, in a population so limited and so little varied as that of Coventry, such a medium *class* is to be found; although its existence in the largest cities, having a *shifting* population, cannot be doubted: at the same time, if the nature of both funds were rightly understood, those of the parish and of any purely charitable society would be but little distinguished in the popular mind.

Charitable Dispensary.

There are also two lying-in charities, which have been established upwards of 30 years, and annually relieve the necessities of about 300 poor married women during the time of accouchement, by the attendance of a midwife and nurse, the use of a box of linen, and the providing of caudles and nourishing foods. The objects are always to be "deserving," and yet "quite incapable of providing for themselves."* The ladies, who kindly gave me testimony to the operation of these charities, expressed a natural gratification at the comfort and happiness which they had been the means of diffusing where their assistance had been given, but lamented that "in many cases provision by the parties themselves against the time is neglected, in expectation of a ticket from the charity, which ultimately they may not obtain."† That good conduct may not be encouraged at the same time that wants are relieved by a thousand acts of unforeseen *individual* benevolence, I should be the last to assert; but what evidence I have here or elsewhere received, in regard to the charities which are *institutions for rendering gratuitous aid*, induces me to coincide in the conclusion that, where they are for the relief of necessities which might have been provided against, they are not only previously calculated upon, even at times far distant, but they are over-estimated in their extent, and many are disappointed in the drawing of the lottery.

Lying-in Charities.

From the preceding details will be gathered some idea of the actual pecuniary and physical condition of the ribbon-weavers; of its deficiencies; and of the direct attempts at their removal which are now being made. That the latter will ever attain the great object of removing all the physical evils which now assail the labouring poor, it is vain to hope. Nor can more extended efforts, on merely eleemosynary principles, be of beneficial tendency. The weavers themselves are fully aware of this; and throughout my district no public largess for relief was ever alluded to by them. They know, and constantly urge, that no relief can avail them which does not appear in the amount of the *real wages* of their labour. Several urged objections to the recent alteration in the poor-laws; but it was the very parties who most lamented the previous decreased unwillingness to resort to parochial relief. And it was, therefore, chiefly on the supposition that the old system, bad as it was, exercised moral influences which the present does not possess, that the objection was made.

Public charity not regarded as a source of permanent relief by the weavers.

Public organization for purposes of charity, is not perfect, any more than other human institutions; but the existing system of poor-laws assuredly gives to the social elements a fuller voice and healthier action than that which it has superseded. It is merely the instrument of these elements, which if it did not serve, its abolition would be certain. As these shall change, it will undergo alterations, both in constitution and administration. Its supposed effect on wages, the only true test of the labourer's prosperity, is thus merely as an organ of influences which we have endeavoured to enumerate and to classify. It is obviously, therefore, to a modification of the elements which exert these influences that we can alone look for improvements in the condition of the labouring classes, and not to empirical changes in one of their instruments, which must be either unattainable, or without results when effected.

Organization for the purposes of public charity determined in its main features by the prevalent feeling among those who contribute the funds.

A poor-law is merely the agency through which property and industry palliate the physical evils of absolute pauperism by eleemosynary exertions, which have in themselves no good moral influence, but which exercise an indirect moral influence in enforcing that economy of human labour which shall lessen the number of claimants in proportion to the means of supplying their wants; and hence a general advancement in the condition of society, immediately attributable to a poor-law, but remotely to those principles of Christian charity and enlightened policy which dictated the adoption of united efforts for the relief of all exposed to physical destitu-

Practical operation of a poor-law to the moral and industrial advancement of society.

* Mrs. C. Bray. † Mrs. Woodcock.

tion. These emanate from the moral constitution of society. It was the identification of wages with eleemosynary gifts, which served only to separate labour from its reward, that the new system of poor-laws was chiefly directed to dissolve; and this it has effected in spite of constant efforts on the part of many, to say he least, unenlightened employers, who point to this law as the obstacle to a higher remuneration of their labourers, because it refuses to permit the demoralizing prostitution of public charity to payment for private services. To the support of the unfortunate offcasts of society, and not of the whole body of its unskilled labourers, can a poor-law alone be directed; and the burthen hence resulting will vary with the resources and character of the community, the propertied leaders of which have hence an immediate interest in their improvement. It is thus the instrument of an enlightened charity which blesses both him that gives and him that receives. Where such charity exists, it may employ other agency than that of an English poor-law, as in Scotland. Where it does not, there will be no public agency for its exercise, as there was not in Ireland, until the British public demanded the extension to that country of a system the result of that charity in their own which they expect it to create in the sister island. This mediation of the central authority of the empire in the institution of sound moral relations between the different classes of society in one-third of the kingdom, is perhaps the most remarkable political experiment ever witnessed; and its progress, in the experienced hands of its projectors, must be watched with intense interest by every philanthropist.

Want of the bonds of public charity between employers and employed in extensive branches of hand-loom weaving.

In the case of an agricultural population, the property of every employer must generally be exposed to the burthens upon a poor's-rate arising from those engaged upon it, as was originally contemplated by the old poor-law system of England; but large classes of the manufacturing population, including the single-hand weavers of the Coventry district, are removed from the benefits hence resulting; and, unless poor's-rates were levied according to trades instead of localities, it is difficult to conceive how they could be made to feel those benefits. Could this be effected in the case of the hand-loom weavers, which the variety of trades pursued in the same family seems utterly to preclude, the consequence would be a gradual congregation of the weavers around their masters, for there would no longer be an inducement to dispersion: no greater number would be employed than the trade promised permanently to support; and those who were employed would be in a position to make as good terms with their masters as any other class of unskilled labourers whatever. The moral effects of public charity, which it has been sought to call forth in the sister island by a system of poor-laws, are unknown in England itself in the case of large classes of the hand-loom weavers, existing under a poor-law, but municipally dissociated from their employers. If good results are to be obtained through a poor-law in the one case, they are also wanting through an amendment of the system in the other; but the form of that amendment, by which the employers of hand-loom labour and the employed should be brought into the same communities for the purposes of public charity, I am unable to suggest. Could it be accomplished, this would be following out the original principle of the poor-laws, with the modern division of society industrially, substituted for its ancient division territorially, which latter originally agreed with its industrial character.

Analogous operation of other charitable exertions upon the condition of the poor.

Endowments and associations for eleemosynary purposes, being in the nature of fixed institutions, the benefits of which are sometimes extensively calculated upon by their recipients, can be of ultimate use only in those cases where such calculation is prevented by suffering from some grievous malady being necessary to qualify for their receipt; unless they be directed to the reward of providence by loan societies, provident savings' banks, endowed friendly societies, annuity societies, &c. Precisely the same considerations apply to their administration as to that of a legal provision for the poor, which have already been stated; and, so far as they extend, they exercise the like good or bad moral influences. Judicious private charity is generally unforeseen by its object; and its beneficent exertions are not likely to decline amid an advancing civilization. But it is only the few who are philanthropists; while upon that rate of charity alone which has become publicly instituted can calculations be based as to the moral influences which may thence bear upon the physical condition of the unskilled masses. That important moral influences, favourably affecting their physical condition, are thence derivable, I am deeply persuaded; nor can their value be too highly estimated, on the broad principle laid down by Malthus, that "it is desirable the labouring classes should be well paid, for a much more important reason than any that can relate to wealth, namely, the happiness of the great mass of society."*

* Principles of Political Economy, p. 472.

VII.—RESULTS OF THE PRECEDING INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE CONDITION OF THE RIBBON-WEAVERS.

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Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

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The results derivable from the data which I have thus endeavoured to group, and reduce to their true relations, may be brought within the limits of a very brief summary, showing the modern progress of each set of circumstances, its tendency, and the means of its modification.—

§ I. As a *Field of Production*, I have shown the ribbon trade to be a province of industry, which, like most others, has increased with the growth of the community generally in wealth and numbers. For many years it was under the protection of a prohibitory system, injurious to the interests of the nation at large, and of so little benefit to Coventry itself, that its repeal, accompanied as this was by the reduction of duties on raw material, would probably not have been felt, but for the factitious stimulus given to the trade during the years which were allowed to intervene between the reduction of the duties on raw material and the legal admission of foreign manufactured goods. There are now in the whole Coventry trade 3504 plain engine looms, which are all in the city, except 50 in the rural weaving parishes; 2228 jacquard engine looms, of which 950 are in the rural parishes, and the rest in the city; and 7489 single-hand looms, all of which are in the rural parishes, except 129 in the city; making a total of 13,239 looms worked by hand, besides which there are a few steam looms.

Repeal of the prohibitory system places the ribbon trade of Coventry upon its own resources amid the industry of the civilized world.

Though great distress was felt for a brief period on the introduction of foreign silks, and the highest wear of ribbons is still supplied from France, yet the great body of the trade is now confessedly exempt from the immediate pressure of foreign competition in the supply of the home market, in which the English manufacturer is yet protected by duties on foreign manufactured silks, nearly tantamount to the whole cost of weaving many of the fabrics. The direct supply of foreign markets is not attempted, since it cannot be done to a profit, owing, it is believed, to the operation of the corn and provision laws, which most affect, through the general enhancement of the price of food, those branches of trade which, like the manufacture of ribbons, are chiefly carried on by manual labour. These laws also greatly aggravate the uncertainty of employment in the ribbon trade, in which, as one of fashion, it is always fluctuating; for every rise in the price of food that may occur through scarcity is rendered by them still greater, and immediately affects the lower-class ribbon market, by withdrawing money which might have been expended in it, but which is now required for the purchase of food. They thus not only prevent the possibility of an equalization of employment by the opening of a foreign trade, but inflict positive misery by aggravating the fluctuations in the home market. There is but too much reason to believe that the commercial revulsions to which of late years our industry has been so frequently exposed, are also aggravated by the interests which make privileged operations on the currency a source of private profit; and some little amount of evil is attributed to remaining duties on the materials of manufacture.

Limitation to trade and fluctuations in employment, aggravated by the corn-laws and by an imperfect banking system.

Monopolies interrupting the intercourse of states are no more defensible, as tried by the ultimate test of the public good, than those which attempt to restrain the citizens of each from freely rendering the mutual services of their several trades and professions; and *freedom of trade*, whether in manufactures, corn, or credit, is the principle by which apparently the resources of any country can alone be fully developed,—a principle which individual interests will readily learn how to use without risk, if left to their own foresight and experience. The imposition of higher duties on foreign goods, even if it would ultimately extend the English ribbon manufacture, which is very doubtful, would be injurious to the community generally; but a free trade in food would equally benefit the Coventry weavers and the nation at large, including even the class of landlords. To leave every field of industry open to enterprise is equally to the ultimate benefit of all classes, through the better application and greater productiveness of their respective labour and property. That credit

Freedom of trade in manufactures, corn, and credit, the principle by which alone industry can be carried to its highest productiveness, and be best preserved from interruptions.

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should be equally freed from monopoly is no less necessary, at the same time that precautionary institutions and regulations, the principles of which are now a subject of active and fertile discussion, may apparently be adopted with advantage, to prevent the mania of speculation from occasionally endangering the gilded fabric reared by so many hands on a foundation, of which the wholly moral character is too little understood.

Repeal of the corn-laws, revision of the Bank of England charter, and the abolition of certain customs and excise duties therefore suggested.

It is with a view to withdraw the existing political restraints upon the productiveness of labour, which often subject it to grievous convulsions, that, in obedience to your instructions to me, to point out those measures which, on examination, would apparently tend to the benefit of the hand-loom weavers, without injury to the community at large, I have suggested—1. The repeal of the existing corn and provision laws;—2. A revision of the Bank of England charter;— and 3. The abolition of such excise and customs duties (for instance, those on foreign timber) as may be found more injurious to industry than advantageous to the revenue. The particular method by which these restraints may be abolished with the least shock to the interests which have become moulded to them, it is rather, I apprehend, for the legislature than for your Assistant Commissioners to discuss.

Important assistance which may also be lent by empowering Government to aid in the establishment of local schools of design, and in the protection of patterns by institutions of trade police.

Beyond these measures, which are merely *permissive* in their nature, I have also ventured to suggest the adoption of *active* measures on the part of Government, for the advancement of industry, in aiding the establishment and maintenance of local schools of design. Other places must have claims to this assistance no less than Coventry; claims founded on the fact that a service may thus be rendered to all classes of the community more widely and more economically than by any exertions independent of the central authority, which is seen to have done so much for taste in the manufactures of other countries, in whose wares this quality is the only one in which our own are eminently excelled. In such aid on the part of the Government there is no violation of principle whatever; it does not become the manufacturer, but merely lends assistance to one branch of industrial *instruction*, which is rapidly becoming *public* through the desultory efforts of voluntary associations, too often wasted for want of the assistance which is here proposed. The protection of property in patterns, &c., is one simply of *police*, which, like the security of property generally, it is a prime object of civilization to perfect; and the police of trades is a subject of great importance in an advancing society, demanding express institutions, of which such protection might be part, as I have endeavoured to show in a subsequent section.

By such measures wealth will be augmented, and employment and prices rendered less fluctuating; but the main influences in the distribution of wealth will not be affected by them.

By the measures here suggested the total amount of wealth would be augmented, and employment and prices be rendered somewhat less fluctuating, to the advantage of the ribbon weavers, beyond almost any other class of artisans; but the distribution of wealth depends mainly on influences far different from those which such measures will modify; and a summary of the previous examination into their nature will point out the chief causes of peculiar depression among the weavers.

Gradual change from industry almost domestic to the system of dissociated capitalists and labourers;

§ II. As regards the *System of Industry*, I have endeavoured to trace, in the Coventry trade, the progress of that transition which a rapid material civilisation has wrought in nearly the whole field of production, from the almost domestic industry conducted on the premises of the employer, to factory labour, or dispersed journeywork. The effect of this change upon the moral relations of the different classes of producers has been very great, and has exercised a powerful influence on their condition. The ribbon trade presents one remarkable and favourable peculiarity, that the proportion of employment for women and children, always very great, has rather declined than increased with the change of system and the improvements of machinery, even in the introduction of steam looms, which are generally tended by men. The original domestic system of manufacture, with the old single-hand loom, yet prevails in the rural districts; the weavers being chiefly women, and the youth of both sexes employed by an "undertaker." Dispersed journeywork on the engine loom prevails in the city and its neighbourhood. Hand factories have supervened on this system, and steam factories are now commenced. The great amount of employment for women and children, especially in the single-hand trade, appears to favour the reckless progress of an ignorant population far beyond the rate at which any extension of trade can take place; and hence a general distress through an internal excess of hands competing for employment, and a depression into helpless misery of those who are the mere journeyhands

offering unlimited scope to an excessive pressure of hands, encouraged by the employment which the trade affords to women and children.

of those who receive the work from a manufacturer, whenever there occurs a time of seriously "slack" trade.

The impossibility of imposing empirical checks on population needs not here to be re-argued. And emigration can be resorted to at the public expense, only as a temporary expedient, where the excess of hands will not re-appear, because of new social influences improving the habits of the people. The re-enactment of rigid apprenticeship laws to check the competition for work, and restraints upon the employment of machinery lest the amount of labour wanted in any given branch should be lessened, are measures strongly urged by some of the men. But *freedom of industry*, no less than freedom of trade, is one of the most valuable portions of civil freedom, which it is the boast of civilization and of the law to render perfect. It would be, in fact, as vain to attempt by laws to restrain the industrial organization which is most productive (or it would not be adopted) as to seek any relief from competition beyond what a sound morality among the labourers themselves will apply. And though the creation, the maintenance, or the improvement of such a morality be rather militated against than aided by the modern dissociation of labourers from employers, it is not by means of political obstacles in the way of industry, which would resolve themselves into attempts at monopoly, that relief is to be sought, but in the moral development of the labouring classes themselves, that they may be able to claim the same relative importance which formerly they possessed, institute new social relations with the employer in place of those which have been destroyed, and, in earning respect from their superiors in station, cultivate respect for themselves. Demoralizing or destructive systems of industry the labourers will then no longer sanction by their acquiescence; they will effect the emancipation of their wives from the toils of the factory and the loom, by the public opinion among themselves, which shall make their employment in them equally disgraceful among the masters, the men, and their neighbours, though widowhood or youth may yet be allowed to take part; they will cherish home as the scene of all their pleasures and the centre of all their hopes; they will forsake by degrees the heedless brutality or mean dissipation in which the enjoyments of too many now chiefly consist; and they will restrain their numbers within the healthy excess of a well-ordered people, beyond which a population will never extend when men marry with the clear intention of discharging their moral duties; a purpose so distant from the apprehension of large classes of our labourers, that I doubt not the very idea of its entertainment will produce a smile among some, though fortunately not among all, who know them.

Empirical applications sought by the weavers to check the augmented competition for employment,

would merely institute monopolies and check civilization, without attaining their object;

to which the augmented moral strength and improved moral relations of the unskilled labourers themselves can alone conduce;

Such a population as I have supposed, would be capable of relieving itself from occasional congestions by a spontaneous emigration; and none other could be benefited by emigration at the public charge. When, as in the case of the hand-loom weavers, the whole are in an employment among the lowest in the scale of industry, it is only a few individuals of extraordinary energy that can attain to any other occupation; so that emigration is the only ordinary egress for any large number, though factory labour sometimes offers an escape. It is a well-conditioned, moral, and intelligent population that will alone restrain its numbers within a healthy amount of excess; a limit which misery, hopelessness, and ignorance have no inducement to regard, for they have nothing *to preserve by doing so*. Moral restraint, which can alone check excess in the competition for employment, is obviously the result of an improved moral condition, producing coincidently physical prosperity: and I have yet, therefore, to trace the influences by which a labouring population, in a community possessing, in the whole, extensive resources, can be raised from barbarism and improvidence to civilization and forethought, especially that large portion of it which constitutes the unskilled masses. Freedom of industry is a principle which it would be fatal to their own interests to infringe. It is the vital principle from which results the greater productiveness of human labour, forming the fundamental distinction between civilization and barbarism. They ought to cherish it as their most sacred treasure; and to their improved moral strength and position alone must they look for their due share of the augmented wealth which results from its maintenance, and the store of which will increase through their augmenting virtues perhaps as fast as the demands which these will enable them to make upon it.

and secure to them their due share in the fruits of that *freedom of industry* which is the great avenue of their own advancement.

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Progress from universal rudeness to limited and partial intelligence,

§ III. To show the state of *Moral Development* among the ribbon weavers, I have collected a few details which mark their partial advancement from universal rudeness to a limited intelligence, which is very unequally distributed. The class of first-hand journeyhands in the city far surpass the country weavers in cleanliness, order, and forethought; and in that intelligence respecting their true interests, both present and future, from which these virtues spring. It is the journeymen's journeyhands and the factory journeyhands, who, in the city, are alone remarkable for their irregularities; but a want of good domestic economy, through the employment of the women in the trade, is almost universal. In the rural districts the ignorance and abandonment of the single-hand weavers is represented as almost beyond the power of exaggeration; and the population takes nearly its animal course. Thus the only portion of the ribbon weavers who are exercising forethought are those who have the most means, while the most destitute are the most abandoned; the exemption from restraint which their occupation affords, being to both sexes a source of barbarous enjoyment. Unconnected with all the rest of the world, except by occasional resort to the master's warehouse; almost wholly uninfluenced by kind neighbourhood or good example, and commonly lost even to religious influences, in the ministration of which there has been great neglect; the moral condition of these people is deplorable in the extreme, and not the less worthy of attention, since I am convinced that it is only that of other large classes of our least-skilled labourers. Both the home and the school they sacrifice to the trade, not less than any factory population before the passing of the Factory Acts, although in return for only a low animal subsistence; and it is only where a more intelligent and thriving population, which is also under a better religious ministry, at the little town of Bedworth, is extensively adopting the use of the engine instead of the old single-hand loom, that much progress is making from this condition.

insufficient to preserve so feeble a people from demoralization and distress when dissociated from their employers and from the rest of society.

Elevation of moral character through improved intelligence the first step towards secure amelioration.

To ameliorate the condition of such a people, the elevation of their moral character is obviously one step, without which every other would be unavailing; since without such elevation they would squander any augmentation of their resources, and the pressure of augmented numbers would constantly be bringing them down to their present level, which is equally opprobrious and dangerous to the rest of the community. The absence of any means of creating among them a moral character sufficient for the appreciation of orderly habits and the exercise of forethought, especially alienated as they are from their masters, and from all society, is very conspicuous. It is, therefore, for the purpose of teaching them to respect themselves, and of enabling them to claim the respect of others, so as to take the first steps in their own advancement, that I venture to urge the adoption of some public system of secular instruction, and entreat of all who appoint the endowed religious teachers of the district invariably to send into it men of sufficient energy for their arduous duties, devoted to their sacred calling, and free to discharge its offices in person. To propose the institution of a system of public instruction for the weavers alone, would be absurd: it is therefore to the establishment of a National Department of Instruction, directing the efforts of a local municipal organisation to this one great end, that we can alone look for the ultimate rescue of such populations from their present depression, and the security of all society from the dislocations and dangers hence resulting. This is the more necessary, since the enlarged industrial combinations, dissociating the labourer from the employer, require the individual exercise of all the virtues of a citizen in the former, with no more intelligence than belonged to his ancient condition, which was rather that of a domestic. The reaction of bad instruction (which is rapidly taking the place that good teaching ought to have filled) upon industry in trade movements, and upon the public peace in political disturbances, is but too obvious, and almost supersedes the necessity of argument in favour of good instruction, which a national system alone can supply. Relieve but the labouring classes from their moral decrepitude, and the public peace will return with their welfare, for which their new strength will enable them to provide, through operations which have been traced in describing the contract for labour.

A national system of secular instruction the only means of its accomplishment, jointly with renewed energy in the ministry of the Gospel.

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Results of Investigation.]

§ IV. Under the head of *Political Relations* I have classed not only the influences which may be supposed to arise from the possession of the parliamentary franchise by the Coventry city weavers, and partially by the country undertakers, but those also which are derived from the residence of the employed in the same local community with the employer, especially where the latter is liable to such burthens of poor's rates as may be entailed by the population labouring for him. That these political relations, through which moral influences operate between classes, have a favourable operation on the condition of a low-skilled people, in the greater regard which they obtain from their employers, and the greater respect which they are thereby induced to entertain for themselves, will be as little doubted as that the extent to which such influence shall operate must depend on their moral development. Ignorance and improvidence, although the employer would exert himself to remove them, were his political relations with the labourers complete, would still tend to keep them in misery; while intelligence and morality would raise them as high in the scale of comfort as is, by the nature of things, permitted, in due gradation, to men who still depend for their subsistence upon the talent, foresight, and accumulated means of the propertied classes employed in marshalling their labour to the common service.

Political relations, not only those connected with the exercise of the parliamentary franchise, but those of neighbourhood and of local community, which exercise an important influence in the connexion between employers and employed, especially when the latter are the unskilled masses.

Of all the political ties between the higher and lower classes which have received a legal sanction in England, that of *public charity* is perhaps the most powerful; and it is the absence of it between employers and employed in extensive branches of hand-loom weaving which I cannot but regard as an immediate cause of much of the *peculiar* depression of the hands engaged in them. In most occupations the property of the employer is liable to a share of the burthens upon the poor's rates which may arise from his labourers; a circumstance which makes their distress and demoralization immediately affect his pecuniary interests, as well as his reputation among his neighbours, upon whom a burthen is also entailed. So long, therefore, as they are in the same parochial community with the employer, unskilled labourers can rely upon such a subsistence as it is customary for their class to obtain in the district. But when it is immaterial where the labour is performed, many employers will readily avail themselves of a small premium of cheapness offered by workmen at some distance, whose "settlement," or parochial freedom, is in a community with which such employers have no other connexion than the occupation which they are thus induced to afford to part of its population. The hand-loom weaving trades, being carried on with a trifling amount of fixed capital, which is moveable, and generally possessed by the workman, while the manufacturer's capital is almost entirely floating, afford opportunity for this very dissociation, which removes the labourer from all the beneficial influences derivable from community with the employer. The property of the latter, whether in land or capital, may be as completely exempt from any charge on the poor's rates arising from his labourers, as he is personally removed from the disorders of a depressed and demoralized people. From the influences of confidence, neighbourhood, and charity, on the part of the employers, the men may thus be wholly removed; when so removed, their silent home-bred competition may take its full course; their employers are absentees, and the world knows nothing of them until their distresses become the occasional wonder of a day, or their demoralization a dangerous nuisance to the country in which they are scattered.

They assure to the unskilled labourer a degree of care and notice from his employer;

from which the dissociation permitted by the nature of some branches of the hand-loom weaving trades entirely removes the labourers in them;

This dissociation, and the consequent relative depression, it is obvious could never have existed in more barbarous times; they can subsist only where the national peace, in which they are a canker, is mainly secure, and industry has made great strides; and they are merely phenomena of a progressive but imperfect civilisation. Not only, however, does this dissociation operate to the depression of the populations scattered at a distance from their employers, but the rivalry of such populations, whether in hand- loom weaving or frame-work knitting, compels those who are congregated around them to labour for a miserable pittance, rather than be deprived of all subsistence by the transferring of employment to the dissociated hands. Thus the absenteeism of the employers from a part of the hands acts to the depression of the whole; and although hand-loom weaving must always be a low-paid labour, and one liable to considerable fluctuation, especially in the silk trade, yet it is to this absenteeism that I attribute the greater portion

to the depression not only of the alienated, but also of the hands who are congregated around their employers but are exposed to the distant competition.

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of that *peculiar and continuous* depression to which this occupation has so long been exposed, as compared with other branches of low-skilled labour. The relative position of the rural and city weavers in the Coventry district, and of their employers, as exhibited in the previous examination into the circumstances of the contract for labour, will fully manifest the operation of this absenteeism; and its tendencies are yet towards an aggravation of the consequent relative depression.

Direct attempts to restore the bonds of neighbourhood or local community would be vain;

That sound moral relations should subsist between the employers of the unskilled masses and the employed, I believe to be essential to the ultimate welfare of all classes; and the evil tendencies of the utter want of them in the case of various large bodies of the hand-loom weavers, would make me hasten to suggest some means of supplying it, but that all direct attempts to restore the bonds of neighbourhood and parochial community would, I fear, prove vain. Only arbitrary and impracticable measures occur to me, such as enacting that the parish or union in which the employer's principal manufacturing warehouse is situated should be liable for the poor's rate burthens arising from families the heads of which are, or had within three months been, in his employment, directly or mediately, which would be a source of endless litigation;—or that hand-loom weaving should be carried on only within certain precincts, when it is already scattered over vast districts, and carried on by a population who could not be shifted without great loss, injury, and unhappiness to themselves and others;—or that no manufacturer should employ weavers not resident within the same parish or union that contained his manufacturing warehouse, which is liable to the same objection. I am compelled, therefore,

and in augmented moral strength on the part of the operatives, through efficient public instruction, must rest, therefore, the chief hope of amelioration and general contentment.

to revert to the moral advancement of the rising generation, through improved instruction, for nearly all hope of amelioration. Through such instruction, the importance of these relations with the employer will become more manifest to the labourer, at the same time that he will acquire, with greater providence and better perceptions, more freedom of action to seek them, to reduce the excess of competition, or to abandon the trade altogether. In the absence of the relations of community with the employer, which are so important a source of advantage, there seems, in fact, to be no resource but in an efficient system of public instruction, to implant among the weaving population sufficient moral strength to resist the depressing influences of the dissociation which tends not only to their own misery, but ultimately to corrupt the peace of society.

Parliamentary franchise available to the labouring classes generally only as a guarantee for a new moral position, to which they must attain before they can acquire them.

Municipal or parliamentary franchises can be of very little benefit to the labouring classes except in so far as they may secure from their employers a somewhat greater degree of that "care, notice, and thought about the people under them," which a valued and experienced correspondent describes as resulting from their parochial association together. This would be the best result derivable from their possession of the parliamentary franchise, were it used with discretion; for legislation cannot *directly* ameliorate the condition of any large class of society; and dire, indeed, to the labourers, would be the results of any such use of it as should shake the public confidence. But if their moral relations with their employers be not sound, no legislature will intrust them with it; and if they be, its active importance to them will be very trifling. It is to strengthen the moral bonds between the labourer and the employer that I would raise the moral character of the former, by the relative feebleness, and not by the relative strength of which, is the peace of a state endangered. When these are secured, political forms will be thought of comparatively little importance by the labourers themselves; if they be insecure, the peace of a society constituted like that of England is in daily danger from combinable masses of the ignorant and disaffected, who may produce injury to all, though unable to accomplish good for themselves. The cry for extended political franchises proves only the want of good moral bonds, the creation of which can be aided by the state only through the education of the labouring classes, that they may form a fit base for an edifice so high and of such airy structure as that of modern society. Whenever they shall acquire the parliamentary franchise, it will be chiefly to employ it as a guarantee for a new moral position to which they must first attain.

Main body of the weavers belong to the lowest-skilled

§ V. In tracing the operation of the various social elements upon the *Contract for Labour*, and their influence upon its terms, I have described the main

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body of ribbon weavers as one of the lowest-skilled classes of labourers, whose remuneration, since they are at the base of society, does not depend on their relative position above some lower class, but is determined at once by the moral constitution of the local society, and the developed resources of the national community in which they are placed. I have then given the fullest detail that I could collect from authentic sources, of every trade movement during the present century, that the minutest phenomenon indicating the action of any unusual influence might not escape observation. And since the operation and policy of the Spitalfields Act became a subject of parliamentary inquiry on occasion of petitions for its extension to Coventry, I have not hesitated to analyse the evidence adduced, which describes the course of one of the most remarkable legislative experiments on record. From the origin of the ribbon trade of Coventry to the present time, it appears to have been customary for the manufacturers to pay for weaving by one common list of piece-work prices, from which system there was no attempt to depart until the year 1816, during the anarchy produced in our manufacturing industry generally by the sudden transition from war to peace, when underpaying was commenced by some masters during the general distress, and has never since been completely repressed.

classes, at the base of society, paid according to its moral constitution and its resources.

Former Coventry system of payment for weaving by a common list of piece-work prices.

The breach of the old-established customs commenced a succession of struggles, the details of which plainly indicate the nature of the influences by which the lists of prices for weaving were previously maintained inviolate. Such lists have to the present time been successively framed by the whole body of masters and men. In good time of trade there has been little difficulty in maintaining adherence to them; and during a continuous brisk period they appear to have been a subject of little notice or solicitude to any party; the trade extending fast enough to keep up prices without them. But more commonly there has been a greater proportion of hands than of employment, which must be the ordinary state of all trades in an "old" country, and was that of the ribbon trade while its list system was maintained inviolate, as well as since its rupture. Under these circumstances, the moral and political relations of the weavers with their masters, have been such as to make the great body of the latter show themselves desirous to maintain for the former, in opposition to the tendency of their competition, a decent standard of subsistence, so long as they were not underpaid by their neighbours in the trade at Coventry, or injured by the rivalry of other places; and the same relations of the men with the propertied classes generally, especially with the tradesmen who depended more or less upon their custom, have induced the townspeople at large to lend their whole weight to any arrangement which should tend to attain this object. Hence has arisen a system of combination between the great body of the masters and the great body of the weavers (sometimes tacit, sometimes openly conducted, and always sanctioned by the public opinion), having for its object to agree upon a list of prices for weaving, modified according to circumstances, and to detect and repress, by obloquy or other means, the giving out or performance of work at less than the listed prices. Underpaying has constantly, however, been practised to a limited extent, and its increase is an object of daily endeavour on the part of some masters; but no sooner has it made any extensive way, so as to interfere with the trade of the higher-paying masters, than the latter intimate to their hands that they can give out work no longer, unless at the same reduced prices which others are paying; a strike ensues, if they add that they are willing to pay the higher price if the other masters can be made to do so; every loom is stopped; the men throw themselves on the public charity; and the whole community is in uproar, until, at a general convention, or town's meeting, the whole of the circumstances are explained; and if the leading houses still say that the trade can afford the better prices, the underpaying parties are overawed or harassed into subscribing the general agreement to pay them; whereupon the men return to their work; and the underpaying, it is true, immediately recommences, but more modestly than before.

Violated during the depression which ensued on the Peace.

Subsequent system of rallying moral influences to maintain the prices of weaving in opposition to the force of competition among the weavers.

It is obvious that the same sanctions which now maintain the list system imperfectly, were formerly strong enough to keep it unbroken; and that they have, through its agency, a tendency to check the force of competition for employment in the ribbon trade, and, through overt or tacit operation, to maintain the rate of wages in other unskilled occupations at the base of society, I cannot for a moment doubt. But they are nsufficient to check the rivalry of dis-

Efficiency within the narrow limits imposed by unrestricted competition among the neighbouring rural ribbon weavers, beyond their influence, and

by the rivalry of distant places.

tant places, or of the cheaper labour offered by the rural weavers, who are dissociated from the masters and the city community. It is the competition of the latter which keeps the Coventry weavers in constant trepidation as to the future fate of their trade; for they know it to be impossible that their masters should pay them prices higher than those for which they or others could procure the like labour elsewhere, whatever they might be induced to do, were the whole trade within the bounds of the city. Wherever masters and men who have commenced an underpaying system are found congregated together, as at Bedworth, there the same elements as in Coventry are found to operate in maintenance of the price of labour; but wherever the men are dispersed without their masters, as in the rural ribbon-weaving districts generally, there is no such limit to the depression and to the rivalry of the depressed population with the better-paying places. It is under these circumstances that there ensues among a low-skilled people that misery against which Malthus protests, in exclaiming—"I really cannot conceive anything much more detestable than the idea of knowingly condemning the labourers of this country to the rags and wretched cabins of Ireland, for the purpose of selling a few more broadcloths and calicoes,"—or, it might be added, "ribbons."

"Boards of Trade" to enforce the terms agreed on by a majority, upon every individual in the trade, needless where the moral elements are favourable, and futile where they should be opposed to its operation;

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Coventry weavers are as warm in their desire for, as they are hopeless of obtaining, a "Board of Trade," by which to enforce, *throughout the ribbon district*, under heavy penalties, the payment of wages by a common list, on the system which they have so long been endeavouring to maintain by "moral means." This plan, which would give a legal recognition and a magisterial authority, reaching throughout the trade, to a system of public interference with the contract for labour which has been habitually pursued, presents a very plausible appearance; but, besides its being unjust in principle for the magistrate to interfere in an interchange of services between individuals, on the terms dictated by their mutual desires or necessities, it cannot be supposed that cheap labour would not be smuggled into the trade, did the state of society present such great facilities for it as would still be offered in the case of the scattered weavers of absentee employers. The "moral means" are, in fact, the only means which can safely be employed; where the moral elements of society are healthy, the interference of the political arm of the magistrate to assist them will be needless; where they are not, it will be unavailing. Such an institution could not be made to affect the whole trade without embracing the whole nation, with a tariff of wages fixed by a ministerial decree, of which labourers, no less than employers, would very soon lament the operation; if it did not embrace the whole nation, underpaying might be pursued beyond its jurisdiction; and even within it, underpaying would occur wherever the state of society was such as to present much inducement to the violation of its ordinances. Again, therefore, I am obliged to recur to moral improvements in the character of the weaving population, and in their relations with their employers; as a nucleus for which I have suggested the adoption of trade tribunals similar to those of the Conseils des Prud'hommes in France, which had the same origin as the ancient trade guilds of England. Such institutions, affecting not only the low-skilled but the higher trades, seem well calculated to bring into activity the better moral elements, and explode the worse, among our manufacturing populations; and the union of masters and men for the purposes of reconciliation and police would, I doubt not, ultimately conduce to the comfort of the latter and the peace of all.

but by the institution of trade tribunals in the nature of the French *Conseils des Prud'hommes*, the better elements which improved intelligence will bring forth may be actively cultivated and rapidly concentrated.

Decline in the money prices of ribbon-weaving less, during the present century, than that in the prices of the commodities which they purchase.

§ VI. The *Pecuniary and Physical Condition* of the ribbon-weaving population, as determined by the influences which I have traced both in their origin and their action, is seen to have varied with the successive modifications which those influences have undergone. There appears to have been little permanent decline in the money price of mere labour from the commencement of the present century until 1829, when the introduction of foreign ribbons compelled an abatement of about 15 per cent., which was only temporarily recovered in the following year; but they have since experienced very little decline. Prices of provisions and clothing having declined in a greater proportion, the *real wages* of mere labour, when the hands are in full work, as they were at the time of my inquiries, must obviously be *positively* greater than they were early in the present century, how much soever this improvement may relatively be short of that which has taken place in other trades.

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In extent the trade has gradually increased; and the improvement in character among the old journeyhands in the engine trade on the undertaking system, enabled the manufacturers, about twenty years ago, to raise them to the rank of "first-hands," receiving the work direct from them, in lieu of subordinately from the undertaker.

Reorganization of the trade since its commencement, by which the great body of the city weavers were placed in better circumstances than they previously enjoyed.

This change has given to the support of each family of the first-hand journeyhands, who form the great body of the engine trade, on an *average*, the earnings of two looms, worked by its members, including apprentices, besides frequently others worked by under-journeyhands, or "journeymens' journeyhands," from which the same families receive a small payment for rent of loom and standing, and for procuring and superintending the work. The gross earnings in each plain engine loom in full work in the city averages about 11*s.* 6*d.* per week; those in the jacquard engine loom, about 15*s.* 6*d.* Under the first-hands there is seen to be a class of journeymen who obtain about 1*s.* 6*d.* less per week than either of the sums above mentioned; but if they be married, as a portion of them are, their wives are very commonly earning something by weaving or winding, and their children, like those of the first-hand journeymen, also are making some little earnings by quill-winding, by other minor processes about the trade, or by running errands, nursing, &c. The factory journeyhands—an increasing class, working on the manufacturers' own looms—make earnings somewhat greater than those of the journeymens' journeyhands.

Money earnings the country single-hand weavers on the old "undertaking" system almost always wretchedly low, and little changed.

The wages of mere labour in the engine-loom, on entering the rural districts, appear to decline in proportion to the distance from the city, among each class of the operative hands respectively; and in the single-hand trade, where there are only two classes, that of the undertakers, or master-weavers, and that of the journeyhands, the earnings of the latter cannot be averaged at more than 5*s.* per week. It is true that they are chiefly women and the youth of both sexes; but the journeymen, of whom there is a reckless number, can scarcely earn more. The undertakers have commonly about seven looms each, though sometimes many more, and their income consists of half a journeyhand's earnings from each. Half-pay apprentices in the engine-weaving make about 5*s.* 6*d.* per week; and in the single-hand trade about 3*s.* 9*d.*

Though the *positive* condition of the ribbon weavers on the whole is improved, their *relative* condition is deteriorated, to their own uneasiness, and that of every neighbouring class.

Although, as the tables of past and present wages and prices will prove, there has, on the whole, been a *positive* advancement in the condition of the ribbon weavers, yet the same documents show a *relative* decline in the price paid for mere labour in weaving, as compared with that in the ordinary domestic handicrafts, and some other branches of labour. The remuneration of the various classes of labourers, no less than the relative condition of the labourers and the great body of employers, has been rendered far more *unequal* than it previously was, by our modern rapid advance in material civilization. Inequality must always exist; but it appears to have increased, through a want of commensurate moral development, to an extreme, in some instances distressful to whole classes of labourers, and generally (through the fear of the better-paid to fall, and the eagerness of the lower-paid to rise) little conducive to general contentment and internal peace.

Change in habits and present as compared with former physical condition of the ribbon weavers.

The habits of life among the ribbon weavers are seen to have rapidly changed, and their appreciation of comforts has greatly *increased;* those required by a present first-hand journeyman being nearly the same as those of the undertaker, when his master, in times past. The decrease of out-door and athletic amusements now, however, aggravates the depressing influences of a sedentary occupation; and but for the influx of fresh health from the country, chiefly by the resort of women to the trade, it is very probable that some classes of the city weaving population would not be perpetuated. The homes of the first-hand journeymen of the city are generally neat, clean, and considerably comfortable; those of some of the under-journeyhands far otherwise; and the poverty of the remoter rural districts is painfully conspicuous in their miserable cottages, ragged children, and general squalor.

Futility of charitable endeavours directly to ameliorate the condition of the weavers, when their masters are not principally involved in making them.

The attempts, by charitable efforts, directly to ameliorate the condition of the ribbon weavers, by supplying to them those comforts which their wages will not purchase when in work, have failed here, as they must everywhere fail. Public charity may relieve directly exceptional cases of distress, but can never directly better the condition of the whole body of the labouring poor; although it will have an indirect influence, through the interest of the rate-payers, in keeping that body in such a state of morality and good

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order that the exceptional cases may be as few as possible. Whenever direct relief of general poverty, and not of peculiar distress, is attempted by public charity (which is as much anticipated by the recipients, if it appear at all accessible, as the wages for which they are labouring, the result can only be demoralization and augmented misery; for labour will proportionately be either neglected by the man, or underpaid by the master; and expectations being excited among more than there are means to satisfy, disappointment is produced, where a gift, though intrinsically worthless, was designed. I cannot doubt, therefore, that out of the large revenue of about 7500*l.* per annum, which the charities of Coventry produce, a considerable portion of the large sums bestowed in gifts is worse than wasted; since they are kept perfectly distinct from the poor's rates, the express purpose of which is to supply every wholesome charity; the expenditure for the relief of the poor amounting, in 1838, a year of good trade, to no less than 6975*l.* Whatever may be the policy of these gifts, there can be no doubt as to that of endeavours to encourage the amelioration of the condition of the labouring classes through acts of providence and industry on their own part. The co-operation instituted among them for the purpose of obtaining medical assistance by means of the self-supporting dispensary, is beyond all praise, as aiding in the development of those moral energies, the increased exertion of which will produce far more to the poorer classes than will suffice to defray contributions to such an institution, not only through an increase of their providence, but through the greater respect which they can command from others when able to respect themselves. It is by industry, intelligence, and providence, on the part of the labourer, and a rational liberality on the part of the employer, brought about by the soundness of the social elements, that the condition of the unskilled masses can alone be raised, and with it that of all the classes next above them; eleemosynary efforts to improve the condition of the labourer, in which the master has no share, must be utterly without avail, though of some value where he is involved; and would that it were possible, by any means more expeditious than that of general instruction, to institute universally the bonds of neighbourhood and charity between employers and employed, the want of which is so lamentably exhibited in the case of the rural single-hand ribbon weavers of the Coventry district.

Recapitulation.

Recapitulation of *condition, causes,* and *remedies.*

§ VII. Having now traced the progress, the tendency, and the susceptibility of change, exhibited by the several classes of circumstances which determine and which constitute the "condition" of the ribbon weavers, it remains but to sum up, in brief space, the most conspicuous features of their *ill condition*, of its *causes*, and of the *remedies* by which it may be amended.

Depression not *positive* but *relative.*

With regard to their pecuniary and physical condition, it will have been seen that the money price of labour in ribbon weaving has, on the whole, declined less during the present century than the price of the articles on which it is usually expended, while a reorganization of the trade has greatly improved the position and circumstances of the great body of the city weavers, at the same time that it extinguished a middle class of employers; that the money earnings of the rural single-hand weavers were almost always wretchedly low, and are now little altered; that the condition of the ribbon weavers, so far as it is determined by the amount of their "real wages," or of the commodities which their money wages will purchase, has not, on the whole declined during the present century, but, in the case of the city weavers, has much improved; that within the last ten years, since the recovery of the shock felt on the first introduction of foreign ribbons, and of the consequent depression of prices for weaving, there have been, however, successive reductions in these prices under the mutual competition of the city and rural weavers; that, though their *positive* comforts have on the whole increased during the past years of the present century, the *relative* reward of labour has declined, as compared with the general condition of the handicrafts and of the propertied classes; and that this relative decline produces discontent among the weavers, and uneasiness among the neighbouring higher ranks of labourers. The homes of the first-hand journeymen in the city present considerable appearance of com-

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fort, and those of the single-hand weavers in the country frequently one of much misery; while the decline in out-door habits among the city weavers entails a physical inferiority which forebodes both immediate and future unhappiness. In "condition," therefore, by which term the Commission undoubtedly contemplated their "physical condition," the ribbon weavers, but more especially the single-hand weavers, are a class not *positively depressed*, but *relatively outstripped* by other classes of society. By these, however, they cannot be abandoned to *relative depression* without evils being incurred of the most serious magnitude through the struggles and uneasinesses which must ensue among the labouring classes generally, from the existence in the midst of society of masses relatively so low in condition.

Public charity not a means of relief either available or desired; although the feelings on which institutions for its administration are based, might act beneficially for the employed if the latter and their masters were locally associated.

Feelings of charity alone, without any regard to policy, prompt the richer classes to make some efforts towards relieving their distress; but mistaken charity debases the objects of its favour, instead of giving permanent elevation to their character and condition. Public charity is regarded by no one, and least of all by the weavers themselves, as a source of permanent relief; as a bond between masters and men, it is seen to have only a partial existence in the Coventry trade; and as such, were it complete, it could usefully operate only so far as it induced the employers to have more regard to the moral and physical welfare of the population under them, rather than incur an excess of unproductive expenditure in poor's rates or voluntary charities. Such a bond might thus tend both directly and indirectly to raise the standard of subsistence among an unskilled population, or, in other words, to increase the price of labour, or its remuneration in wages; but it is exceedingly incomplete in the case of the ribbon weavers; and it is through weighing every circumstance affecting their contract for labour that the discovery of any means of affecting its terms can alone be hoped.

Moral influences, tending to raise or to keep up the rate of wages paid to an unskilled population,

It cannot be surprising, that the men who suffer from mutual competition for employment, or the masters who are beaten in the market by the cheaper price at which labour has been purchased by competitors, should turn their attention at once to the contract for labour itself, and seek, in the method by which its terms are settled, to create and enforce a common rate of piece-work prices. The main body of the ribbon-weavers I have shown to be one of the lowest-skilled classes, at the base of society, whose remuneration does not depend upon their relative position above some other class, as does that of superior crafts, but is determined at once by the moral constitution of the local society, and the developed resources of the national community in which they are placed. Constituted as the former was thirty years ago, a system of payment by a common list of piece-work prices was maintained inviolate by the moral influences of a public opinion, until the depression which ensued at the peace, in 1816; the number of hands limiting itself, of necessity, to little beyond that which could be employed at those prices. From that period to the present time it has been constantly endeavoured by the majority of masters and men to maintain successive lists, by rallying the same influences; and they have generally been operative within the narrow limits imposed by unrestricted competition among the neighbouring rural ribbon weavers, who are beyond their reach, and by the rivalry of distant places, where such influences may be much less available. To supersede their irregular and imperfect operation, both parties are desirous of possessing some organization, under the name of a "Board of Trade," with magisterial power to force upon all a common contract for labour agreed to by a large majority; an institution which, with the existing social elements, would be ineffective unless national; and, if national, fatal to the industry it sought to protect. Some sphere may, however, be created for the useful operation of those social elements which we must hope to see rapidly developed; and such a one would be presented by the erection, in each manufacturing centre, of *popular institutions of trade police*, partaking of the ancient guild principles, and which have, in a neighbouring country, been rendered of such various utility under the name of *Conseils des Prud'hommes*. An act of Parliament prescribing the organization and the power of such tribunals, to which the name of "*Boards of Trade*" might very appropriately be applied, might vest the power of granting them in the Lords of her Majesty's Privy Council, on petitions from both masters and men, which should be referred to the Board of Trade, to report, with the assistance of proper officers, on the propriety of their prayers.

cannot be usefully armed with magisterial authority, which must be nearly needless or wholly unavailing;

but may be encouraged in a peaceful and beneficial course by popular institutions of trade police.

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Since no arbitrary restrictions can be imposed on the contract for labour, the influences upon its terms demand the deeper attention.

Since it is impossible to impose legal fetters on the contract for labour, it behoves the labourers, and the employers who feel an interest in their welfare, as well as all who have any stake in the peace of society, to perceive clearly the influences which are bearing upon its terms. The more skilled classes of labourers are, by the laws of competition, successively paid higher than the "unskilled" masses; but among the latter the depressing tendency of competition for labour which is common to every "old" country must somewhere be met and checked by the "moral" influences, the operation of which, under one set of circumstances, we have traced in the Coventry trade. But unless the like influences be operative in society generally, overtly or tacitly, among masses or among individuals, it is obvious that their application, in some one locality only, must, in a moveable trade, be unavailing.

Changes in the moral influences on the contract for labour which have been traced in the Coventry trade.

In the Coventry trade I have traced the circumstances through which the partial adoption of a free-trade system has placed its industry almost upon its own resources amidst that of the civilized world; the destruction of a middle class of employers, leaving the industrial dissociation of the capitalists and labourers far greater than formerly it was; the past universal rudeness of the latter, from which there has been a limited and partial advancement to better intelligence; and the increase in the proportion of hands dissociated from the employer, not only by their greater social distance, but by their dispersion in places remote from his neighbourhood or local community, whereby they are alienated from a degree of care and notice on his part, and that of his neighbours, which is of the greatest importance to the terms of their payment where the employed are of the unskilled masses.

Consequent tendencies to relative depression in the condition of the ribbon weavers.

The condition of the ribbon weavers is now, therefore, exposed to some relative depression, as compared with the former remuneration of their labour, consequent on the limitation of trade imposed by the average dearness of food in England, aggravated by the existing corn laws, which virtually almost prohibit the exportation of ribbons, and facilitate the introduction of French ribbons, in exchange, directly or indirectly, for the produce of our great combinations of machinery, which to a considerable extent escapes this disadvantage;—on the fluctuations in employment, always considerable in a trade of fashion, but aggravated by fluctuations in the price of food, rendered excessive through the same system of corn laws, and by disorders throughout the field of commerce, resulting from the like cause, though apparently increased by privileged operations on the currency with a view to private profit;—on the more unlimited scope given, by the greater industrial dissociation of the employed from their employers, to that excessive competition for employment, to which the extensive occupation of women and children in the trade offers peculiar encouragement;—on the insufficiency of moral development among the operatives to withstand this unloosed competition, and the other depressing influences of their dissociation from their employers and from all society, with scarcely more intelligence than formerly served for their guidance while personally associated with a middle class, who, whatever their own rudeness, gave a tone to the notions and habits of their dependents, sufficient for the condition in which they were subsisting, and in place of which there are now no influences to protect them from the improvidence and demoralization to which they are so much exposed;—and on the absence of large classes of the weavers from the relations even of neighbourhood and local community with their employers, which, alienating them from the operation of the moral influences that local connexion alone can call into operation on behalf of a people of so little intelligence and strength of character, leaves them to the full force of their own mutual competition, which suffices to depress not only the classes thus alienated, but also the hands who are congregated around the employers.

Excessive pressure of population a symptom of moral disease in society, not to be removed by empirical checks on competition, whether placed on population itself, or on access to trades.

The tendency of population far to overstep the limits of employment, and, through excess in this competition, rapidly to drag successive classes of labourers to a condition of great relative depression, in which their share of the national wealth shall be very small, is seen to be an *evidence* and active symptom of disease, rather than the disease itself. Empirical checks upon the consequently augmented competition, whether those upon population itself, which some abstract reasoners have supposed might be applied with a view to general effects upon the labour market (but which, were it in the ordinary course of human nature to practise them, individual distresses would long since have dictated, and would still cause to be used), or those

which the men themselves would gladly impose, in destroying the industry instead of the lives of the surplus number, by excluding them from all knowledge of a trade through rigid apprenticeship laws, alike are useless to the proposed end; since, were either of them practicable, they would infect with the suicidal indolence of monopoly, the former the whole race itself, and the latter its several industrial sections, which, seeking each to gain an advantage over the rest, would ultimately sink under their common poverty. Attempts to impede the knowledge of trades are, in one respect, the worst of the two; since, without gaining the proposed end, they inflict a mortal injury on the welfare of many, who are thus compelled to become a burthen to themselves and to society.

Freedom of trade and freedom of industry principles equally demanding inviolability, to the end that labour may attain its highest productiveness.

The previous enumeration of depressive influences will at once, however, suggest available means by which their tendencies may be changed. Freedom of trade, in corn and in credit, no less than in manufactures, under whatever regulations may be requisite for the public security, are alike demanded, in order that our industry may be carried to its highest productiveness, and subjected to the least revulsions. The *Repeal of the existing Corn Laws*, and a *Revision of the Bank of England Charter*, appear therefore absolutely necessary, to free from existing violations this fundamental principle. Beyond striking off the fetters of industry, the legislature may yet further serve its interests, by enabling Government to assist in the establishment of *Local Schools of Design*, and by erecting institutions of trade police, for the *Protection of Property in Taste*, in connexion with the municipal organization of trades already suggested. By such measures the productiveness of labour and the general store of wealth will be greatly increased; but the distribution of this wealth depends on far other agencies. Unfortunately there are not wanting those, in rank above the labouring classes, who mistakenly encourage in them an animosity against those more economical systems of industry which, enormously increasing the total production, have hitherto, through secondary influences, made the *relative* share of some labourers less, although the *positive* increase in the commodities of life distributed among the whole body through their means has been immensely increased. But it may easily be demonstrated that laws against the productiveness of industry, such as any that would interrupt its unlimited assistance by machinery, can never benefit the labouring or any other class participating in the national wealth, of which the greater the amount, the greater will be the share of each class in a healthily constituted community.

To strengthen the moral character and position of the labourers, so that the unskilled masses may respect themselves and be respected by their superiors in station, the sole hope of extinguishing misery and discontent.

The moral disease of which unwonted excess of competition is a symptom can be removed only by operations upon the constitution of society, in augmenting the moral strength of the labourers, that they may respect themselves, and in improving their political relations of neighbourhood and citizenship with the superior classes, that by these they may be respected. By thus attacking the disease at its root, which is the course dictated by all the preceding examinations into the means of improvement, whether in industrial organization, moral conduct, or political relations, we can alone hope to put an end to the demoralization and the relative depression of large portions of the unskilled masses, whose relative physical condition depends immediately on these moral and political circumstances, as also does that of superior classes of labourers remotely, through their being remunerated higher only in a certain proportion, fixed immediately by competition. The benefits arising from a higher moral development, through which alone can any large and permanent amelioration be attained, will be of slow growth but permanent character; improved intelligence will supply an unwonted economy, and give a zeal, discretion, and transferability to industry, which alone will increase its produce beyond the demands for augmented remuneration which may grow with them; and classes of people in the moral decrepitude and physical destitution of the Coventry single-hand weavers will no longer exist. The great instrument of this moral advancement, besides renewed energy in the ministry of the Gospel, must be a system of *National Education;* for such is the term by which it seems agreed to designate a "centrally-organized municipal system of public instruction," embodying such arrangements that the secular instruction may be complete without the religious, so that the conscientious scruples of a parent, which makes him withdraw his child from the latter, may not be made a ground for inflicting on that child a secular ignorance which disqualifies him, not only as a citizen but as a

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Results of Investigation.

Public instruction the sole lever by which the moral character of the labourers can receive elevation and strength, whereby they will be enabled to provide healthy political relations for themselves,

Christian, even from profiting by the religious instruction of his natural guardians, or of those approved by them.

Public instruction has no talismanic secret of prosperity to convey, but is the sole lever by which the moral character of our unskilled population can be elevated and strengthened. Their moral or rather political relations with their employers, and with the superior classes who are their neighbours, will be the fulcrum upon which it will in great part work to the amendment of their condition. Direct endeavours to improve these relations, which, in the case of the hand-loom weavers, are seen to be so exceedingly defective, would prove not only vain but mischievous; although, in the case of manufacturing populations generally, a valuable political sphere of action for good moral elements would be presented by popular institutions of industrial police, which may be designated by the name of *Boards of Trade*, since this appears to be already in popular vogue. I have, however, such entire confidence in the results derivable from an *efficient* system of public instruction, that upon this alone, if the labour be but commenced ere it is too late, reliance may safely be placed for the political effects desired, through the spontaneous movements of the labourers themselves. Political franchises, which are now so eagerly sought by the labouring classes, will never be acquired by them, except as a guarantee for a new moral and political position, to which they must attain before they will receive them; and all the rational objects for which they seek them being also then already attained, their anxiety for such possession will be greatly moderated. Of the importance of public instruction to direct their hopes and efforts into channels conducive to the public prosperity, and away from the delusive prospects of anarchy, under a social constitution, the delicacy and intricacy of which demand the profoundest peace, I cannot too warmly express my conviction.

to their own welfare and the security of all society.

List of remedies; and the results to be hoped from them.

The *Remedies*, therefore, which alone I can venture to submit to you, as promising any considerable amelioration of the condition of the ribbon weavers, are:—the Repeal of the existing Corn Laws, a Modification of the Bank of England Charter, assistance to Local Schools of Design, and improvements in the Protection of Property in Taste; all having the purpose of augmenting and equalizing the amount of employment and the productiveness of labour;—an immediate provision for National Education, on the scale of extent and efficiency demanded by the urgency of the circumstances, to *restore* the social elements to that equilibrium which an industrial revolution has disturbed;—and the institution of Local Boards of Trade, to exercise the functions of an industrial police, for the purpose of bringing these elements, among manufacturing populations, into healthy action. Centred in a sound and religious morality (to which the freedom of religious instruction is essential), the industry, intelligence, order, and frugality which the latter measures would rapidly develop among our labourers, would secure to the whole community that peaceful prosperity so well described by Malthus, whose conception of a perfectly healthy community I claim permission to subjoin, as presenting a prospect which may yet be realised in England. "Indisposed to a war of offence, in a war of defence such a society would be strong as a rock of adamant. When every family possessed the necessaries of life in plenty, and a decent portion of its comforts and conveniences, there could not exist that hope of change, or, at best, that melancholy and disheartening indifference to it, which sometimes prompts the lower classes of people to say, 'Let what will come, we cannot be worse off than we are now.' Every heart and hand would be united to repel an invader, when each individual felt the value of the solid advantages which he enjoyed, and a prospect of change presented only a prospect of being deprived of them."*

* Malthus: Essay on the Principle of Population, vol. iii., pp. 99, 100.

Banbury.

December 21st, 1838.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Banbury.

Manufactures of girths, &c., and of plushes of various kinds.

This ancient borough, which contains about 4000 inhabitants within the municipal boundary, and 6000 within the parliamentary limits, has a manufacture of horse-cloths and girths, carried on by Messrs. Cobb; and a considerable trade in plushes, and other very heavy fabrics of worsted and cotton, variously intermingled, chiefly for exportation, which is in the hands of the three different firms of Gillett, Harris, and Baughen.

Extent of the plush-manufacture; variety of fabrics; and markets for them.

The plush-manufacture employs between four and five hundred looms:—

Mr. Gillett has about	150
Mr. Baughen	120
Mr. Harris	160
Total	430

The above firms are said to be the only plush-manufacturers in England making rough articles for clothing, excepting a house at Manchester, which makes a few "sealiotts" for waistcoating and caps. Messrs. Riley, however, make silk plush for hats (at Kettering), as also do Messrs. Harris in that neighbourhood and at Coventry; but none of this fabric is now made at Banbury. All the articles now produced at Banbury in the plush-trade are in the style of velvets; and are made in looms of the oldest construction, with the shuttles passed by hand. Coarse wires, inserted between the warp threads in weaving, form the pile; the threads across the wires being cut with a lance to form the pile of those which are strictly plushes; while other articles, variously designated, have a curly surface formed by simply withdrawing the wires without cutting the threads which cross them. Many of these fabrics go through the hands of merchants to Spain, Italy, and the south of Europe generally.

By the regulations of a diminished trade-club, no women are allowed to work:—

Hands at work in the trade.

"There was, the other day," states one of the manufacturers, Mr. Gillett, "a complaint to a master that a weaver's wife was working during his absence in his loom; and he promised to put a stop to it. Some few are old men; and there are, in some of the looms, boys who are apprentices for the full term of seven years; each man being by the rules of the club allowed only one apprentice. An exception may perhaps be made in the case of the son of a weaver. Some men have two or three looms, with a journeyman or two, and one has ten or a dozen; undertaking the work from the master. The under-journeyhands receive the full shop-price, deducting 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week for loom standing, which is the profit of the undertaker. There are 20 girls employed by Messrs. Gillett, about 11 miles from Banbury, at a village called Brails, where the warping and winding is done preparatory to the weaving. The dyeing is done at Banbury by Messrs. Gillett. The worsted ready spun, and the mohair spun and doubled, are bought by the Banbury manufacturers, with some cotton-yarns; and the warping and winding is their first step with it. This is done on their own premises. The plushes are dyed by the manufacturer after being woven, and those for waistcoats are also printed. The sealiotts are some of them dyed in the yarn, viz., those which are woven in checked patterns.

Trade-club still in existence. Connexion with the general union repressed.

"The weavers have a trade-club, of very considerable standing, for giving mutual assistance, and for trade purposes, held at a public-house. They had long been accustomed to send committees to treat with the masters; and in 1834, at a time of general excitement, they joined or corresponded with the union of the trades generally. Some of the men refused to join the union, and were encouraged by the masters, who refused to employ any in connexion with the union. Many refused to give up this connexion, and were long out of work. For three months many of the men were out, being promised assistance from other trades, which never came. They have since been very submissive.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

BANBURY.

Prices of weaving.

The masters all pay the same prices, according to the article, at so much per yard: it would soon be found out if one master paid less than another, through the men's complaints.

Yards in a piece.	Fabric.	Price of Weaving per yard. s.	d.
42	Common worsted plushes	0	6
42	18 worsted plushes	0	8
42	Common 14 narrow hairs	0	8
42	16 narrow hairs	0	10
30	16 narrow sealiotts	0	7
30	16 super sealiotts	1	0
42	17 scores livery plushes	1	5
24	Tapestry, 23 inches	2	6
24	Hair velvets, 18 inches	2	6
30	Sealiotts, varying according to spot and fancy, from 5*d.* to	0	7

Earnings.

"The earnings vary very much, according to the fabric and to the skill of the hands. The looms often belong to the masters, and sometimes to the men. No difference is made in payment on this account; the loom being a tie upon a man to work for the owner of it. New looms are seldom seen; but when old ones have to be sold they may be had from 1*l.* to 2*l.*, according to the goodness of them.

Rate at which pieces are made.

"A man ought to make a piece of from 42 to 44 yards of livery plush in a month, for which he would receive about 3*l.* They make about 12 in a year; and this will be 36*l.* Sometimes they are out digging potatoes or at other avocations; but, taking good and bad together, they are reckoned to do ten such pieces a-year, or to earn 30*l.* annually. The worsted plushes and the narrow hairs are very poor looms'-works, while the hangings, and the velvets, and the super sealiotts are good. There are about 60 men on liveries, which is perhaps above the medium. Most of the men have gardens which they cultivate; *the larger proportion living in the villages around*, at Brails, Shelford, Boddicote, Bloxam, Adderbury, Middleton Cheney, &c. The hands of Mr. Gillett would average from 10*s.* to 12*s.* per week, it being only the old and the boys who make less than 10*s.* But there is poorer work—such as the "hairs"—upon which a man must work very hard to make 10*s.* per week. Some of the weavers' children generally wind the quills.

Slack times through general commercial revulsions.

"There may be a few men unemployed, and there are sometimes small fluctuations in prices of goods and of labour, but the trade is constant and limited, and can afford generally a fair price; such articles as the livery plushes being one of necessary but limited demand at a remunerating price. There have been no variations in prices of labour worth mentioning for many years; the men when not wanted are turned off, and last year there were many out of employment, but they are all now pretty fully employed, and likely to be through the winter. The trade is unaffected by any checks, but those thrown upon it by revulsions in the commercial world at large. Half were out of employ for some months last year, and how they managed to exist Mr. Gillett does not know, except that he contributed 5*l.* to the Visiting Society, which gave them bread and other articles. The trade began to improve about last Christmas, and has since been increasing, insomuch that it is now scarcely possible to get the work that is wanted done. Upon the whole, however, the condition of the weavers is somewhat better than that of the agricultural population generally, though not much; 9*s.* per week having heretofore been the agricultural wages; but they have been raised in some parishes to 10*s.*

Evidence by a weaver to the same effect, and as to deductions to show nett earnings.

The evidence of William Smith, one of the oldest plush-weavers in the place, was chiefly to the same effect. He thinks that the work was not made quite so good forty years ago, and that then the men could earn rather more within the time. But the greatest variations have always been rather in the amount of employment than in the price of labour; and there was quite as much want of work in former as in late years. He points out that, from the earnings above stated, sixpence per week on the average the year round ought to be deducted for extra fire, light, tackling, and perhaps house-rent; and that the men in the neighbouring villages lose time in fetching and carrying. The quill-winding, too, valued at 1*s.* 6*d.* per week, ought properly to be deducted, though commonly performed by some member of the weaver's family; and this, with the previous drawback, would reduce the earnings above stated no less than 2*s.* per week. "All the able-bodied men in full work will be making upwards of 10*s.* per week," but Smith himself is not making 9*s.*

Under-journeymen, and new under-journeywork factory.

The few under-journeymen who pay to the first-hand weavers 1*s.* 6*d.* per week for rent, and receive from them the full shop-price for their labour, are generally unmarried hands. "When a man marries he purposes to have a house, and a loom to work at home." Mr. Baughen has a factory of about 30 hands, on the system of under-journeywork; but the men do not like the factory, it places them so closely under the inspection of the masters, without the freedom of hours which they enjoy elsewhere.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Banbury.

"There used to be a large trade-club, which has dwindled down to a small body of 21. This is merely for trade purposes; without any fund, but merely to discuss the interests of the trade, and spend 3*d.* weekly. The masters have not liked the club, which, however, has been a very different thing from the union, which they expressly opposed. The regulation with regard to apprentices is, that no weaver shall have more than one apprentice until the one he may already have shall have served six years; and the mode of enforcing this regulation, and the one excluding women from the loom, is, for a committee of delegates, one from the hands of each master, to apply to the master of the offending party to stop his work, to which he accedes, if the man do not abandon his opposition, rather than meet the strike with which he is otherwise threatened. Few of the men are in benefit-clubs; but, when individuals are sick, a collection is made for them round the town among the trade."

Trade-club, and its mode of operation.

The plush-manufacture is obviously one step further than the girth-factory from the relations existing in agricultural life, and among dispersed trades, towards the dissociation subsisting in large manufactures.

The manufacture of "webs," or girthing, and horse-cloths, has been carried on by the family of Messrs. Cobb at this place for about 140 years, and has been of gradual growth without great fluctuations. The articles are supplied to Birmingham, Walsall, Glasgow, Bristol, &c., whence they find their way into general consumption. They have from the first been made in a factory on the premises of the manufacturer, and the present number of hands employed in weaving and winding is about 40. The weavers are chiefly men and boys, but there are five girls weaving lighter articles; the looms being all single-hand, and making only one breadth at a time. The boys are generally apprenticed for seven years, from 14 until 21; and when for a shorter term, only because they have entered the trade later than 14 years of age.

Hands employed in the girth-factory.

All winding, warping, and filling of quills is done by hands expressly employed by the master. The men have simply to put in their warps, and shoot down the weft. They are paid by the piece, according to a scale of prices which has not been varied within the memory of the present proprietors of the trade. The following is the scale, with a statement of the payments to each hand in four successive weeks:—

Trade system; prices of weaving; and weekly earnings.

Prices paid by Messrs. T. R. Cobb and Co., Banbury, Oxfordshire, December, 1838:—

	s.	*d.*		*s.*	*d.*	
Per piece of 15 yards girth-web . .	0	6	to	1	2	
,, 12½ yards rollers . . .	1	0	to	1	9	
Brace per gross of 144 yards . . .	6	0	to	7	0	according to width.

Boys Winding per Week.	10th Nov. £.	*s.*	*d.*
Clarke	0	3	0
Betts	0	1	9
Boss	0	1	9
Stockley	0	1	7½
Essix	0	1	7½
Baker	0	1	7½
Gunn	0	1	7½
Hobday	0	1	6
Gillett	0	1	6
Fenbitt	0	1	6
Herbert	0	1	6
Wagstaff	0	1	6
Wagstaff	0	1	6
Holioak	0	1	6
Gift to Weaver's Widow	0	2	6
	1	6	0

The gross earnings are the same for the weeks ending 17th and 24th of November and 1st of December.

Weavers per Piece Work.	10th Nov. £.	*s.*	*d.*	17th. £.	*s.*	*d.*	24th. £.	*s.*	*d.*	1st Dec. £.	*s.*	*d.*
Jos. Baker, warper	1	5	3	1	5	0½	1	5	7	1	3	11½
John Baker (old)	0	11	7½	0	12	0	0	11	9	0	11	0½
Edw. Bushell, Sen. (old)	0	6	6	0	12	4	0	7	2	0	7	11½
Edw. Bushell, Jun.	0	13	6	0	16	4½	0	19	9	0	18	3
Birch	0	11	10	0	14	8	0	13	0	0	12	4
Clarke (apprentice)	0	9	0	0	9	2½	0	8	6	0	4	2½
Essix, Joseph	1	1	1	0	7	7	0	15	5	0	14	6
John Hobday	0	15	6	Idle			0	16	6½	0	16	4
W. Kennedy	0	15	4	0	14	8	0	14	10	0	16	0½
John Herbert	0	9	3	0	15	1	0	9	3½	0	9	2
W. Lamprey (old)	0	10	2	0	11	1	0	9	4½	0	11	2
W. Maids (apprentice)	0	10	0	0	8	4	0	9	0	0	6	2
G. Owen	0	16	1½	0	16	6	0	17	2	0	17	6
James Owen	0	13	6½	0	13	10	0	12	8	0	10	7½
John Roberts	0	18	6	0	18	2	0	19	6½	0	18	2
Randall (idle)	0	7	7	0	6	9	0	14	4	0	9	6
Hambage	0	10	3	0	11	0½	0	11	5	0	11	10
Upton	0	13	4	0	16	2	0	13	0	0	15	0
R. Wagstaff	0	15	0	0	13	4	0	14	8	0	16	6
J. Wagstaff (idle)	0	10	0	0	8	0	0	2	5	0	14	4
Girls (5)	1	8	9½	1	2	3	1	2	0½	1	4	10
Lucas (out doors)	0	13	4	0	14	8	..			..		
Heath (ditto)	0	1	0	0	17	8	..			0	13	8
	15	5	6	14	17	9	14	7	0½	15	3	1

The men do not work well on a Monday; but on an average work 9½ hours a-day for six days in the week.

The apprentices are paid only two-thirds of the full prices for the first years of their time, then three-fourths, and afterwards four-fifths. They are first introduced into the winding department of the factory, and, if likely hands, are brought

Introduction of hands into the trade.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

BANBURY.

Satisfactory relations between employer and employed, owing partly to neighbourhood, and partly to the large proportion of capital employed, independent of wages.

on. It is not until he has been in the trade for three or four years that an apprentice can be entrusted with the best work; but an active youth of eighteen may then be as good a weaver as at any period of his life.

The manufacturer gives his men constant employment; and, refusing to employ men of bad character, he has a steady body of hands. Indeed the relations between the employer and the employed appear to be of the most primitive and satisfactory nature. Combination is unknown; for, though there are times when the master, in accordance with a depression in the trade, might be disposed to reduce wages (in which reduction the men would be obliged by their necessities to acquiesce), yet the hands have rather been employed at a temporary loss, to keep them together. On the other hand, the same view to the future deters the men from seeking a new employer at advanced wages under a temporary improvement in trade. Neither do other manufacturers in the same branch reduce wages under depression or advance them on revival of the trade. The wages amount to little more than six per cent. on the price of the articles; and to interfere with them would therefore only "disorganize" the factory, and perhaps ruin the trade, for a fraction of price almost immaterial compared to the variations produced from other causes.

Effects of these relations, as compared with those seen to result when a manufacturing population are dissociated from their employers.

The very isolation of this little manufacturing community establishes between the master and the men relations which do not subsist between employers and employed in large manufacturing populations. The profitable employment of his own fixed and floating capital requires of him to keep together his hands by equalizing the wages and the employment, while he himself takes all the hazard of the markets. His hands are also members of the same parochial and municipal community; and his relations with them are nearly of the same permanent and varied character as those of the landlord and farmer with an agricultural population. The same close connexion of the employed with the property of the employer must everywhere be conducive to the institution of moral relations, which we have seen to be wholly wanting where there is no such connexion. The character of an individual employer may give to one establishment a well-being and contentment which it would be vain to seek in any other in analogous circumstances. But a single detached manufacturing establishment which, though its hands be lowly-skilled, employs them in connexion with a large proportionate capital, obviously holds out a better prospect of a permanent and decent subsistence than one which, like various other branches of the hand-loom weaving, is carried on by a people wholly dissociated from their employers, whether in regard to property or residence.

Intelligence; means of instruction; provident institutions, &c.

The active intelligence displayed at Banbury in the administration of its various public bodies, in its institutions for instruction and charity, and in its local publications, is very remarkable. There is a mechanics' institute with about 200 members, an infant school, and a national school, besides Sunday-schools attached to each place of worship. A British school is now in course of erection, on a very liberal scale. The weavers have decidedly improved in conduct of late years; some of the young men belong to the mechanics' institute; and the young men are altogether superior to the old. They receive every encouragement not only to seek increased intelligence, but to resort to innocent amusements of a more active kind. The savings-bank is a very flourishing institution, and has caused a great decline among the old benefit-clubs. The depositors, in November, 1838, were 2492, and the amount due to them 71,299*l.* 11*s.* 11*d.*; but there are few weavers connected with it, the chief depositors being servants and petty tradespeople. The journeymen-weavers, as well as the shoemakers, who are a very numerous body, and much more unsteady, are said to be great politicians among the other labourers.

Congleton.

December 28th, 1838.

CONGLETON.

Various branches into which the silk trade is here divided.

The trade of this town, which has a population of about 10,000, consists chiefly in the throwing of raw silk, the spinning of waste silk, the manufacture of thrown-silk into plain ribbons by power-looms, and the weaving of a few ribbons and broad

silks by hand-looms. There are also two cotton spinning-factories; but the weaving is confined to the silk-trade. The silk throwsters are here, as elsewhere, exceedingly desirous that the duties on foreign-thrown silks may not be abolished; urging that, were the price of Italian organzine thereby lowered, they must be grievously injured, and that, were it not lowered, the amount of the duty would be a free gift to the Italians. Their complaints of the state of the throwing-trade in late years, while enjoying this trifling protection, are undoubtedly well founded. Here, also, I found the prevailing complaints of the plunder of the bales of silk in their transit by the canals from London, supposed to be chiefly committed in the neighbourhood of Stoke-upon-Trent.

Power-weaving become the staple weaving trade.

Mr. John Newman, a very intelligent master weaver, or undertaker and proprietor of looms, who has been in the ribbon-trade at Congleton since 1825, gave me the chief evidence into which I considered it necessary to enter in a place where hand-weaving is now of such limited amount. The throwing and spinning firms are those of Messrs. Read, Pearson, Johnston, and Charles Johnston, all of whom likewise weave ribbons by power, as also do a few silk-manufacturers of a lower class. Power-loom weaving is now, in fact, the staple weaving-trade of the place. The extent of it is as follows:—

Manufacturers.	Number of Power-Looms making Plain Ribbons, about
Messrs. Pearson	100
„ Johnston	50
„ Charles Johnston	50
„ Read	30
„ Hunt	8
„ Brooks	7
„ Barton	9
	254

The three latter hire weaving-shop and steam-power.

Supersedence of the single-hand and hand engine looms by steam engine looms.

In 1825 plain ribbons were still made by women in a few single-hand looms in a neighbouring parish; but all the ribbon-weavers in the town were using the engine-loom, as all in the trade now are. The engine-weaving by hand is confined to the town, and there are not more than 100 looms; the power-looms possessing such an advantage, that young men who had a few looms of their own were obliged to sell them to the factory proprietors, to be applied to power-weaving, and to seek employment in the factories themselves. This occurred chiefly nine or ten years ago, and the remaining engine-looms worked by hand remain merely because, at existing prices, there is little difference in the cost of manufacturing by them or by the power-looms. Of the broad silk-looms, which were once very numerous here, there are now no more left than of the hand-engine looms. The broad weavers have chiefly sought employment in Macclesfield; those who remain are employed by Messrs. Read and others in weaving bandanas and twills for pocket-handkerchiefs. The number does not exceed 100. Congleton has therefore about 200 hand-loom weavers to 250 power-loom weavers.

System of power-weaving in ribbons.

The power-loom weaving has so complete a dominion over the hand-loom weaving, that a brief notice of it is indispensable. The power-looms of Messrs. Read are employed in making plain black sarcenets; those of Messrs. Johnston are making also black satins; and those of Mr. Pearson produce likewise a few plain colours. There is one man to each loom, in the front of it, picking up the warps as he leans across the baton, and correcting the faults of the machine. The treadles are alternately pressed by points revolving on an axis; the shuttles are thrown by a fly fixed underneath the warps; and the baton is swung by a crank in the axle, which works the treddles. The shuttles are worked at about the same rate as by hand; but there are more shuttles than in the hand-engine loom, to the amount of one-fifth, one-fourth, or one-third. The narrower breadths are made wholly by steam at present; the broader sometimes by the hand engine loom, beginning with 6 dys. The following are the prices paid to both steam and hand weavers:—

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

CONGLETON.

Prices of hand and power weaving determined by a common list.

Breadths.	Hand Shuttles.	Power Shuttles.	Hand Prices per Piece of 36 Yards.	Power Prices per Piece of 36 Yards.
dys.			*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*
2*	..	30	0 6½	0 5
4*	..	30	0 8½	0 6
6	22	26	0 10	0 7
8	16	20	1 1	0 9
10	16	20	1 3	0 11
12	12 or 14	16	1 6	1 1
14	12	16	1 10	1 3
16	10	12	2 1	1 5
18	10†	10	2 4	1 7
20	8	10	2 7	1 10
24	8	10	3 1	2 4
30	6	8	4 0	2 9

* These not made by hand.

† Seldom made by hand, and by power generally, in 20 dy. looms.

Rather more earnings would be made upon the broad than upon the other looms: they require superior management.

Earnings greater on the power than on the hand engine looms, though prices of weaving apparently less.

In comparing the hand and the steam prices for weaving, it must be borne in mind that the factory proprietor winds and warps the silk, and performs all the usual duties of the "undertaker" for the hands at the steam-looms; and that, in fact, the prices paid by the undertakers, to whom the hand-engine looms belong, to their journeyhands, are about the same as those of the manufacturer to his power-weavers. The earnings of the power-weavers must obviously, however, be greater in the proportion of the greater quantity which their looms throw off, as well through the augmented number of shuttles as through more incessant motion, and more regular hours of labour.

Hands employed on the hand looms, and access to the trade.

On the broad looms, and on the engine-looms of Congleton, a few women are employed; but on the power-looms there are very few, and some of the largest manufacturers will not employ women on them. The engine-looms are owned by about ten undertakers, one of whom is Mr. John Newman, who gives the following evidence:—

"The hands of either sex now introduced to the trade come chiefly through a five years' apprenticeship, from the age of 13 or 14. Formerly many Irish came into the silk-trade; but now Dublin, which was the nursery of them, is drained of all but its few tabinet-weavers. Most of the apprentices are half-pay apprentices, living with their parents and friends, though a few are in-door apprentices. The undertaker, though he supplies quill-filling, receives only one-fourth of the first-hand price, and accounts to the journeyman for the other three-fourths.

No combinations among men; but agreement among masters upon a minimum list for both power and hand-weaving.

"There has long been but little combination in the trade; nothing since witness has known it of the kind which exists in Dublin, in which city he was apprenticed. There is now a committee for supplying subscriptions to a turn-out shop at Manchester; but there is no permanent combination or fund to fall back upon. A union was formed in 1834, at the time of the general excitement on the subject of trades-unions, but it was broken through by some of the manufacturers refusing to employ those connected with it, and it was quickly abandoned. There is a mutual understanding among the masters to pay by the list above given, as a minimum list.

Hours of work.

"The introduction of power into the trade has effected a complete revolution in the habits of the weavers. Formerly they came and went to and from their work at the undertaker's as they pleased; but the factory was a place where no irregularity could be practised with impunity, and the necessity of their resorting to it has made the whole more tractable and more industrious. Besides, the prices were so reduced, that, if a man have any expectation of earning a decency, he must work hard and close. Six in the morning is the hour for the factory-weaver; and the necessity of his appearing then compels his sobriety overnight. In the hand-engine looms the hands do not generally commence before breakfast on Monday, in the course of which day they are inclined to a little truancy, nor do they work after five P.M. on Saturday; but during the intervening time they work hard from six A.M. to nine P.M., allowing two hours for meals.

Quantity made per week by each loom worked by steam and hand respectively.

"The factory-hands reckon to turn out of each loom a length per week, though it is the opinion of the factory proprietors that they might do considerably more. In the hand engine loom three half-lengths per fortnight is the average of the work done by the weaver. A set of grosses, which is four lengths, is called a calendar month's work, but is not done in that time. The factory-weaver's earnings on his length will be 15*s.* per week (according to the statements of the factory-weavers, but the masters think it is more.) They consider that they must have *good* silk to make a length per week. The hand engine loom weavers, for their fortnight's work, of three half-lengths (say of 12 dys.), would not receive so much. The first-hand price

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for the work would be 27*s.*, but 6*s.* 9*d.* is due to the undertaker for quill-winding, loom-rent, &c.; and fire and candle the year round require a deduction of 6*d.* per week more, leaving 9*s.* 7½*d.* as the nett weekly earnings. Sometimes the hand-weaver gets rather more, but is liable to be kept waiting for warps or for shute. The introduction of power at first increased the amount of "play," as the vacant time was called; but the number of hand-looms has so decreased as to leave the rest more constant employment.

Mutual competition of hand loom and power loom weavers.

"The cases of several establishments which have been broken up indicate that power-loom weaving is not always a good speculation; but there are now only two firms which give out hand-work to undertakers. *The power-loom wages would be higher but for the competition of the hand-loom weavers,* who could manufacture the cheapest if the power-loom wages were raised. In like manner the hand-loom wages would be higher but for the competition of the power-loom weavers. Cannot say what causes the general depression of wages. People will have things cheap, and masters cannot sell unless they can make them cheap."

Different sections into which a general competition for employment is thus divided.

This was the witness's mode of describing the general competition for employment, which would be much the same were there no steam-looms in existence. The competition between the steam engine loom and the hand engine loom at Congleton is obviously analogous to that of the hand engine loom and the single-hand loom in the Coventry district; and the two branches in each case exhibit merely subsections of a general competition for employment, rivalling each other in the same locality, precisely as different localities have long rivalled each other in the same trade. The same causes of an aggravation of this want of employment, in the employment offered so largely to women and children, exist in still more active operation at Congleton than even in the single-hand trade of the Coventry district. The same witness proceeds to say,—

Employment afforded to women and children in the silk-mills.

"The women are fully occupied, if they be able, in the silk-throwing mills; and domestic comfort seems farther off than ever. Wages never change for the better, but are constantly declining. The whole of the family of a weaver are now worse off than ever. There is positive suffering wherever there are families of young children of which none, or very few, are capable of working in the mill. The mill-wages have been very much reduced. Every weaver's family must be in suffering unless the children be making earnings, and perhaps the wife also. The children go to the mills for some time to learn, without receiving any payment; they then begin to receive 1*s.* 6*d.* per week. The women working full time get 6*s.* or 7*s.* A day-labourer is far better off than the journeyman-weaver.

Want of good conduct.

"Little time as they have for dissipation, they are generally of dissolute habits. Many of the factory-people are exceedingly improvident. Some will spend their money in as decent clothing, food, and housing as they can get; while others will be ragged, miserable, and shifting from place to place, without paying rent. Some of the best workmen take pride in the dissolute expenditure of their extra earnings, which they regard as public evidence of their superiority.

Instruction, and habits as to providence, &c.

"The weavers do not generally go to places of worship. The principal schools are the Sunday-schools; for the silk-factories, upon which the Factory Acts enforce no limitation as to the age of children employed, detain them from resort to day-schools. There are many benefit clubs, to which the weavers subscribe—some 2*d.* and some 3*d.* per week,—from which, during sickness, they receive 5*s.* and 6*s.* per week. There are also burial-clubs; and there is a club for burials only, called the Congleton Club, which has between 1000 and 2000 members. Payment of 1*d.* per week for 17 weeks, and ½*d.* per week afterwards, secures to each member's friends, on his or her death, 3*l.* 12*s.* for the expenses of the funeral. The sick-clubs are not so thriving. The 'Odd Fellows' have a lodge, and the 'Foresters' also: these are clubs for sickness and burial, with the advantage of offering to their members the benefits of them in case of removal to other places, as well as during their residence in the locality. There is a savings'-bank; none of the depositors, however, are weavers (unless it be undertakers), but chiefly servants and country-people. The local police consists of one officer under the corporation. The feeling between masters and men is not generally bad.

Physical appearance and condition.

"The population are generally strong and healthy, though they have often a pale and haggard appearance, frequently from their in-door and mill employments. They have little actual sickness, though a low rate of spirits, especially the children, as compared with the children of other districts."

"Their chief food is potatoes and porridge, with seldom any butchers' meat."

The general appearance of the workpeople and of their habitations is unfavourable.

Repeal of the corn-laws.

The only remedy which the undertaker who gave me evidence could venture to suggest was the repeal of the corn-laws, "so that food might be cheap in proportion to the cheapness of labour, which the corn-laws prevent."

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MACCLESFIELD.

December 29—31, 1838.

Present investigation limited to assigned causes and proposed remedies of depression.

MR. KEYSER having reported to you his completion of the investigation into the *actual condition* of the silk-weavers of Macclesfield, the duties which devolved upon me, to render the inquiry complete at this place, consisted in the collection of evidence as to the *assigned causes* and proposed *remedies* of the depression which that gentleman found extensively to exist.

Means of information.

To this end I called together, on two successive days, the most active among the operative weavers; and, as regards the external interests of the silk-trade, availed myself of the evidence of John Brocklehurst, Esq., member of parliament for the borough, and a resident manufacturer.

Macclesfield trade analogous in its main features to that of Coventry.

The detail into which I have entered in describing the external circumstances of the trade of Coventry, its internal constitution, the moral condition of its work-people, their contract for labour, and the progress of their condition, dispenses with the necessity of any lengthened memoir regarding that of Macclesfield, which, in all its main features, presents the closest analogy to it. This analogy is proved, not only by the evidence given to me by the present weavers, but by that adduced before parliament, at the period of the Coventry petition in 1818, on the repeal of the Spitalfields Act in 1823, and at the silk inquiry of 1832, as to the effect of foreign competition.

Former list system of prices for weaving and trade regulations, broken up at the peace.

The weaving of silk was not introduced at Macclesfield, which now contains a population of about 32,000, until 1787; and from 1793, when it was still in its infancy, until 1814 inclusive, the weavers were paid according to a list of prices, formed by their delegates, and agreed to by the masters, who attached to it their signatures. The trade was then confined chiefly to grey bandanas, with a few romales and figured handkerchiefs; but it now comprises also an extensive variety of piece-goods. From time to time, early in the present century, the lists underwent some alterations, as new articles were introduced, or the relative labour employed in the production of the various styles changed; and the system of framing such lists, accompanied with regulations as to the number of apprentices, and other details, was part of the trade constitution until 1815. At the period of the general depression which ensued on the peace, the masters proposed a reduction of 25 per cent. in the prices; the men refused to accede to these terms; a compromise was offered to them, which they unwisely refused, since labour was offered much cheaper elsewhere; and the result was a protracted struggle, in which the masters united to refuse all recognition of the old system, which was utterly destroyed, and the men have henceforward worked on such terms as they could individually make. The old apprenticeship system was now broken up, and hand-factories erected by the masters. Still the income of the weaver was not greatly reduced at Macclesfield any more than at Coventry.

First great reductions of wages after the introduction of French goods, and repeal of the Spitalfields Act.

The masters were contented to fix their prices a little under those of Spitalfields, which the Spitalfields Act rendered a somewhat permanent standard; and it was not until the repeal of the Spitalfields Act, and the shock given to the trade by the introduction of French silks, after it had received a great impulse from the reduction of the duties on raw silk, that extensive reductions in the price of labour were at once effected. That a minute examination of London and country prices would show under these reductions the same relative proportions that they exhibited while the Spitalfields Act was in force, was anticipated by one of the Macclesfield witnesses before the Lords' Committee on its repeal;* and, I believe, with justice. During the preceding excitement an advanced list had been obtained in 1825; but such was the succeeding depression, that a number of manufacturers failed, and, after unavailing struggles on the part of the men by strikes, it was finally abandoned in 1826. From this time there was no list of prices for weaving until October, 1832, when there was a general turn-out.

Turn-out of 1832, to obtain a list of prices.

"The immediate cause of this turn-out," states one of the weavers in the presence of the others, "was the endeavour of the masters to underpay each other. The first step of the weavers was to have a meeting on the Water Green. A body of them agreed to prevent any of the weavers taking out work at a price less than the list which they resolved to demand. The magistrates made no strenuous attempts to put down this intimidation, and in which they were far less 'tyrannous' than the existing corporation. The turn-outs met the under-price weavers, turned their coats, and dusted them with flour. They were otherwise assaulted,

* Peter Kiefe, Minutes of Evidence, p. 58.

windows were broken, and the lives and properties of underworking weavers were unsafe. This lasted seven weeks; at the end of which the weavers obtained what they wanted,—their list of prices.

Opposition of the masters to a list system.

"All the masters were opposed to the system of having a list; they wished to employ their capital just as they pleased—just as the witness himself would if he had capital; and if he were to be controlled in the application of his capital in Macclesfield, while he could be uncontrolled at Bullock Smithy, he would rather remove to Bullock Smithy. All the masters gave in—Mr. Pearson at the end of a month, and the rest all on one day. At this time a list was framed, of which the later and existing list of 1835 is merely a revision and enlargement.

List instituted and maintained for the town; but found unavailing in regard to the country weavers, and those of other towns.

"From 1832 the list was maintained as a local regulation applying *only* to Macclesfield town, beyond the limits of which capital was removed; and, availing themselves of the poverty of the surrounding cotton-weavers, masters gave them out work at a less price than was demanded by the Macclesfield weaver, by which the latter was undermined. The result was, dissatisfaction in the minds of the manufacturers who did not resort to this; the system increased; and some houses set up a country agency for the giving out work, besides their town warehouses. One firm employed upwards of 400 looms in the country. One house even now merely throws, winds, and warps at Macclesfield, and puts out the weaving at Middleton and other Lancashire places, where the work can be got cheaper. Somewhat more than a year ago this began to produce uneasiness among the weavers, and disputes have consequently arisen.

Necessity, therefore, on the part of the men in the town generally, to work at a lower price.

"Some of the weavers therefore sought to accommodate their institution of a list price to the new circumstances of the home competition. Part agreed to the proposition; part dissented from it; and hence division arose in the trade. It was proposed by one party of the weavers to reduce some of the list prices, to meet those at which the work was being done in the country. Another party did not assent to it. This was late in 1837, when various meetings were called, and, but for the desire to avoid names, evidence could be given that one part of the manufacturers desired this dissension among the weavers, that all lists might be destroyed and abolished. On November 6, 1837, a large meeting was held without result; in February, 1838, another large meeting was held, when thousands were present, and they all determined to turn out, in maintenance of the list as it stood, without any alteration. This the witness considers was wholly impracticable—he dissented from it; and after a fortnight's struggle there was a compromise. The men paraded the streets with bands of music; they were sent to prison for intimidation of those who were disposed to take out work at under-price: the great body existed on charity.

Committee of men endeavour in vain to maintain the full price.

"This struggle originated in a revision of the list, in October, 1837. A committee of weavers had been called together for the purpose of maintaining the price of Persians. The manufacturers were getting the work done cheap in the country, and the men were taking it out in the town at 1*s.* 6*d.* less than the list price. The committee levied contributions for the support of the weavers who should refuse to work at the reduced prices; they sought to get the country weavers into union with them; but the latter, some of them, duped the committee, and the whole body, though they spoke fair, were not sufficiently disposed to combine.

Committee to revise and reduce the list of prices.

"This committee was unable to maintain the price of Persians, and another committee was then deputed by the trade in their usual manner; the weavers of the several warehouses sending their delegates. This committee proposed a revision of the list to the trade; this revision was agreed to by a majority of the shops, January 29th, 1838; but it was negatived by a general meeting of the weavers on February 12th, 1838. The committee at the meeting did not adhere to their own propositions; they did not go to the meeting; and the meeting refused to accede to the revision. This meeting was the one of 1838 already described.

Refusal of the men to confirm the revision; and consequent absence of any fixed scale for present payments.

"Mr. Brocklehurst, after the men had been out a fortnight, said to one of the other manufacturers that he would pay any price that any other employing an equal number of looms would pay; and the men went in on the supposition that this was gaining their point. They went in again without any express understanding having really been come to; and Mr. Brocklehurst proceeded to pay by the list as agreed to in January, which, however, has never been printed or fully recognised. Other houses in the town are paying under the list, and the list last printed (that of 1835) is not now observed. Perhaps Mr. Pearson is the only one, besides Mr. Brocklehurst, who is now paying even the list revised in 1838. The other houses are, a large portion of them, not paying by the list at all.

Favourable influence of the parliamentary franchise on the contract for labour.

"There is some little guarantee that, however, some vestige of the list will be retained. The political dissensions of different parties since the introduction of the parliamentary franchise has benefited the weavers. There are few weavers (about 80) who are voters, but masters are inclined to pay a better price with a view to gain the favour of the town generally. The shopkeepers and those included in the burgess-lists always supported the men in any dispute for wages; they are desirous of their being as well off as possible; and to pay them better is a mode of gaining their favour. But there is an universal repugnance among the masters to any list, there being an universal desire to do as they like with the working people, which we want to prevent. Since the meeting and turn-out in January, 1838, there have been no general movements in the trade. The manufacturers, of their own free will and accord, have just agreed to raise the price of Persians: and this arbitrary power, though now favourably exercised, they possess, at any time, to lower it. It is this arbitrary power of which the weavers complain, and instead of it they wish to substitute a mutual agreement between masters and men."

Through the circumstances here described, various depressing influences have

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Reductions successively made in wages.

Mode through which they are affected.

lowered the amount of the silk-weavers' earnings, according to another witness, in the following proportions:—in 1793, the average earnings were, 15*s.* 1½*d.* per week; in 1811, 17*s.* 6*d.*; in 1813, 19*s.* 10*d.*; in 1825, 19*s.* 7*d.*; in 1829, 10*s.* 4*d.*; in 1832, 9*s.*; and in 1838, from 7*s.* to 10*s.* nett. The larger manufacturers of Macclesfield, like those of Coventry, are especially desirous that their men should receive a comfortable maintenance in return for their labour, and they seldom reduce, except under a general pressure on the trade. The existence of smaller masters underpaying them to a limited extent renders their own men somewhat grateful for their better treatment; and the moment that this underpaying arrives at such a pitch that it must be stopped, at the cost of a little temporary trouble or inconvenience, the few principal houses can turn out the whole body of the trade until "they have made the underpaying masters advance their prices," or until they will accept in mass the lower price which those masters are paying. This is obviously the usual operation of strikes in uncombined manufactures; all strikes without this countenance could have no chance of success, and have seldom been attempted; the result in the case supposed is almost immaterial to the larger manufacturers; but the men complain, and not without justice, that they are thus driven to adopt illegal measures on pain of a reduction of wages. If they see any chance of success, they resort to intimidation towards the hands who are working at a lower price,—if not, they submit to accept the lower price themselves. To prevent the intimidation by an improved police, the weavers evidently consider an interference with their *rights;* they seem never to have called a public opinion to their aid, like the weavers of Coventry, until the introduction of the parliamentary franchise; and it is to do the work of such intimidation in a legal form that they require a "local Board of Trade."

No legal means of preventing underpaying; and resort to intimidation partly superseded by moral influences arising out of the new parliamentary franchise.

Desire for a local Board of Trade, to fix and revise lists of wages, and supersede illegal intimidation in their enforcement.

The remote influences upon wages the weavers unite in regarding as of secondary importance compared to the form of making the *contract for labour* itself, by which a rate of wages might be fixed to which the supply of hands should regulate itself, rather than that the proportionate supply of hands should influence the price of weaving labour.—

Fixed minimum not contemplated.

Organization must be general, or it will prove abortive.

"It is obvious, from the preceding statements, that a local regulation is insufficient, and that the only arrangement practicable is to have some general measure, sanctioned by law. The witness considers it wholly impracticable to have a minimum price of labour any more than a minimum price of goods, but considers that what the majority at any time are paying the minority ought; and it is the minority, who underpay the prevailing prices, that the weavers wish to have restrained, not locally in any particular town alone but in the kingdom generally, or in extensive districts, on a municipal system, with a representative assembly in each district, composed of masters and of men.

Trade districts.

"Macclesfield itself is a district which, notwithstanding its depression, is yet superior in wages to the surrounding districts, the competition of which is, however, rapidly undermining it; and this is a question not of the state of trade, but of local competition.

Representation of both masters and men.

"The representative boards should consist of equal portions of masters and of men, with an organization, similar to those of municipal governments, for enforcing upon all individuals the general agreement which may be come to by them. This is a proposition totally different from the Spitalfields Act, and to the application for a minimum of wages, which Parliament could not grant. They might revise the lists annually or quarterly, and the board should also see that the invention and employment of machinery did not reduce the operative to distress. Local boards on this basis will alone protect the working man. For turns-out merely send the trade from one town to another; and unless the Government give some such protection they will continue to be troubled with torch-light meetings and other disturbances.

Functions of the proposed board.

One of them to be taxation of machinery.

"The great bulk of the community is composed of consumers whose sole property is labour, which is taxed (as inanimate labour is not) and bears a large proportion of the taxation of the country: and an adequate remuneration of labour is essential to the safety and well-being of society. While *inanimate* labour robs the labourer of the demand for his labour and its reward, while he is taxed and *it* is not taxed, the labourer must be in misery; and to check the progress of this power is the object of the proposed board. The situation of the weaver most imperiously demands its adoption. There are three grades of labouring remuneration:—1st, of competency, in which the labourers sometimes resist the will of the master; 2nd, of poverty, in which they yield to his desires to reduce; and then comes, 3rdly, degradation, and the condition of the Lancashire cottoners.

Precedents for legislative interference in the contract for labour.

"There are precedents for this interference of the legislature—1st, in the Truck Act; 2nd, in the Factory Act; and 3rd, in the Usury Laws.

"Unions among the workmen have no means of making other men keep from robbing them of employment by underworking them. We want an organized means of preventing this."

Desire on the part of the weavers for some means to prevent their fellow labourers working under price.

I have given the preceding evidence in its original vagueness, that the views of the weavers may be the more accurately represented. It is obviously contemplated that it is to exert some restrictive influence over the extension of *machinery;* power-looms being regarded as one of the chief agents of depression. Considerable

diversity of opinion existed as to the constitution of the board; but it was agreed that there must be some impartial and magisterial casting vote, where the masters and men could not come to an agreement; and that some central authority of the State must have a supreme control over the local boards to prevent one district underpaying another through their legalized lists.

Vagueness of their plans and unattainable purposes of the proposed boards. Incidental mention of moral causes of depression.

One remedy which it is supposed that local boards would apply indicates existing causes of depression, wholly unnoticed, except thus casually. "They would prevent immorality," states one of the witnesses. "The children go very young to factories; and, though earning their own support, early throw off parental authority. But, if there were a Board of Trade, the parents would be better able to keep their children, and to maintain their control over them."

Remote causes little heeded by the witnesses.

The remote causes of depression were, in fact, little heeded by the witnesses, and none undertook to give an exhaustive statement of them. *Moral deficiencies* must have a deep influence, though scarcely noticed. *Power-looms* are deemed one of the most important sources of injury, and *foreign competition* was assigned as one of the most influential, since the opening of the ports to French silks. *Corn-laws*, it is stated, may have had some influence in aggravating the depression; but it was the prevailing opinion among the witnesses that the home competition for employment would cause their work to be paid as much lower as the reduced price of their bread would warrant, were there no such laws in existence. *The duties on foreign-thrown* silks were not mentioned by the men; and the manufacturer, to whose evidence I have already attended, so far from considering them an injury, deems their continuance of vital importance to the *Macclesfield* trade :—

Arguments against the abolition of the existing duties on foreign-thrown silks.

"Wherever the throwing is done, there the weaving will have an immediate tendency to follow; and to abolish the duty of 3*s*. 6*d*. on organzine (2*s*. for tram and 1*s*. 6*d*. for singles) per lb., on Italian-thrown silks, would encourage the Italian throwster, would cause more to be thrown in Italy and less in England, and still further depress the English weaver by the sole hold of the English on the silk manufacture being, so far as this operated, reduced to that of weaving, in which we are confessedly inferior in advantages to the Lyonnese, to whom the trade would accordingly go. The Italians themselves, even, might begin to weave; they already meet us with silk handkerchiefs, especially in the South American markets, where they fairly outrival us. Genoa, too, still has her velvet trade. Florence, it is probable, makes the silk handkerchiefs.

"The existing duties are a protection of the English throwster from an increase of throwing in Italy, and enable him to employ in his factories, in the throwing processes, the children of the very men who are employed in weaving the silk.

"The manufacturers of the north of England—those of large capital—are commonly both throwsters and manufacturers, by power or by hand, or both, so that to benefit the weaver at the expense of the throwster is merely interfering with the processes of the trade, and leaving its material interests unchanged. At least such changes ought surely to be made only at the desire of the parties themselves, and it is their especial desire to be let alone.

"Not more than one-third of the throwsters are also weavers, and of those who are, many also sell the trams and organzines unwrought; but there are only one or two manufacturers, and those on a small scale, in Macclesfield, who are not throwsters also, because of the importance of having a choice of silks to make the most advantageous combinations. The command of the raw silk unthrown is of vital importance in attaining these objects.

"Even Coventry and Spitalfields, which do not throw for themselves, might be, as they frequently are, at a considerable loss for material, if they were more dependent on the foreign, and not on the English thrower; for even the Italian silks pass Lyons on their way to the London market, and, if they can be sold to an advantage there, will not be brought forward. The increase of the Italian throwing would make Lyons more and London less than ever the depôt and market for silks, and Lyons already has advantage enough in that respect, silks being much more frequently fetched from Lyons on an extra demand in England than returned from Lyons to London.

"There is some English capital employed in reeling in Italy, but knows of none in throwing.

"The debentures given on the payment of the duty on Italian organzine are an encouragement to the manufactures of the north, at the same time that the duty does not injure the trade of Spitalfields and Coventry; for a considerable per centage of the duty is given back again in the purchase of the debenture by the exporter, while the goods which are made from the Italian organzine are wholly for home consumption, and of a class to which the repeal of the duty would make no difference in the consumption; being chiefly used in satins and velvets. Moreover, the Spitalfields manufacturer has an advantage in going into the market and selecting the raw silks to his purpose, and employing a throwster to throw them in those combinations, and in that manner most immediately adapted to his purpose; the districts now supplying the raw Italian silks being without mills, of which the repeal of the duty would immediately encourage the erection. This want of the manufacturer, to make his combinations in the throwing, may be urged as securing the English throwster from the fear of foreign competition. But this bond is not sufficient to hold the trade; the continental throwsters are already increasing

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in proportion to the English. England no longer, for instance, supplies America chiefly with sowing silks, which are made partly by her own manufacturers. South America is supplied from Naples and China.

Macclesfield.

Assigned causes of depression, and proposed remedies for it, already examined in the Coventry Report.

At Macclesfield, not one cause of depression was assigned, and not one remedy proposed, which had not also occurred to the Coventry weavers, whose circumstances I had already minutely investigated, and in my report upon which they are briefly examined. I have here, therefore, simply reported the views entertained locally as to causes and remedies, and must refer for the discussion of them to the more detailed report upon Coventry.

Leek.

January 1*st*, 1839.

Leek.

Trade of Leek in the manufacture of broad silks, ribbons, sewing silks, &c.

This town, which contains about 5000 inhabitants, has long been the seat of a manufacture of broad silks of the best quality, and of plain ribbons by hand; upon the latter of which the manufacture by power has gradually encroached. There are yet about 150 broad-looms and 180 engine-looms in the town; but only half of the former and a third of the latter are now fully employed. The number of houses employing hand-looms is about eight, of whom the principal is that of Messrs. Ellice, Russell, and Clowes, to a partner in which I am indebted for much of the accompanying information. About thirty of the broad looms have the jacquard machinery attached; but the small figures are produced by the alternate pressure of a number of treadles. The ribbon-looms are employed chiefly in making plain black sarcenets, with occasionally a few "loves," but scarcely any satins. Steam-power, however, has taken both the work and the workmen from this department, and now makes all the galloons. The steam-looms, offering a better price to the journeyhands formerly on the hand engine loom than the undertaker could give, they have taken nearly the whole of them. The number of steam engine looms is about 100. Those of

Power-loom trade.

Messrs. Carr	20
„ Glendinning and Grant	10
„ Worthington	10
„ Wreford	50
„ Ward	10
	100

There are no power-looms making broad silks, though some are being erected. The power-weaving of ribbons, ferrets, and galloons, in those looms, is part of the whole system of silk-manufacture in the Leek factories, which embraces also the throwing and spinning of silk, and the twisting of it into sewing-silk, braids, &c.

Hand-loom trade.

The principal occupation of the hand-loom weavers is in the production of black, checked, or figured silk neck-handkerchiefs, and a few gros-de-naples and figured gown-pieces of the first quality; the best plain black ribbons, and silk serges of superior qualities. They manufacture chiefly for the best home market, and all the principal employers conduct their business on the same principles; each firm throwing their own silk, weaving or twisting it, and disposing of their goods by their own agents to the retailer, or occasionally to the warehouseman. Each have their own style of business and their own country connexion. The beautiful raven black, which the dyers of Leek alone can give, (perhaps on account of the qualities of the Churnet water, which runs by the town,) forms some bond upon the black ribbon-trade; although these dyers work also for Manchester, London, &c. The sewing-silks, twists, and buttons, are alone designed for exportation, either by the manufacturers or through merchants.

Classes and supply of hands.

The hand-loom work is given out to "undertakers" warped and wound. They are owners of a varying number of looms, and employ journeymen and apprentices, to the former of whom they pay the warehouse price, after deducting for loom-rent, &c. The hand ribbon looms yet employed are chiefly worked by the female members of the undertakers' families, the power-factories having taken all the journeymen away from them; and there are no apprentices being brought up to this branch of the trade. Apprentices are taken into the broad trade, generally for seven years, commencing between the ages of eleven and fourteen. "There are half-pay

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out-door apprentices, living with their parents. There are very few of them, because the trade will not keep them; it is liable to so many delays and stoppages. Those who would have come into the trade go into the steam-factories. There were formerly a great many Irish in the broad trade here, but they have removed for employment to Manchester and Macclesfield; and the present weavers are either natives or long residents."* There are a few Irish in the factories.

Steadiness of prices of labour.

"The broad trade, depending on an internal country connexion," states one of the principal masters, "is less liable to revulsions on the one hand, and excitement on the other, than woven manufactures generally are; and not only is there no more than perhaps one per cent. difference between the prices of weaving now paid by the different manufacturers, but there is little variation between one time and another. In a time of depression the masters do not hasten to reduce the prices, though they lessen the amount of employment; and in one of excitement, the demands of the men have been moderate. The prices are all by the piece; handkerchiefs being paid for by the dozen, other broad silks by the yard, and ribbons by the piece of 36 yards." The following are the lists of Messrs. Ellice, Russell, and Co., from which those of other employers do not materially differ.—

Present prices of hand-loom weaving, both broad and narrow goods.

Leek Hand-Loom Weaving.

Black Sarcenet Ribbons.

2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	24 and 30 dy. widths.
7½*d.*	9½*d.*	11½*d.*	1*s.* 1½*d.*	1*s.* 4*d.*	1*s.* 7*d.*	1*s.* 11*d.*	2*s.* 3*d.*	2*s.* 7*d.*	2*s.* 10*d.*	3*s.* 6*d.* 4*s.* 6*d.* per piece of 36 yards.

Plain Black Bandanas.

32	34	and 36 inches.
5*s.*	5*s.* 6*d.*	6*s.* 6*d.* per dozen.

Black Barcelonas, 3 threads.

26	28	30	32	34	36	38 inches.
4*s.* 6*d.*	4*s.* 6*d.*	5*s.* 0*d.*	5*s.* 0*d.*	5*s.* 6*d.*	6*s.* 6*d.*	7*s.* 6*d* per dozen.

Black Brussells, 4 threads.

32	34	36 & 38 inches.
6*s.*	7*s.*	8*s.* 9*s.* per dozen.

Fancy Handkerchiefs.

From 6*s.* per dozen to 16*s.* per dozen, varying according to quality and pattern.

Trade movements for lists of prices, &c.

The broad-silk weavers, in 1834, endeavoured to get a formal agreement among the masters to a list of prices. "A principal house said they would pay by a list which the men had framed, if others would. Other houses would not agree. The hands of one firm struck, but the men did not succeed in getting this or any list acknowledged. This strike was at the time of the general movement in the trades, in 1834; and some subscriptions were raised for the support of the turn-outs, but the cause was shortly abandoned."† Two men were tried at Stafford for illegal proceedings, but were released on the intercession of their employers. There is now no union or committee of the weavers, but they are as desirous as ever to establish a recognised list of prices to intercept the tendency of mutual competition. "Since 1834 there has been none proposed; Messrs. Ward's hands, after being out three weeks, returned to work only a week ago, at lower prices than they received at the commencement of their strike."‡ The prices in the hand-engine loom have necessarily declined before the power competition, to the injury of the undertakers or first hands, but not of the journeyhand class, who are now working the power-looms themselves.

Common list of prices for weaving in the power ribbon looms.

While the hand-loom weavers have been unable to obtain any list, the power-loom employers have found it convenient to adopt a common list of prices for power-weaving, in like manner as those of Congleton. They were incommoded by a turn-out of the hands last summer against the reduction of the prices for doubles and galloons to the Manchester scale. The following is the list, with the number of shuttles in each loom, and the quantity generally made per week by each.

* Clowes, Harris, and others, undertakers. † Various of the undertakers.
‡ Weavers' Evidence.

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Leek List of Prices for Power-Loom Weaving of Plain Black Sarcenet Ribbons.

Breadths.	Prices per Piece.	Shuttles per Loom.	Lengths of 36 Yards made per week.
dys.	*s.* *d.*		
2	0 5	30	1½
4	0 6	30	1½
6	0 7	26	1½
8	0 9	22	1*
10	0 11	18	1
12	1 1	16	1
14	1 3	14	1
16	1 5	12	1
18	1 7	10	1
20	1 10	10	1
24	2 2	10	1

* Sometimes rather more.

Earnings on the ribbon looms worked by steam and by hand respectively.

One of the principal masters supposes the nett weekly earnings of the power engine loom weavers to average 16*s.* per week, but the relieving officer of the union estimates it at much less. The hand engine loom trade is so disorganized by the withdrawal of all regular journeymen, that there are only the loom-owner's own earnings and those of his family to be estimated. On 12 *dys.* of black sarcenets, the manufacturer above alluded to thinks about 11*s.* might be earned; or 10*s.* 6*d.*, if fire and light be deducted.

Earnings on the broad hand-looms.

The earnings of the broad looms weekly, at the warehouse prices, are estimated by the same gentleman at about 15*s.* per week on handkerchiefs, and from 16*s.* to 18*s.* on figured goods; from which filling and fire and light have to be deducted. But the weavers whom I examined represent the average as much less. "The kinds of work in the broad-silk loom are so various that it is difficult to state what would be the earnings upon them exactly; but, taking a medium article—a three-thread 34-inch Brussels—it must be a *very* good hand who can make two dozen per week, at 6*s.* 6*d.* per dozen. The gross earnings, at the warehouse prices, would, to such a hand, be 13*s.* To know the journeyhand's wages, 6*d.* per day, which is the universal price throughout the trade, must be deducted for the undertaker, in payment for loom and gearing, loom-standing, filling, and fire, and, at this time of year, 6*d.* per week more for lights. This would leave 9*s.* 6*d.* per week; but, including the time lost in twisting-in, a journeyhand would not make more of such work than would amount at warehouse prices to 11*s.* This would produce to the journeyhand only 7*s.* 6*d.* or 8*s.* nett per week." † And this amount an undertaker present (Goodwin) says that his hands, of whom he has three, are not earning when in constant work, which they cannot get.

Resources of the whole family.

"There are about 40 undertakers in the broad trade; a considerable number of journeyhands; a few women, the wives of journeyhands; and a few apprentices. The undertakers appear to be a class superior in habits and condition to those of almost any other place; but those of the journeyhands are low; their wives are commonly piecers and doublers in the factories, wind for the sewing-silk manufacturers, or are mill-overlookers. They work commonly by the piece, but a woman's weekly wages are reckoned at 5*s.* to 5*s.* 6*d.*, except for doubling, which is very badly paid. The children early get employment in the factories, even at six or seven years of age; the silk-mills being exempt from any limitation as to their age. Their wages increase from 1*s.* per week, when first admitted, up to 2*s.* 6*d.* when about 13 years of age. Some are employed at quill-winding for the weavers." *

Condition and habits of the manufacturing population.

The houses of the undertakers are many of them convenient and substantial buildings, consisting of four apartments on the ground and first floors, with workshop above. One of my witnesses pays 10*l.* rent, 4*s.* street-gas tax, 2*s.* 6*d.* for highways, 12*s.* poor's-rate, 9*d.* Easter dues, and 4*d.* church-rate per annum, besides 6*s.* 8*d.* water-money. It is the journeyman class who are obviously more expressly the object of inquiry, on account of their poverty; and of these the most important body is the steam-factory weavers. The relieving-officer testifies that, during the 15 months that the union has been formed, he has had no weavers on his books except through sickness, and these were among the poor journeymen, who live perhaps in 5*l.* cottages. They have generally had families, and, though their homes

* Weavers' Evidence: Harris, Goodwin, Hornsey, Clowes. † Weavers' Evidence.

betokened great poverty, they were clean, as also were their persons and dress, and those of their children. The town is notable for its cleanliness. Midland District. Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq. Leek.

"The factory-journeymen, as well as the undertakers' journeymen, are paid on a Tuesday night, against Wednesday, which is market-day; and when they break loose a little it is generally on a Wednesday or Thursday. Many make Wednesday in the afternoon and Thursday loose times, which they spend at the public-houses. Pay-day.

"All the weavers who are merely journeymen, and have small families unfit for the factory, are in great poverty. Children of undertakers go to the factories as well as those of journey-hands. Their occupation in the factories is perfectly clean and healthy, and by no means a matter of complaint. The trade has latterly been good; and, except among the young journeymen with families (nearly all being married), there is no positive misery. Children's labour.

"Embezzlement of silk at the factories prevails to an enormous extent, and has lately much increased. Receivers are readily found. There are, however, few dissolute people. The greater number not only send their children to the Sunday-schools, but go to places of worship themselves. Of the young men many subscribe to the mechanics' institute, especially for the winter, while in summer they are generally busy at cricket." * "Except a small endowed school there is no public day-school, and nearly all the instruction which the children obtain is at the Sunday-schools. In the Wesleyan Sunday-school there are upwards of 1,000 children. It would be a great blessing to the town if it had a public day-school for the children; there is a great desire to get instruction for them." † Moral habits; and want of instruction.

The hand engine loom undertakers recommend a tax on machinery, and the broad loom weavers desire a repeal of the corn-laws. Remedies for depression.

Derby.

January 2nd, 1839. Derby.

This borough, which contains about 26,000 inhabitants, is the seat of a manufacture of broad silks by the hand-loom; the fabrics produced being chiefly figured gros-de-Naples, plain velvets, plain and figured satins, and plain sarcenets, with a few miscellaneous articles. It is in the hands of the two London firms of Messrs. Moore, Boyd, and Seale, 31, Milk-street, and Messrs. Robinson, Fort Street, Spitalfields. The former now employ 214 looms, and the latter about 130, making a total of 344. The goods are of a medium quality, for general consumption; the satins being chiefly made by Messrs. Robinson. There are at present no looms positively out of employment, though some are occasionally kept waiting. There was one master employing a few looms here before Mr. Moore established his branch about 15 years ago, in the vicinity of his throwing-factory at Derby. Mr. Robinson commenced his business about eight years ago, and the trade is still extending. For the last twelve months there has been a constancy of employment. I examined collectively two persons in the employment of Messrs. Moore, and three engaged with Messrs. Robinson. The following is the substance of their testimony:— Increasing manufacture of broad silks.

"Of the weavers employed by Messrs. Moore, only 80 live in the town; some living at Mickleover, four miles off; some at Findon, five miles off; others near Belper, eight miles distant; at Wirksworth, 14 miles off; Castle Donnington nine miles distant; Crich, 13 miles off; Milford, six miles; Little Eaton, four miles; and others at outlying places. Dispersion of looms in the neighbouring towns and villages.

"Mr. Robinson has some weavers in Wirksworth, two in Mickleover, some in Littleover, two in Findon, some at Eage, 10 miles distant; one at Hilton, nine miles; one at Aston, six miles distant; but the greater number of his hands by far are in the town, only about 30 being out of it.

"In the places above mentioned there are no weavers of silks but those employed by the two houses in Derby. The country people, wanting employment, applied for silk-weavingtoe the warehouses, and were taught in the factories attached to them. But, in the cases of Wirksworth and Crich, the trade was taken there at a time when hands were scarce, and a confidential person was employed to teach the first hands.

"Messrs. Moore have in Derby two factories of hand-looms, each containing 20 looms; and Mr. Robinson has one, containing about 35 looms, and in which he does his winding and warping. These operations are performed for Messrs. Moore's hands, on the same premises with the warehouse. Hand-loom factories.

"Not only the looms in the factories, but those worked at the homes of the weavers, are the property of the master, with very few exceptions; only four in the case of all Mr. Moore's hands, and only 10 of Mr. Robinson's, owning their own looms. There is no class of Hands employed, and mode of their introduction to the trade.

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* Rowley. † Weavers' Evidence.

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'undertakers,' unless in that light can be regarded the man who employs the young members of his own family on several looms in his possession. Those young hands who are being introduced in the figure branch on Messrs. Moore's looms are articled to them for three years, receiving 6*d.* per yard for the first year, 6½*d.* for the second, and 7*d.* for the third, on figured gros-de-Naples; but they pay neither loom-rent nor shop-rent during that period. Those brought up to plain work are under no indentures either to Mr. Moore or to Mr. Robinson; on figures the latter is employing no learning hands. The ages at which the learners are brought into the trade is very various, and they are brought usually 'from the cow's tail.' There are both men, women, boys, and girls employed in the figure-trade; the total number of figure-looms belonging to Messrs. Moore being about 130. Those who have been in the plain trade only, must submit themselves to the indenture before they would be admitted into the figure-branch, and they generally will not, so that the raw hands are taken because others cannot be got. Messrs. Robinson's figure-looms are only about 20. Of the figure-weavers in Messrs. Moore's employment about 20 are females, and in the plain branch about 15 or 20. Messrs. Robinson have no females among the more practised hands whom they generally employ in the figure-trade; but they have a few among the plain weavers. Among Messrs. Moore's figure-weavers from 20 to 30 are boys under 20; but among the plain weavers they are few. Robinson's, also, are without many boys; in the figure-trade none. Frequently hands have come from Macclesfield and from Spitalfields, of their own accord, to seek work here, and have been employed; but they were never sent for: some have staid, and some gone away. There is perhaps scarcely any part of England whence silk-weavers have not come hither.

Children of weavers.

"It is very seldom that the plain weavers bring up their boys to the plain weaving. They either go into the factories or are (a few) brought up to the figure-loom. The youths get from the throwing-factories as they grow up into some sort of handicrafts. It is difficult to say how the youths are provided for as they get up: some go to the iron-founderies, others to the net-factories, others become labourers in various sorts of common work. This pressure has a tendency to keep down the price of common labour, which is accordingly very low. Mr. Morley, a net-manfacturer by steam, employs a very great number of young men.

Children withdrawn towards other employments.

"Sometimes Messrs. Moore are short of apprentices, in proportion to their desire to have them: industrious and steady boys can generally get other employment, and the remuneration during the servitude to the silk figure trade is lower than they could get in those employments; and their parents are wanting their earnings to keep the whole family.

Deductions from gross earnings.

"All the hands who are not hired under special indenture as above described pay 6*d.* per week to the employer for loom-rent. The few plain weavers in the factory (only four of Messrs. Moore's) pay also another 6*d.* per week for loom-standing; the figure-looms nothing. The master sustains all wear and tear of gearing. The whole of Mr. Robinson's hands pay 6*d.* a-week for loom-standing. In both factories the hands pay 6*d.* a-week for six months for light, and in Mr. Robinson's 3*d.* per week for fire: Mr. Moore's men find their own fires at about 1*d.* per week.

The deductions to be made from gross weekly earnings will be as follows:—

	Per week.
Loom-rent	6*d.*
Loom-standing (except Mr. Moore's figure-looms in factory)	6*d.*
Light	3*d.* for the year.
Fire	1½*d.* ditto.
Turning on of warps (say)	1*d.* per week.
Quill-filling	1*d.*
Twisting in and entering	2*d.*
	2*s.* 7½*d.*

Prices and strikes.

"There was a turn-out for one week about 10 years ago. It was about a reduction in three-single sarcenets. The men had to submit, and to go to work at the reduced prices. They have no combination or committee, and no acknowledged leaders. There have been various reductions since, and several partial struggles; two or three against Messrs. Robinson, but with only partial success. Ostensibly the prices paid by Messrs. Robinson are the same as those paid by Mr. Moore, but deductions make them in the factory a trifle less. There is no understanding whatever between the two houses as to what wages shall be paid. The weavers have opened correspondence about two years ago, on occasion of turns-out, with the London and Macclesfield weavers, with a view to the establishment of a list price, but with no result. There is no system of late money, as at Macclesfield, but all may bring in their work whenever they like, before 10 o'clock in the morning. There was a weavers' lodge, which some years ago followed in a funeral procession of one of the unionists' processions. They were not out at the Derby strike of 1834.

Mode of working and paying.

"Figured silks are generally 80 yards long in the warp; plain sarcenets 100; plain satins, 80 or 85, sometimes 75; and velvets 31 or 32. The pieces are not cut out and paid for until wholly wrought; but advances are made to the amount of not more than 20*s.* on a sarcenet, 30*s.* on a figure, and 2*l.* on a velvet. Deductions are made for damages of colour, of workmanship, of soiling, &c., at the discretion of the master. This is sometimes complained of by the weavers, but they are generally satisfied that the deductions are moderate and fair, or, at least, that it is useless to contest them.

Prices.

"The prices paid both by Messrs. Moore and Messrs. Robinson for figured gros-de-Naples, which are the chief *figured articles*, are 8*d.* per yard to all the journeyhands, for the quality

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generally made, the breadth being 19 or 19½ inches (1000 reed, four thread). There are richer articles paid more, such as eight-thread figured satin, 18 inches, 800 reed, 10*d.*

"The prices for *plain sarcenet* are, for 1100, two-threads, 20 inches, 4*d.* per yard; and this is the quality making by Messrs. Moore.

"The *velvets* are all plain, and the price for 1000, three-thread, 20 inches, single pole, is 2*s.* 3*d.* per yard.

"The *plain satins* made by Messrs. Robinson are 1100, three-thread, 18 inches, 4*d.*; and 1000, four-thread, 18 inches, 4*d.*

Earnings.

"Of the *figured articles*, reckoning to include all incidental time in twisting in, &c., a man working factory hours (which the hand-factories do not to the full extent of 10 hours a-day), and at the same time an industrious man, will do a piece in three weeks; but, working the hours that the men generally do, a piece of 80 yards will be done in four weeks and three days, or about a calendar month. The total pay for it will be 53*s.* 4*d.*, from which has to be deducted 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* 3*d.* loom-rent at 6*d.* per week, and 9*d.* or 1*s.* 1½*d.* fire and light the year round at 3*d.* per week; and the net earnings will be for the industrious man 45*s.* 5½*d.* in three weeks; and for the average hand 41*s.* 6½*d.* in four weeks and a half; giving for the—

On figures.

Industrious hand . . . 15*s.* 2*d.* per week; and for the
Average hand . . . . 9*s.* 1*d.* per week.

On plain sarcenets.

"On plain *sarcenets*, the average time occupied in weaving the 100 yards will be three weeks and three days; an industrious man it would take two weeks and four days; so that, the gross earnings being 33*s.* 4*d.*, the net earnings will be—

For the industrious hand nearly . . . 12*s.*; and for the
Average weaver about . . . . . 10*s.* 3*d.* per week.

On velvets.

"The industrious man working the factory hours will not, reckoning for going to the warehouse, &c., do the piece of *velvet* in less than seven weeks, and with the average it will be eight weeks; the twisting in and journeys to the warehouse occupying three days and a half, and the actual weaving the rest: the total earnings will be 72*s.*, from which must be deducted in the one case 5*s.* 3*d.*, and in the other 6*s.*, leaving for the industrious man 66*s.* 9*d.*, and for the average 66*s.*; being net—

For the industrious weaver, per week 9*s.* 5*d.*
„ average weaver „ 8*s.* 3*d.*

On satins.

"To make a piece of plain 1100 three-thread *satins* will require of a steady-working hand two weeks and four days, but will take an average hand three weeks and three days. The gross earnings being 26*s.* 8*d.*, there will be for the harder-working hand, clear from deductions, 24*s.* 8*d.*, and for the other 24*s.*; being

For the industrious hand, per week . . 9*s.* 3*d.*
„ average hand, „ . . 7 0

Further deductions for damage.

"It ought to be borne in mind, that in the preceding calculations no allowance is made for the deductions which occur, sometimes to the amount of 1*l.* or 2*l.*, for damages, which, when such damage is occasioned perhaps by changes in the weather, are thought a great hardship.

Average gross earnings.

"The gross payments by Messrs. Robinson for eight recent weeks to 130 weavers, men, women, and youth of both sexes, amount to 454*l.* 1*s.* 11½*d.*, or 8*s.* 8¾*d.* per week each, from which the preceding deductions must likewise be made.

Domestic condition.

"The condition of the weavers at their homes in the town is very low. Their homes are generally clean, though their means are scanty. The wife, when she is able to do anything, winds and weaves at home generally.

Instruction.

"There are a national school, a Bell's school, a Lancasterian school, and four infant schools. There are Sunday-schools attached to the places of worship of every denomination. There are five parish churches, two chapels of ease, and one building; one Catholic chapel, and one building; two Wesleyan Methodist chapels; one Primitive Methodist chapel; one for the New Methodist connexion; two for General Baptists; one for Particular Baptists; one for Independents; one for Unitarians; one for the society of Friends; one New Jerusalem chapel; and one Armenian. The Sunday-schools are very numerously attended; the factory-children getting no other instruction. The weavers do not, to the knowledge of the witnesses, any of them send their children to day-schools. A good many are sent to Sunday schools. Very few go to church or chapel themselves. They do not like to go worse in appearance than others. One-tenth of the weavers in the town are Irish, who have been settled some time.

Proportion of ill-conducted hands.

"The listless, careless fellows who do not desire more than a bare existence, or aspire to character, are not a large proportion; though there are some; and one of the witnesses says that these are the dead weight upon the trade, who keep the wages down.

Little excess.

"Men consider they can do better in both London and Macclesfield than at Derby, where the prices are lower, and this place therefore contains very few surplus hands. Whether this be so or not, the men think so.

Providence.

"Some of the weavers are in sick-clubs, but not many; many of them are strangers to the place and to each other. At Mr. Robinson's warehouse, in cases of sickness or death, voluntary contributions are made by the hands. Some are joining the Druids' club, whose

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Integrity.

pay is 4*d.* a-week, besides other expenses. The worst time of a weaver's life is while the children are too young to go to the factory.

"There is not a silk-manufacturing place in which there is perhaps so little pilfering as in Derby. There are no resident known receivers, though some come from Macclesfield. There have been instances of embezzlement (three cases) by weavers; but both among weavers and mill-people there is less than elsewhere. It is more unity among the throwster masters to watch and prosecute receivers, than the magistracy or police, that brings about this result. Their hands, who know the receivers, tell them. There is a police on the London system since the introduction of the new municipal system. There are 24 policemen.

Causes of depression;

"James Roberts considers that the *repeal of the Spitalfields Act* has been the whole and sole cause of the depression of weavers' wages; for a master, being by that Act compelled to pay a certain price, employed only the good workmen, while the bad ones were left without employ. The repeal of that Act left the master to avail himself of the services of the bad labourer at the cheaper rate to pull down the price of the good workman. It was a custom to pay a certain rate of wages in London, and in the country to work at a certain *proportion* less, and no more. But since the repeal they endeavour to pay as low in London as they do in the country, while the country employer is constantly endeavouring to be under the London master.

And remedies.

"Others say the *corn-laws* are the main cause of depression. Several say it was Mr. Huskisson's endeavour to set the English in competition with the French, who work without the burdens of taxation that the English have. They say the corn laws have not one iota to do with the reduction of the wages of a silk-weaver; that it raises the price of bread, but no more towards the weaver than any other tradesman. Livesay, and Norman, and Young, advocate the repeal of the corn-laws; Jones the same—on the ground that the more demand for goods the better the price.

Roberts recommends a "*Protection Wages Bill*" on the same foundation as the Spitalfields Act; viz., that a committee of masters and a committee of men should meet together, and decide what was a fair price to be paid for making a fabric; and if they could not agree, that then they should come before magistrates in quarter-sessions to have it determined what was fair, equitable, and right. It would then be as it formerly used to be; the masters would know what the prices of labour were, and not be fearful of being mutually underpaid."

Weaving of ribbons by hand completely superseded by the power-loom weaving.

The rivalry between the steam-looms and the hand-looms in the manufacture of ribbons being, at Derby, terminated in the abandonment of the latter, this branch of the trade demands but a very brief notice. The steam ribbon-looms now at work are the following:—

	Looms.
Messrs. Bridget	40
„ Peet	86
„ Taylor	30
„ Frost	65
„ Topham	12
	233

The two first firms are increasing their number. They are chiefly making plain black sarcenets; but the first of the above houses is making also plain and coloured satins. The following is the list by which wages of weaving are paid in these factories, the usual number of shuttles, and the quantity made per week. The looms of one firm are larger; but the economy of this is doubted by others, as overstepping the capacity of a single tender, without too frequent stoppages; while those of another firm are somewhat smaller on the average.

List Price of Power-Engine-Loom Weaving of Plain Sarcenet Ribbons at Derby:—

Widths.	Shuttles in each Loom.	Prices per Length.	Lengths made per week.
dys.		*s.* *d.*	
2	30 [and 36]	10 10	1½
4	28 [and 24, 26, and 30]	12 6	1½
6	24 [and 22 and 26]	14 0	1½
8	24 [and 20 and 22]	18 0	1½*
10	18 [and 20]	16 6	1
12	16 [and 18]	17 6	1
14	16 [and 18]	18 2	1
16	12 [and 14, 16, and 20]	18 6	1
18	12 [and 14 and 16]	20 4	1
20	12 [and 8]	22 6	1
24	10 [and 8]	22 6	1
30	8	24 0	1

* Sometimes less.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Derby.

There are yet a few looms in one factory turned by a hand-swivel instead of steam; the boy who works the swivel receiving 3*s*. per week, beneath which the cost of steam-power must range, to make its employment profitable. Ten working hours a-day are reckoned to be factory hours, from 8 A.M. to 7½ P.M.; 1½ hour being allowed for meals. In these hours five half-lengths per fortnight, it is supposed, might be made of all the breadths from 16 dys. down to 10 dys. inclusive; but a length per week is the quantity actually produced.

Weaving a branch of the local silk-trade comprising every department of the manufacture.

It will be observed, at Derby, as at the more northern seats of the silk-manufacture, that the weaving, whether by hand or steam, is a branch of the general manufacture of silk, in the same locality, from the first process of throwing. All the smaller articles made at Leek are produced here also.

Hosiery Districts.

Hosiery Districts.

Memorials were addressed to the Commissioners on behalf of the operatives in the hosiery-trade, as well of Leicester as of Nottingham, inviting the extension of their investigations to those towns and the neighbouring districts; but, the terms of the Commission limiting their inquiries to the "hand-loom weavers," while these workmen are "frame-work knitters," they were deemed beyond the limits of their labours. In obedience to that passage of my instructions, however, which directs my attention to the comparative condition of other labourers, I made, in passing through these towns, a few hasty inquiries, which sufficed to show the strong analogy between the knitting and the weaving trades, both in their organization and the condition of the hands.

Condition of the "frame-work knitters" not an object of direct investigation, though greatly resembling that of the "hand-loom weavers."

The hosiery and lace trades occupy a large population in the great midland district, extending from Leicester northward to Chesterfield, and from Nottingham westward to Derby and Hinckley. Nottingham is the centre of the cotton and silk hosiery trade; Leicester, of the woollen hosiery; and Derby has about the same amount of the silk hosiery trade as Nottingham. The machine lace trade is a more modern branch of industry, which took its rise among the hosiery, and Nottingham is the great centre of it, although it is carried on, not only in the surrounding towns and villages, but also in Somersetshire, Devon, Wilts, Gloucestershire, and the Isle of Wight. Of late years, owing to change of fashion, which has discarded quillings from wear throughout Europe, and the better internal supply of the French market with articles made by French machines from English finer twists, the lace trade of Nottingham has declined more than one-half. Formerly, two-thirds of its produce was exported; but now not more than one-half is sent abroad. The consequent distresses among the workmen gave rise to a memorial to the Board of Customs, urging the adoption of systems of stamping; of licensing; of stricter preventives against, and more severe punishments for, smuggling, or any other means by which lace of the quatlities which are introduced from France might be excluded; although it was notorious that a great part of the trade which had so recently declined subsisted on he smuggled sale of its produce in France.

Extent of the hosiery and lace districts.

Decline in the bobbin-lace trade.

In May, 1838, was formed the "Nottingham Association for ameliorating the condition of the working classes," which proposed as its objects,—

"Association to ameliorate the condition of the working classes."

"1. Advocating a due preference, protection, and encouragement of our home manufactures.

"2. Collecting and diffusing information on the subjects of wages and trade, and the condition of the labouring classes.

"3. Promoting the just and regulated payment of adequate wages; and,—

"4. Co-operating and holding friendly communications, from time to time, with the manufacturers and workmen in furtherance of the above object, and endeavouring to promote between them feelings of mutual confidence and good will."*

Organization among the workmen to aid in its efforts.

Co-operation prevented by a disagreement on the

The workmen appointed a committee to communicate with the "Association," which comprised some of the most respectable inhabitants; and likewise instituted a Chamber of Commerce, of all the different branches of the trade, with one committee to call upon the manufacturers to learn what measures could be devised for the revival of the trade, and another to solicit aid from persons not engaged in it.

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* Prospectus.

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Hosiery Districts.

subject of corn-laws.

Real nature of the Association, and similarity of the circumstances with which it had to deal to those elucidated at Coventry.

Sir Robert Peel has advised some of those who were taking interest in their condition, rather than apply to Parliament for a committee, to make local examinations, and devise their own scheme of remedies, to be submitted, if they thought fit, to the legislature; but, when the "Association" and the workmen approached to a co-operation for this purpose, a dispute on the corn-law question prevented it; and on neither side is there now any efficient organization.

The "Association," it is obvious, was an attempt at a permanent institution in the nature of a Coventry "town's meeting" on trade subjects; and that it would have had precisely the same elements to deal with may be gathered from the following placards recently issued in the hosiery and lace trades respectively. They evince the same competition for employment, with the same desire on the part of some masters to avail themselves of the cheaper labour, and of others, holding the higher positions in the trade, to pay any moderate price for labour if they be not underpaid by others, against whose payment of lower wages the men are tacitly encouraged to preserve them.

Placard showing the trade politics of a branch of the hosiery-trade.

The following placard, states my informant, "is an example of the workpeople fighting the masters' battle. If ——— and Co. gain, their hands who turn out are probably destroyed; if their hands gain now, they are marked as disaffected, not only by ——— and Co., but by every master in the trade. This question ought to be otherwise settled than by thus tacitly turning a man's hands out against him:"—

"To the generous Public.—We, the undersigned, belonging to the branch of Cut-up Hose and Glove Hands employed by the firm of Messrs. ——, ———, and Co., better known by ——— and Co., have ceased from work, and turned up our frames, which has been followed by the whole of the hands bated, working to that establishment, in consequence of an abatement which was offered on Saturday, 25th of May; and no other Hosier wishing to adopt the same, but, on the contrary, urges the journeymen who are employed by them to support the turn-outs, or they must unavoidly follow Messrs. —— and Co.'s bad example; therefore the whole of the trade make this appeal to a generous and discerning public.

Turn-out against partial underpaying, with the same mode of operation witnessed at other places; tacit sanction of masters and mutual support of men.

"We therefore call upon our friends at Mansfield, Sutton, and other places interested as fellow-workmen, to assist us in our struggle against one of the greatest tyrants of the age.

"Signed on behalf of the Trade,

"Charles Bellamy. Richard Terry.
Joseph Spencer. William Howe.
Joseph Jackson.

"Rancliffe Tavern, Gedling Street, May 31, 1839.

"*Hands Turned Out.*

"25 Glove-hands out in Nottingham.
41 Ditto at Bulwell.
63 Cut-up hose-hands out in Nottingham.
46 Ditto in Ruddington.
3 Ditto at Bradmore.
17 Ditto at Gotham.
18 Ditto at East Leak.

213 Total number of hands out.

"*Men at Work at the Reduced Prices.*—William Oliver, otherwise William Davey, of Ruddington, hose-hand; Hezekiah Bates, Windmill Hill, New Snenton, glove-hand.

"The hands at work in the Cut-up branch pay one shilling per frame towards the support of those turned out.

*** "Those persons who may be appointed by the trade to solicit your support will have in their possession a hand-bill similar to this, with the Nottingham Arms printed at one corner. This plan is adopted to prevent unprincipled persons taking any improper advantages."

Placard showing the trade politics of a branch of the lace-trade.

"The following case is one where those working by hand on narrow machines, are affected by power wide machines. The wages of the people in the great bulk of the wide machinery have averaged 40*s.* a-week. The pressure of the last panic had the effect of increasing wide and superior frames, and rendering the high rate of wages, previously secured by combination, insecure, if it did not place them beyond the possibility of maintenance:"—

"*To the Town and Trade of Nottingham and its Vicinity.*

"It has been remarked by a sagacious writer, 'That wages are income, and that income is only another word for property, therefore, in those states where wages are insecure, property

is generally considered to be endangered.' These remarks are called forth from a new era which has arisen within this twenty years, in which many employers seem to consider that industry has no rights, and that no rule but that of sordid unchecked self-interest ought to govern the master: in numerous instances making whole bodies of ingenious workmen miserable, that one man may shine in splendour. This poverty-making system of leaving the artisans unprotected has been materially checked by the representations which the journeymen operatives have from time to time made to the masters, in which they have in many instances been supported by the generous and conscientious of that body, who, feeling the evils of unlimited competition, have cordially joined their workmen in promoting private regulations, which wise conduct has brought additional hundreds of thousands of pounds into Nottingham, by establishing a competent rate of wages and profits, instead of giving away its industry for an inadequate compensation.

Description of the modern excess of competition, and the "moral" influences through which it has been customary to check it.

"However beneficial this practice has been found to the town and trade of Nottingham, yet a violent attack has been made by one manufacturer to abolish it, aiming to leave the whole body of the workmen at his mercy unchecked, by refusing to receive petitions or deputations from the workpeople, and thus establishing a more hideous despotism than what exists even in Turkey, where the lowest grade are permitted to present to the Sultan their petitions in person, thus elevating practical Mahometanism over this manufacturer's practical Christianity.

Refusal of an individual to acknowledge them.

"The warp-tatting-lace trade employs about 650 workmen, the major part of whom reside in the vicinity of Nottingham, and are intimately identified with its interests. These workmen within these last few years have been reduced in their wages about 30 per cent., of which 20 per cent. was reduced during the late panic. As the workmen had been put to many privations during the national stagnation, they naturally imagined that, when the demand returned to its usual channel, the manufacturers would have no objection to ameliorate their wages, as nearly one-fourth had been taken off at one swoop, and, as their expenses were the same, they hoped that at least some mitigation would be made in the rent of frames, the great drawback on their wages, in some few instances amounting to 19*s.* per week. Accordingly, about the middle of February last, meetings of the workmen were called in Nottingham and Stapleford, to take into consideration the propriety of appointing a deputation to wait upon the tatting manufacturers to solicit an advance of one-sixteenth of a penny per inch on their wages, or about one-tenth of former reductions, by whom a joint deputation was appointed to wait upon the manufacturers, according to very early custom, presenting to them the following address :—

Reductions in the warp-tatting-lace trade during a panic.

"'*To the Warp Tatting Lace Manufacturers.*

"'Gentlemen,—With feelings of the utmost respect, your Workmen beg leave to apply to you on the momentous subject of their wages, hoping you will have the kindness to take the same into your generous consideration. It is now more than fifteen months since their wages were reduced to what may be considered the PANIC PRICE, which was nearly a fourth of their clear earnings. Your Workmen confidently trust that you will consider that they, (conceiving, from the embarrassed state of money and trade affairs, that you were sufferers like themselves) have borne so large a sacrifice with the utmost temper, patience, and good feeling; but, as the effects of that deplorable event have to a great extent passed away for a more healthy state of trade, they most earnestly request that you will favour them with a trifling advance on their wages of a sixteenth of a penny per inch; as they firmly rely that you will never for a moment drive them to the despairing thought that wages may fall at every panic, without the cheering hope of an advance when the crisis has abated. A deputation is appointed to respectfully wait upon you, requesting you to call a meeting to take their request of an advance of wages into your early consideration, and also the subject of a revision of the charges made for frame-rent, which they trust you will consider upon calm consideration are rather too burthensome for the interests of all concerned, as your Workmen believe that upon this matter the true interest of the frame-owner and lace-manufacturer will be ever found identified with the interest of the workmen.'

Address of the workmen to the employers, on a revival in the trade, for an advance of wages.

"This small request, however, was civilly denied by the manufacturers upon several allegements; but one of the principal manufacturers not only refused to advance the price, but impudently declared that all his men were quite satisfied—that they had nothing to complain of; adding, in the vehement tone for which he is so remarkable, that his men blessed him for his kindness, and almost adored him; with many such hyperbolical expressions, and affected to treat the deputation, though he knew them personally, and they had been his workmen, as impostors unauthorised by the workmen, and as common agitators.

Complaint of the personal behaviour of one master to the deputations of the men, as wholly unjustifiable either in good feeling or usage.

"Conceiving thus their characters and veracity to be impugned, and that he was endeavouring to make them odious, meetings were again called, and the above document was signed by 350 workmen making tatting-laces, of which number more than 50 were the workmen of the manufacturer who had ventured to state that his workmen blessed him and adored him!!! Thus furnished, a part of the deputation again respectfully waited upon him. But he no sooner saw the deputation than he assumed the military bashaw, exclaiming, 'What, are you come again? I thought I had given you enough before:' making use of the language contained in the following letter sent to him by Mr. Starr, asking for an explanation or apology. And, after abusing the other person in no very gentlemanly language, the *thing* ordered them out of his warehouse. Such an unwarrantable outrage upon a trade deputation had never been experienced before, even in the most disturbed times; and it now

Midland District.

Report from *J. Fletcher*, Esq.

Hosiery Districts.

Letter to him from one of the men.

became evident that the manufacturer aimed to set the working classes at open defiance, and commence a system of persecution.

"'Sir,—As I had no opportunity of asking you the reason why you maltreated me on Thursday morning, I beg to state, that I cannot admit of such base and cruel language being heaped upon me, without demanding to know the reason why. For you must remember that you charged me with being a Robespierre—a Danton; and that I should like to pike and bludgeon you; and that if my side get the ascendancy, we should take and hang you up. Now, Sir, what does all this amount to? Did you not mean to infer that I was a most dangerous and violent character, and that nothing short of assassination must be my intention? This being the case, I deem it a sense of duty due to my character not to suffer this to pass over without demanding from you either to prove your assertions, or make some apology for the unmanly treatment I received from you. For you must know, although I am a poor man, it may be that I have as much honour and honesty about me as those who have accumulated a mass of wealth from the hard earnings of their toiling workmen. Trusting you will not fail to accede to my demands, in default of which I shall be under the necessity of taking another course, such as the law may justify me in,

"'I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

"'*Mr.* ——— ———, "'Thomas Starr.

Mary Gate, Nottingham.'

"Having waited a considerable time and receiving no answer, he addressed the following letter again to him.

"'*Snentonville, April 6th,* 1839.

Second letter to him from the same.

"'Sir,—Having a few days since addressed a letter to you requiring an explanation or an apology, respecting the horrid allegations which you have made against me, stating in the most vehement manner that I was a Robespierre, a Danton, and that, if I had the power, I should destroy you, and other such violent and dreadful charges; I now again call upon you, in the most impressive manner, to substantiate, if you can, your averments, or to state the grounds upon which you ventured to make such attacks upon my character, more especially at a time when I was peacefully and respectfully waiting upon you for the legal purpose of soliciting for your oppressed workmen some alleviation of the grievances complained of by them.

"'I have no doubt that you imagine that the wealth you have acquired will screen you from being made amenable for your actions; as no doubt you consider, like all other worldly-minded men, whose thoughts are fixed upon this world, that your are a clever, a powerful, a wise, and mighty man, choosing to forget that you have been a private soldier, who was hired for a shilling a-day, and yet you have had the temerity to insinuate that I was an assassin, and would not scruple to murder you if I had an opportunity. Your behaviour to your work-people is in general outrageous and unbecoming you, even as a soldier; but, when it is known hat you ascend the pulpit as a minister of the Gospel, preaching peace and good-will when you are at war with your dependants, the scandal you bring upon the Christian congregation of which you are a member requires a remedy for the glaring inconsistency. I have now to acquaint you, in the most serious manner, that, if you do not retract your dreadful charges against me, I shall lay the whole matter of your conduct before the elders and trustees of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and also before the preachers of the circuit at their next meeting, that your real character as a master, a preacher, and a man, may be brought before them. I am perfectly aware of the pecuniary and worldly advantages you derive from your religious connexion, by your Pharasaical hypocrisy; but this you may rely upon, that the Wesleyan Methodists are too good Christians to permit you, when publicly known, to disgrace them by acting the lamb in the pulpit, the wolf in the warehouse, and the tiger in the counting-house. If that remedy should fail me in procuring my vindication from such horrid calumnies, a jury of my country will no doubt teach you your duty to your fellow-men, and to keep a bridle upon your slanders in future.

"'I am, Sir, Yours,

"'*To* ——— ———, *Esq.* "'Thomas Starr.

Park, Nottingham.'

"To neutralize the effect of the above letters, it was found necessary to issue the following memorable resolution:—

"'At a meeting of the workmen employed by Mr. ——— ———, of Nottingham,

"'It was resolved,—

Resolution of the men working for this master, condemnatory of the last letter, and laudatory of him.

"'That, in the opinion of this meeting, the letter now read, addressed to Mr. ——— ———, and signed Thomas Starr, dated April 6th, 1839, is an unjustifiable and unwarrantable interference on the part of the writer thereof between the employer and the employed; inasmuch as it is therein stated that the writer waited upon Mr. ———, "for the legal purpose of soliciting for his (Mr. ———'s) *oppressed workmen* some alleviation of the grievances complained of by them." And this meeting condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the surreptitious means resorted to, and the misrepresentations made use of, by Mr. Starr, to obtain the consent of parties for authority to apply to Mr. ——— on behalf of the trade; and consider it their duty, individually and collectively, to positively deny that they are the "*oppressed workmen*" of Mr. ———, but, on the contrary, have always found him to be an honourable and upright master, and feel the highest satisfaction and pleasure in his service; and this meeting denies that they have, at any time, authorized Mr. Starr to make

use of abusive languange to Mr. ———, and at the same time degrading to themselves; and in confirmation of this resolution we hereunto subscribe our names:—

"'John Bullers, Francis West, Thomas Stevenson, William Stones, Robert Plackett, William Atkin, Goodacre Sills, John Wallis, Thomas Smedley, Thomas Anthony.'

"These and about 120 other names were printed and circulated as having signed this resolution. Of this number of poor creatures who wrote their names that Mr. ——— ——— was an *upright and honourable master*, and that they felt the highest satisfaction and pleasure in his service, and that they were not *oppressed workmen*, more than 50 had signed the declaration above given *that their wages had been reduced one-fourth.*

Reprobation of this conduct by the other workmen, as being pursued "for bread."

"The poor signing things who have disgraced themselves by declaring that they are not oppressed are continually taunted by their fellow-workmen for their folly and wickedness, who ask them numerous searching questions as to chapel-building, waste tickets, dockings, *sittings*, piece-tearings, frame-rents, clean shoes, bonnets, stoppages, pattern-rigs, lyings, bouncings, tearings, ravings, and kickings; but the fault doth not lie with them, it is with the instigator; *they signed for bread*, but it is not by such means that deputations, meetings, or discussions about work or prices are to be abolished; the men who signed the resolution well know that he has given them satisfaction and pleasure enough to last for life, even if they live to the age of Methusaleh.

"The great majority of the tatting workmen, duly appreciating between Mr. Starr and Mr. ——— ———, called a meeting on Monday, the 27th of May, 1839, at which were passed the following resolutions:—

Resolutions of the tatting workmen generally, declaring their right to petition collectively in trade matters, and be treated with civility, and their readiness to be judged by their *townsmen.*

"'Resolved,—

"'1st. That this meeting conceive that workmen who believe themselves to be injured or oppressed have an undoubted right to wait upon and civilly petition and remonstrate with their masters, and that the exercise of such right has been invariably of great benefit to both parties, and is essential to the preservation of the peace and comfort of society.

"'2nd. That the conduct of Mr. ——— ———, in endeavouring to put an end to such long-established beneficial usage, by wantonly, falsely, and unjustly abusing a respectable deputation, when waiting upon him by direction of the workmen engaged in the manufacture of warp tatting-laces, they consider to be unjustifiable in the extreme, and that the charges made by him against such deputation of being imbued with the spirit of Robespierre and Danton, and of entertaining principles of assassination, are as wicked and malevolent as they are utterly devoid of foundation.

"'3rd. That this meeting condemn in the most marked manner the insidious attempt made by Mr. ——— ——— to add injury to insult by inducing a part of his workmen to sign a document, purporting that they were satisfied with the prices paid to them for their work, and the exorbitant charges made upon them for frame-rent; when at the same time this meeting have every reason to believe that he knew that many of the same persons had signed a document in conjunction with their fellow-workmen employed by other masters, complaining of being abated, as they believe that such document was only prepared for the purpose of misleading the Christian public.

"'4th. That, being confident in the general generosity, good feeling, and manly spirit of persons of all grades in the vicinity of Nottingham towards the working classes, when they conduct themselves civilly, decorously, and orderly; we request Mr. Starr, who has been maligned by the printed document in question, to publish the whole proceedings which have passed between him and Mr. ——— ———, that the public may judge of his conduct towards the deputation and to his workmen in general, firmly relying on their sympathy on behalf of such an important branch of the Nottingham trade as the warp tatting-lace manufacture.

"'5th. That this meeting do adjourn until Monday the 10th of June, to examine the new Arbitration Acts, and consider what further steps may be necessary to be taken with Mr. ——— ———.'

Appeal to local interests, and to the religious feelings of their townsmen.

"The question now before the town and trade of Nottingham is: Shall, or shall not, the working classes be considered as having the peaceable right to interfere with their wages? It is a most momentous question as regards the income of the district drawn by the hosiery and lace trades from all parts of the world. But there is a higher question to ask of society and the religious world: Is religion and the preaching of the Gospel to be nothing but a mere name? Are the tenets of the Christian religion to be taught in the temple and forgot in the warehouse? Are extortioners, covetous, or worldly-minded men to be teachers? If so let it be openly acknowledged. It is a heart-searching question: Are ye for God, or are ye for Mammon? That is, Will ye support the poor, or will ye support the rich man? The cause is now at issue; it remains for the Wesleyan and other Christians to decide: if they don't, mankind will."

Field of inquiry presented by the hosiery trades.

In each of the three great branches of the hosiery trade there are, as among the ribbon-weavers, various classes of hands, distinguished by the quality of their work, the locality of their residence, and the amount of their earnings. The inferior classes of workmen are mostly dispersed through the country, while the superior hands are congregated in the large towns. The depression of large bodies of the hands in the cotton hosiery trade might rationally be attributed at once and solely to the

Midland District.

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Hosiery Districts.

foreign competition of the cheaper labour of Saxony through the operation of the corn laws; but it is remarkable that the same depression subsists among a large portion of the knitters of *woollen* hosiery, which branch does not sustain foreign competition, because of the less value of the labour in the article compared to the capital required for raw material to make it; at the same time that no such invention as the power-loom has caused any great or sudden revolution in the amount or the system of employment. That a close examination into the condition of the Leicestershire frame-work knitters, whose relations with the employer are very similar to those of the hand-loom weavers in the Derby silk-trade, would detect peculiar causes of depression in moral influences resulting from peculiar industrial organization, I am fully convinced; but the extent and intricacy of such an investigation place its successful pursuit wholly beyond the means now assigned to me.

Outposts of silk-weaving at Tideswell, and at Newcastle-under-Lyne.

Within the county of Derby, besides the weavers already mentioned, there are some at Tideswell, engaged in weaving silk, chiefly for the Manchester trade; to the Assistant Commissioner investigating the circumstances of which, I have therefore referred their case. There are also a few silk weavers at Newcastle-under-Lyne; but it is probable their circumstances differ little from those of the neighbouring town of Leek.

Plush weavers at Kettering, Rothwell, and Desborough.

In Northamptonshire, at Kettering, and in the neighbouring villages of Rothwell and Desborough, are several hundred weavers engaged in making silk plush for hats, whose condition appeared to me, from a few particulars kindly communicated by R. J. Saunders, Esq., the Factory Inspector, so much to resemble that of the Banbury plush weavers, that a special investigation into it was unnecessary.

Conclusion.

I am sensible that some deficiencies will be found in the preceding digest of classified facts; but they have resulted partly from my want of greater pecuniary means, while none assuredly have remained unsupplied through apathy in regard to the welfare of the people "whose interests" your Instructions "placed as a trust under my care."

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

JOSEPH FLETCHER.

3, *Trafalgar Square, Westminster,*
October 21*st.* 1839.

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for Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

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REPORTS

FROM

Assistant Hand-Loom Weavers' Commissioners.

PART V.

REPORT by W. A. MILES, Esq. on the West of *England* and *Wales*.

REPORT by R. M. MUGGERIDGE, Esq. on the Counties of *Lancaster*, *Westmorland*, *Cumberland*, and Part of the West Riding of *Yorkshire*.

NOTE to the Report of J. C. SYMONS, Esq., on the *South of Scotland*.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

LONDON:
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FOR HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

1840.

Hand-loom Inquiry Commission,
3, Trafalgar-square, Westminster,
January 30th, 1840.

Sir,

In obedience to the desire of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, expressed to this Board in your letter of the 26th of February last, that copies of the Reports of the Assistant Commissioners engaged in the Hand-loom Inquiry should be prepared and transmitted to you, I am requested to forward the accompanying Reports by Mr. Miles and Mr. Muggeridge.

They contain the results of the investigations into the condition of the Weavers in the West and in the North-west of England respectively, and complete the series of Assistant Commissioners' Reports.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,
JOSEPH FLETCHER
Secretary

The Honourable Fox Maule, M.P.,
&c. &c. &c.

REPORT by W. A. Miles, Esq., on—

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West of England.

REPORT from W. A. Miles, Esq., on the Condition of the Hand-Loom Weavers of Gloucestershire, &c.

To Nassau William Senior, Samuel Jones Loyd, William Edward Hickson, and John Leslie, Esquires, Her Majesty's Commissioners for Inquiring into the Condition of the Hand-Loom Weavers in the United Kingdom.

Gentlemen,

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Introductory Remarks.

In compliance with your instructions (which I found more ample than my means for their exact fulfilment)* I proceeded on the duties of the commission with which I had the honour to be intrusted, and have in the course of my investigations visited North Wales (flannel), Kidderminster (carpets), Witney (blankets, waggon tilts, &c. &c.), Hereford (coarse linen), Ludlow (flannel), Bristol (sacking and tarpauling), and Gloucestershire (woollen cloths);—my colleague, Mr. A. Austin, proceeded through the South of England.

I have extended my inquiries among master manufacturers, operative weavers, clergymen, dissenting ministers, tradesmen, relieving officers, and other persons either practically acquainted with the trade or with the districts.

My attention has been closely directed to ascertain, as correctly as possible, first, the truth of alleged distress, and its consequent effects, not only upon the weaver, but also upon property and the local trade in general. Secondly, the causes of that distress (if ascertained to exist). Thirdly, to ascertain what remedial measures might be suggested by various parties, and to examine how far they might be practically adopted. My inquiries have been directed to the following subjects:—

1. Trade.
2. Wages.
3. Condition of the Weavers.
4. Power-looms.
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6. Combinations and strikes.
7. Truck.
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16. Migration and Emigration.

I have endeavoured to prepare the most accurate tables, containing statistical and other information, in order to refute or confirm the opinions offered to me, and in submitting them to your inspection in their proper places in this Report, I trust they will be considered useful. I have found distress to exist in the woollen manufacture, owing, as far as I could ascertain, to the surplus of labour and the fluctuation of trade.

My attention has been chiefly directed to the situation of the out-door weavers in Gloucestershire, as the condition of the factory weaver, averaging 11*s.* 9*d.* per week, is far above that of the out-door workman.

The evidence I have received concerning the shop-loom system has been of a most contradictory nature, arising from prejudice of the weavers who are removed from their cottages to work in the factories, which they consider an interference with their trade, and with their domestic comforts. Their pecuniary condition is much better than that of the out-door weaver.

The carpet trade is fluctuating, but wages are steady—though employment is uncertain.

* I cannot but regret the extreme labour imposed upon me, by the denial of a clerk. My tables, and their detail in this Report, will prove the assertion.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Summary of Report.

The strike at Kidderminster, 1828, has injured the weavers, and the town in general; it has also generated a feeling of dislike between master and man, and severed all feelings of mutual interest.

The Witney trade in blankets, waggon tilts, &c., is steady, and the workmen, though at moderate wages, are perfectly contented. The same is the case at Bristol.

Unlike other districts, I have found a cordiality existing at Witney among masters and men. This excellent feeling arose from the kindness of the masters towards their workpeople, and the interest they took in their welfare. I have heard workmen say they could be happier upon low wages if treated as men, than receive higher wages, and be treated like brutes.

In Gloucestershire I found an acrid feeling existing among the workmen towards their masters. I studiously endeavoured to obtain every information without causing any excitement; a result rather dreaded on my arrival in the district, but which I took great care to prevent. I have received thanks from the magistrates, manufacturers, and workpeople, for my discretion.

The summary of my remarks and quoted evidence concerning the cloth trade may be thus stated:—

1st.—The manufacture of woollen cloths fluctuates annually to a great extent, but if taken in longer periods, say quintennially, it is very steady, being about 340 yards variation on nearly 1,800,000 yards, the average annual quantity produced. *Vide* page 365.

The chief causes of distress are the commission houses, and severe competition in the home market. It is much to be doubted if this competition causes to any class a benefit in proportion to the distress it entails in the manufacturing districts; but it is evident that the manufacturers, while competing with each other, carry on the contest at the cost of labour. *Vide* page 401.

In this state of competition it would be fallacious to suppose that increased quantities of production would indicate an increased prosperity. The reverse is the case: it is from large quantities that small profits are now derived.

Owing to the introduction of machinery and power, the facilities of production are increased: formerly a mill could only produce a certain quantity; the productive power of that mill and of the manufacturer was limited. The supply of cloth did not exceed the demand, and prices were steady; now the power of production is in a measure unlimited, the supply exceeds the demand, and sales must be effected at any cost.

The manufacturers, generally speaking, have not sufficient capital to produce those quantities, and yet to hold enough capital in hand in order to meet a succession of adverse contingencies. Their money is embarked; they are at their full stretch in the race, and any sudden check upsets them: hence the failures of so many firms.

The manufacture of woollen cloth requires great care and skill, but there is no trade more intricate, more contradictory, or more uncertain, even in any state, from the sorting of the wool to the sale in the market. Unlike any other trade, a manufacturer in Gloucestershire (with the exception of some of the larger firms) cannot make out his own invoice for the London mart. The buyer, or cloth-factor, sends the cloth to a cloth-worker, who rigidly perches each piece, and for every blemish he can detect, puts down a porportionate deduction in the length —thus, a quarter of a yard for a hole, half a yard for a "through" or rent, a quarter of a yard for a "brack" or speck, or for bad colour, and so forth. The amount of this deduction is subtracted from the length, and the manufacturer receives for the remainder; so that even to the last process there is uncertainty in the trade.*

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* The Yorkshire makers send their cloths occasionally to a cloth-worker to be assessed, and then send them so assessed into the market; some, however, assess their own cloth, and admit of no interference.

It might be well if the Gloucestershire manufacturers were to send their cloths to a cloth-worker to be assessed and ticketed before they are offered in the London market, by which means the value of the cloth would be determined at the time of sale. Under the present system a sale is nominally made, but the amount is unknown until the buyer has sent his purchase to the cloth-worker, who might make such heavy deductions that the manufacturer would be a severe loser by the transaction.

For the benefit of all parties, if no undue advantages are sought, the value of the purchase ought to be determined at the time; and if the cloth be previously assessed and ticketed by the cloth-worker, the imperfections of the cloth would be stated, and the buyer would be protected from imposition. In the first and second years of the reign of Henry VII. the farmers of the Ulnage, that is, cloth-measurers, in Gloucestershire, paid 16*l.* 15*s.* towards the expenses of the Royal Household. *This officer of the Ulnage measured and sealed the cloths before they were exposed to sale;* it was his duty to examine the cloth with great care before he passed it and sealed it, because *he was liable to a very severe fine* if he ventured to put his seal to any articles that were defective, either with regard to make, colour, or material, without specifying such defects.

This uncertainty unsettles wages; the manufacturer is uncertain of his profits; and the same spirit of uncertainty pervades the whole of the trade. The wages of the weaver are the largest in amount, and consequently the manufacturer, when contemplating a reduction, fixes upon that larger amount as being a sum which could better suffer a diminution.

Owing to this uncertainty of profits, and the fluctuating state of trade, there are periods when the market is brisk, then there is a demand—so when the market slackens there is a surplus of labour. A busy time induces a hope of steady trade, and during a slack time there is a hope that trade will soon revive—therefore men linger on, and the labour market does not properly adjust itself to the supply; consequently wages are tending to the minimum, and there is a mass of weavers struggling for existence, hardly one shade above pauperism. Another evil resulting from the present state of trade in Gloucestershire is, that the petty shop-keepers and others, who flourished when trade and wages were steady, are not only impoverished by the decrease of capital and wages, but they have moreover to contribute to the maintenance of a manufacturer's workmen when trade is slack.

2nd.—The condition of the out-door weaver is depressed without any prospect of remedy;* for if a demand for labour should arise from any change in the trade, wages will not be allowed to exceed in any great degree the cost at which power can perform the work. The lowness of the out-door weavers' wages and earnings are fully attested, and show his condition to be below that of any other labouring class, where skill or knowledge of a trade is requisite, women and young persons have been found adapted to the work, and the market is overrun. *Vide* page 403.

3rd.—Education (*vide* page 480) is checked by the low state of wages. It is in the evidence of many persons well acquainted with the districts that the parents cannot supply decent clothing to the children.

The average proportion receiving education is one in thirteen on the total population; in those parishes where wages are under the average, namely, 10*s*. for a family of five, the proportion of children are in a less degree educated; and in parishes about or above the average of wages, the proportion is more favourable. *Vide* page 487.

4th.—Wages and earnings vary according to the terms of the manufacturer. (*Vide* page 382.) They are too low in reference to the quantity of labour given, because, by reason of the surplus of labour and the fluctuations of trade, men undersell each other. High wages are not a proof of high earnings, because there are many deductions among some masters which reduce the apparent high amount to no greater sum than is paid by the lower paying master, who names a straightforward sum and pays it nett.

The earnings of some weavers are reduced by the advantages taken by the masters. The long warping bar is a fraud upon labour. The due and proper length of the warping bars might be regulated and occasionally examined by the factory inspectors. The letting of cottages at enormous rents, the high charge for hire of looms, either in the factories or at the cottages, and above all, the connexion of a master or a wool loftman with a shop, are all of them means to abstract a profit from the labourers' earnings—a system which does not compensate the master for the misery it entails upon his workmen, who have no interest in common with the masters, and who too frequently look upon embezzlement as retaliation.

It is much to be regretted that in many cases the manufacturers leave the management of their working men to their head servants. (*Vide* Evidence of Richard Stiff, page 550). The rseult is, that the working man has no interest in the prosperity or well-doing of his employer, and the employer or manufacturer scarcely knows his men. The wool loftmen and other persons at the head of the different departments exercise a rigid and arbitrary control, which too frequently blunts the better feelings of the men, who are thus made the vassals of the underlings, and in some cases are compelled to deal at shops secretly supported by them.

* Weavers have always been poor and depressed. I cannot speak, however, of those operatives who wove the linen in which the mummies have been rolled from time beyond history. The learned Professor Heyne, of Gottingen, left the loom for the classics. His father was a weaver, suffering great distress. In his Memoirs, the Professor says, "Want was the earliest companion of my childhood! I well remember the painful impressions made on my mind by witnessing the distress of my mother when without food for her children! How often have I seen her on a Saturday evening, weeping and wringing her hands as she returned home from an unsuccessful effort to sell the goods which the daily and nightly toil of my father had manufactured!"

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

SUMMARY OF REPORT.

Mr. Rasher, an intelligent farmer at Stanley, and a guardian of the parish, confirms this statement. Captain Thompson, at Coaley, also complained of the system, as being injurious to the moral and better condition of the weavers.

Beer-shops are said to be injurious to the working classes; it is a temptation which can be best met or overcome by small allotments, or by encouraging the labouring man, by education and by other habits, to seek other means of recreation or amusement than in the settle of a beer-house. The poor man has no other resource to employ his leisure time, or to derive amusement after his day of toil. *Vide* page 464.

Combinations and strikes have proved detrimental to the weavers. (*Vide* p. 448.) In 1825 the weavers, secretly instigated by some higher paying manufacturers, attempted to cause an equality in the prices of weaving. In 1828 the masters struck against the men by attempting to lower wages, and a general price was agreed to, but not long upheld. Since this period there has been a constant tendency to reduce, and the weavers have gradually become lower and lower in condition.

Embezzlement (*vide* page 473) is not of sufficient magnitude to molest wages; the law is not sufficiently stringent; a rural police has already done good in suppressing it by seeking out the receivers.

Truck (*vide* page 458) is not common among the manufacturers, but is injurious where it exists.

The weavers are in favour of the Boards of Trade, though they cannot define how it will benefit them; yet they acknowledge where it will injure them. I have examined two of the leading men of the body of weavers upon the subject, and I refer to their evidence. *Vide* page 505, *et seq.*

The Corn Laws are almost unanimously allowed to be the cause of distress. I have a Table of Wages from 1820 to 1838, in periods of different years, with the average prices of corn. I find wages have been reduced 30 per cent., and corn is 3*d.* a quarter dearer (*vide* p. 398). I therefore do not see that the wages of the woollen weaver are affected by the price of corn. It is surplus of numbers that places the weaver in a different position to his fellow-workmen.

The allotment system is valuable if in small portions, and if not allowed to be the chief means of support, otherwise it entails pauperism.

Emigration, as a partial aid in a district extremely depressed by any sudden failure, is beneficial, but it is too expensive a remedy for large and general adoption. I should beg to recommend facilities for emigration or migration to the stripe weavers in Bisley, Horsley, and Hampton parishes, where, by unavoidable circumstances, the trade has been lost. Migration is the mildest and best remedy; it is the remedy the weavers find best suited to their purposes and wishes, and, if facilities were afforded, might be in some cases advantageously adopted.

The weavers are not an intelligent class of persons; they have lived in their lone cottages, and are scarcely able to understand the machinery of commerce; they hold up their hands in favour of open trade—trade free as air—but at the same time most strenuously urge that every sort of restriction should be adopted to secure a monopoly of their own calling: for instance, they urge that power-looms should be put down, either by "law" or by a tax amounting to prohibition; that factories should be abolished; that no man shall have more than three looms in his possession; and that the apprenticeship system be again adopted.

You will perceive that many of the subjects above mentioned open a wide and extensive field of investigation, involving subjects of the deepest moment, and requiring a greater measure of time, means, and of ability than I possess; I therefore deem it my duty to report faithfully the opinions of others rather than to advance my own.

My attention has been chiefly directed to the condition of the out-door weaver in the county of Gloucester, because within the last few years the trade and system of manufacture has been altered, and with this alteration the condition of the weaver has been changed. In the North, power has outstripped the hand-loom weaver in cottons, and in Gloucestershire the unequal race has just commenced in woollens.

The following table shows the state of the British woollen trade and prices of wheat from 1820:—

ACCOUNT of the Quantities of BRITISH MANUFACTURED WOOLLEN GOODS EXPORTED, distinguishing the Description of Goods, from the Year 1820 to 1833, inclusive.

Prices of Wheat, each Year, per Quarter.	Selling average Price at full-priced Bakers in London.	Date.	Cloths of all sorts.	Napped Coatings or Duffels.	Kerseymeres.	Baizes.	Stuffs, Woollen or Worsted.	Flannels.	Blanketing.	Carpets and Carpeting.	Woollens mixed with Cotton.	Hosiery.	Sundries	Declared Value.	WOOL.		
															Imported.	Exported.	Consumed.
s. d.	d.		Pieces.	Pieces.	Pieces.	Pieces.	Pieces.	Yards.	Yards.	Yards.	Yards.	Dozens.	£.	£.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.
65 10	..	1820	288,700	59,644	78,944	37,183	828,900	2,569,105	1,288,409	526,124	407,716	59,960	39,337	5,586,138	9,975,605	64,585	7,691,773
54 5	..	1821	375,464	69,622	91,402	41,610	1,022,342	3,504,851	1,424,238	764,922	627,800	107,779	38,986	6,462,866	16,622,567	291,318	15,898,353
43 3	..	1822	420,497	67,757	95,870	43,447	1,078,428	4,503,612	1,926,711	884,922	1,120,326	136,597	47,042	6,488,167	19,058,080	233,872	16,256,924
51 9	..	1823	356,027	54,226	94,344	41,539	1,150,133	4,311,997	2,131,632	778,426	918,469	106,420	44,619	5,636,586	19,366,725	200,776	18,787,329
62 0	..	1824	407,720	51,585	108,012	47,105	1,242,403	3,105,961	1,990,041	848,842	1,393,443	113,123	43,361	6,034,051	22,562,485	419,594	23,995,458
66 6	..	1825	384,880	45,268	126,448	47,100	1,138,808	2,959,594	2,162,834	888,324	1,793,301	106,498	45,335	6,185,648	43,816,906	678,034	41,101,636
56 11	..	1826	328,559	41,800	86,038	36,862	1,125,308	2,432,120	1,082,582	903,597	531,517	71,922	37,223	4,966,879	15,989,112	888,651	17,868,551
56 9	..	1827	371,965	51,690	122,049	47,574	1,258,667	2,518,887	1,899,600	1,195,939	846,768	148,117	43,559	5,245,649	29,115,341	760,109	27,943,244
60 5	10 3/7	1828	335,042	40,646	84,524	49,567	1,310,853	2,539,766	2,097,542	1,197,947	981,152	159,463	48,314	5,069,741	30,236,059	872,249	31,031,377
66 3	11 1/4	1829	363,075	16,186	33,465	52,777	1,307,558	1,572,920	1,839,961	811,538	1,074,077	91,285	41,948	4,587,606	21,516,649	406,566	22,614,550
64 3	10 1/4	1830	388,269	22,377	24,714	49,164	1,252,512	1,613,099	2,176,391	672,869	1,099,518	111,146	54,038	4,728,666	32,305,314	659,242	31,522,859
66 4	11	1831	436,143	13,892	29,650	30,259	1,487,404	1,572,558	2,546,328	678,656	1,000,004	143,774	64,648	5,232,013	31,652,029	1,025,962	29,669,908
58 8	9 3/4	1832	396,661	23,453	40,984	34,874	1,800,714	2,304,750	1,681,840	690,042	1,334,072	152,810	55,443	5,244,478	28,028,973	555,014	27,666,350
52 11	8 1/4 1/8	1833	597,189	19,543	31,795	43,036	1,690,559	2,055,072	3,128,106	667,377	1,605,056	232,766	78,236	6,294,432	38,046,087	442,696	39,066,620

STATEMENT of the Quantity and Value of the different Articles of WOOLLEN MANUFACTURED in RUSSIA, in the Year 1824; and total Value of such Goods Imported in 1820 and 1824.

		Value. £.	
Cloth, fine . . . . . yards	1,181,647	1,661,691	£.
,, middling . . . . . ,,	391,710	220,337	
,, coarse . . . . . ,,	3,943,111	665,399	In 1820, value imported, 977,816
Kerseymere, Merino, &c. . . . ,,	198,639	44,693	
Divers Cloths . . . . . ,,	101,928	5,733	In 1824, value imported, 402,356
Shawls and Handkerchiefs . . pieces	15,416	3,371	
Blanketing	. . .	12,750	

STATEMENT of the Number of WOOLLEN MANUFACTORIES in the RUSSIAN EMPIRE, in the Years 1812, 1816, 1820, and 1824.

1812	136
1816	235
1820	304
1824	324

Table of Woollen manufactured Goods exported, &c. and the price of Wheat in each Year.

SUMMARY OF REPORT.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

TRADE.

TRADE OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

The manufacture of woollen cloth was established at Cirencester as early as the period of Henry IV., who granted a charter to a body of weavers in that town.

The streams which pour through the vales of Avening, Rodborough, Chalford, and Painswick, all concentrating near Stroud, appear to have been long rendered available to manufacture, because houses of the Elizabethan, and even of an earlier period, are scattered in every direction near these brooks.

The fine cloth is the principal fabric in the West of England; cloth of coarser descriptions are manufactured, but the superiority of the Gloucestershire cloth is in the finest qualities. The Yorkshire manufacturer competes with the Gloucestershire manufacture in the coarser or lower sort of cloth, but not in the finest description.

About thirty or forty years ago the cloth was of thicker make, but by recent improvements it is shorn to the finest face or pile; this, however, does not employ more human labour, because the operations are performed by machinery.

Market.

The principal market for the fine trade in Gloucestershire is the home consumption, and in China for the stripe cloth.* There is, however, a severe competition among the manufacturers, and every method is now studied to improve the quality of the cloth, but until this competition occurred, many of the manufacturers were comparatively ignorant of the skilful operations of the trade, and their knowledge did not keep pace with the improvements of the times. This was not the case in Yorkshire, and much of the coarser trade has gone to the North.

There is no subject more complicated than the cloth trade, the very nature of it is unlike any other trade, and consequently it is almost impossible to arrive at any positive conclusion. This fact will be attested by any person connected with the trade.

Almost every person has a different opinion concerning the present state of the trade. Almost every manufacturer arranges and prepares his wools in some peculiar manner, exercising his skill and judgment to turn it to the best advantage. The nature of silk or cotton is not so variable, and the skill is not so essential to fabricate it; the manufacture of wool differs materially from either.

There is no certainty in the trade, high wages are by no means a test of high earnings, or low wages of low earnings, and every step of the inquiry is a contradiction.

Apparent proof of Decrease.

The apparent proofs of a decrease in the trade are, 1st, That within the last eight years four of the largest firms have failed: 2ndly, That out of 137 cloth mills 58 have been closed: 3rdly, That cottage property and mill property have decreased at least 30 per cent. in value.

It is admitted by all that the stripe trade has greatly decreased. This sort of cloth was chiefly made in the Vale of Chalford, and out of 41 mills only 15 are now used; moreover that district suffers great distress, and the few manufacturers in it now remaining do but little trade.

With regard to the apparent evidences of a decrease in trade, it is true that certain firms failed, but firms then of minor rank have grown up to importance, so that the trade has remained, but only changed into other channels. The failure of these firms is attributed more to expensive establishments and improvident expenditure, than to any decrease in trade. Mr. Wyatt, of Stroud, Banker, &c. &c. states that, in his opinion, many of the manufacturers failed in consequence of their extravagance, and through an ambition to become large landed proprietors before they had secured sufficient capital, inasmuch as they frequently borrowed half the purchase money at 5 per cent., when the land did not yield more than 3 per cent. Mr. Charles Stanton, one of the leading manufacturers in the county, is of opinion that trade rather languishes than improves in consequence of scarcity of capital. Timothy Exell, chairman of the delegates of weavers, says, there is less money than formerly to employ labour. 2nd, The number of mills has decreased, but this does not prove a decrease in trade, because, since the introduction of steam in order to generate a moving power, these mills are dispensed with, and consequently fall in value; formerly, a fall of water was the only means to procure that power, so that a decrease of mills only shows an increase of other power, more certain and more concentrated, in the larger mills. 3rd, The decrease in the value of mill and cottage property is no test of a decrease in trade, that is, of the quantities produced,

No actual proof of Decrease.

* A coarse but thin cloth, made especially for the China market, with a striped list, hence the term "stripe."
The Drap de Ray, or striped cloth, by an Act temp. Edward III., was ordained to be made in England of the same length and breadth as that which was fabricated at Ghent.—*Vide* 'Strutt's Dresses,' vol. ii. p. 193.

because, undthe system of shop looms, the weavers who worked at their own houses or hl cottages (wherein they placed looms and hired journeymen) those weaverre now working in factories; the quantities are produced in those factories inste of being woven in the cottages.

The follow table shows the number of mills closed and employed :—

mber Mills the trict.	Name of District.	Number taken down.	Number used for other purposes, such as Corn-mills, List-mills, or Saw-mills.	Number void.	Total Number not used in the Cloth Trade.	Number now used in the Cloth Trade.
2	Nailsworth .	..	..	2	2	10
1	Chalford . .	4	7	15	26	15
7	Alderley . .	..	2	..	2	5
9	Wootton . .	..	4	10	14	15
1	Stroud . .	..	2	4	6	15
8	Dursley . .	..	2	5	7	11
9	Stonehouse .	..	..	1	1	8
7		4	17	37	58	79

Decrease in Number of Mills.

Totalmber taken down . . 4
Totalmber used for other pur-
p 17
Nowl 37

Total Number of Mills formerly employed in the Cloth Trade . 137
Total Number of Mills not used in the Cloth Trade 58

Number of Mills now used in making Cloth 79

Decrease more than 42 per cent.

The follog letters from Mr. Baker and Mr. Hall, Architects and Land Agents, relato the decrease of property in the district :—

"*Castle Hall, Painswick, 10th November.*

"Sir—In ver to your letter I beg to state that I consider the decrease in the value of Mill propertythis county, employed in the manufactory of woollen cloth, is very nearly one half, or a in proportion as three to five. Decrease of Mill Property.

"With regto your question as to the assessment at a former period compared with the present valua, it is one which I scarcely know how to answer, in consequence of not being much emplo to value mill property prior to the new assessment act, but I believe the usual mode wto value the mills at something under their annual value, and reduce that sum 50 per c for the assessment; whereas the present mode is to value the mills at their annual value reduce that sum from 25 to 30 per cent. for repairs and insurance.

"I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

(Signed) "CHARLES BAKER.

"*W. A. Mi Esq.*
&c. &c."

"*Cirencester, November* 8, 1838.

"Sir,—Inly to your favour of the 6th instant, requesting information concerning the decrease of property which has come under my valuations in this county, I beg to inform you, tI consider the value of this kind of property has diminished generally one-half, and in g case fully one-third.

"The diffi system under which the valuations for poor's rates are now made precluded me from dra a comparison between the new and old rating.

"The vabns were formerly made in different proportions, varying in nearly every parish, and ow uniformly rated at their full annual value.

"I have the honour to remain, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

(Signed) "RICHARD HALL.

"*W. A. Mi Esq.*
&c. &c."

Having ntioned the apparent proofs of a decrease in trade, I now submit proof that e is no decrease in the total quantity produced, but on the contrary; because, if stripe trade has decreased, the total number of yards made in each year shows corresponding decrease, in amount; and consequently the broad or cassimere e must have increased.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

TRADE.

The stripe trade was chiefly supported by the East India Company* but when the charter ceased in 1832, the Yorkshire competition took much of the trade from the district. The following return shows the quantities supplied to the East India Company, but it gives no evidence of decrease in the amounts made because the manufacturers make and ship the stripes upon their own account to China. This is evident with regard to the Yorkshire manufacturers, who have not supplied one piece of stripe to the East India Company since 1832.

Stripes.

The QUANTITIES of STRIPE CLOTH supplied from GLOUCESTERSHIRE, as well as from Yorkshire or other Counties, to the EAST INDIA COMPANY, from the Year 1820 to the year 1838, distinguishing the Quantities in each Year, from Returns furnished by order of the East India Company.

Table of Quantities of Stripe supplied to the East India Company.

Year.	Quantities of Stripe supplied.			Total Number of Pieces
	From Gloucestershire.	From Yorkshire.	From Other Counties.	
	Pieces.	Pieces.	Pieces.	
1820	9,643	..	425½ Bought of London Factors.	10,0
1821	10,460	1,250	..	11,7
1822	12,523	2,250	40 ,,	14,8
1823	9,952	59	33 ,,	10,0
1824	10,623	..	15 ,,	10,6
1825	11,049	1,300	..	12,3
1826	14,877	607	..	15,4
1827	5,960	400	..	6,3
1828	4,774	1,946	..	6,7
1829	11,048	1,911½	5 ,,	12,9
1830	11,688	622½	..	12,3
1831	16,326	660	..	16,9
1832	15,680½	1,293	..	16,9
1833	69½	..	..	
1834	60	..	..	
1835	72	..	..	
1836	199	..	..	1
1837	..	..	42 ,,	
1838	143½	..	..	1
Total .	145,147½	12,299	560½	158,0

I am led to infer that the stripe trade has been gradually going in the North. It was once the support of Chalford Vale, but, as it receded, the truck system advanced; and Mr. Nat. Jones, a manufacturer of stripe in that Vale, says "he does not resort to truck from choice but from necessity, for without adopting that plan he sees no prospect of any trade being done in Chalford." He further said, "that, instead of making for order as formerly, he is now obliged to ship his own cloth for China, and to receive tea in exchange, (obliged, as he remarked, tuck with his buyers.) He has cloth now in China unsold, and unless he has very favourable returns does not think he shall be induced to ship any more."

Decline of Stripe Trade.

I infer that it is want of capital that has ruined the trade in Cord. In Yorkshire there is more capital and more speculation. In one case, the manufacturer makes to force or find a market, in the other he waits for a demand and then prepares the supply.

The distress of Bisley (Chalford being situate in that extensive parish) is set forth and explained in a valuable communication with which I was favoured by the Rev. H. Jeffreys, and which is inserted under the head of "Condition of the Weavers." Page 416.

By the above table there is an extreme decrease in the amount of the East India Company's orders, nor does it appear to me that there is sufficient capital in the vale of Chalford to make the usual quantity upon speculation; some of the larger and more wealthy firms in the county occasionally make stripes, but in proportion to the presumed decrease. The average annual demand for pieces from

Want of Capital in Chalford.

* The Chalford manufacturers were liable to fines by the officers who were appointed to inspect the cloths for the East India Company; and it has been reported to me that much unfairness existed in their arbitrary conduct. One manufacturer assured me that some pieces he had sent in were returned to him, on which he had to pay fines, and that he gave those *same* pieces to another manufacturer under contract for a better cloth than his contract, at which those rejected pieces were accepted. I have many cases concerning this subject.

1820 to 1832 appears to be 12,109 pieces, averaging 36 yards each piece; and a reference to the Yorkshire trade may afford some idea of the quantity manufactured in Gloucestershire.

I now submit the total number of yards of cloth of every description made in Gloucestershire from 1823 to 1838 inclusive; wherein it will be seen that the trade has not suffered any diminution, and if one sort of fabric has decreased another sort must have increased. The following table also contains the prices of wheat in each year. In this table it will be seen that by the two last averages of five years, the trade is stationary; yet, by reference to each year, it is the most fluctuating trade. It is to this uncertainty that I attribute the distressed condition of masters and the reduction of wages.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

TRADE.

A TABLE showing the Quantities of Cloth made from 1823 to 1838, inclusive, and also the Prices of Grain for each Year, showing the Increase and Decrease in each Year, and quintennial Averages.

Year.	Price of Wheat.	Total Number of Yards.	CLOTH. Increase or Decrease in Reference to the Preceding Year. Increase.	CLOTH. Decrease.	WHEAT. Increase or Decrease in Price of Grain, in Reference to the Preceding Year. Increase.	WHEAT. Decrease.	CLOTH. Increase or Decrease in Reference to the Total Average Quantity. Increase.	CLOTH. Decrease.	WHEAT. Increase or Decrease of Wheat in reference to the Total Average Price. Increase.	WHEAT. Decrease.	CLOTH. Averages in Periods of Five Years.	WHEAT. Averages of Wheat in in Periods of 5 Years.
	s. d.				s. d.	s. d.			s. d.	s. d.		s. d.
1823	51 9	1,769,762	..	..	..	..	42,459	..	..	5 3		
1824	62 0	1,741,120	..	28,642	10 3	..	13,817	..	5 0	..		
1825	66 6	1,750,243	9,123	..	4 6	..	22,940	..	9 6	..	1,638,992	58 9
1826	56 11	1,499,661	..	250,582	..	9 7	..	227,642	..	0 1		
1827	56 9	1,434,175	..	65,486	..	0 2	..	293,128	..	3 0		
1828	60 5	1,659,329	225,154	..	3 8	..	..	67,974	3 5	..		
1829	66 3	1,517,252	..	142,077	5 10	..	..	210,051	9 3	..	1,785,099	63 2
1830	64 3	1,602,953	85,701	..	..	2 0	..	124,350	7 3	..		
1831	66 4	1,976,622	373,669	..	2 1	..	249,319	..	9 4	..		
1832	58 8	2,169,340	192,718	..	..	7 8	442,037	..	1 8	..		
1833	52 11	1,426,689	..	742,651	..	5 9	..	300,614	..	4 1		
1834	46 0	1,966,846	540,157	..	..	6 11	239,543	..	..	11 0		
1835	37 0	1,864,526	..	102,320	..	9 0	137,223	..	..	20 0	1,784,757	47 9
1836	48 4	1,916,518	51,992	..	11 4	..	189,215	..	..	8 8		
1837	54 6	1,749,208	..	167,310	..	6 2	21,905	..	..	2 6		
1838	64 5	1,593,594	..	155,614	9 11	..	..	133,709	7 5	..		

Average of Wheat. 57*s.*

Average Number of Yards. 1,727,303.

Average Quantity of Yards, from 1823 to 1837, both inclusive, is . . 1,784,928
Total Number of Yards, in 1838, is 1,593,594
Decrease compared with the average of 10 preceding Years . . . 191,334

Quantity of cloth manufactured annually in Gloucestershire.
Fluctuating state of the Trade, if considered annually, but steady if taken in average periods of five years.
Vide page 399.

A Return of the Number of Pieces and Yards of Woollen Cloth made in Gloucestershire (Broad or Felt, Cassimeres and Stripes), in each Year from 1822 to 1838 inclusive, so far as it can be supplied by the Records of the Excise Department.

Years.	Broad Cloth. Number of Pieces.	Broad Cloth. Number of Yards in such Pieces.	Broad Cloth. Number of Yards where the Number of Pieces is not stated.	Narrow. Number of Pieces.	Narrow. Number of Yards in such Pieces.	Narrow. Number of Yards where the Number of Pieces is not stated.	Number of Yards of Broad and Narrow Cloth, the kinds not being kept distinct.	Cassimere. Number of Pieces.	Cassimere. Number of Yards in such Pieces.	Cassimere. Number of Yards where the Number of Pieces is not stated.	Felt. Number of Pieces.	Felt. Number of Yards in such Pieces.	Spanish Stripe. Number of Pieces.	Spanish Stripe. Number of Yards in such Pieces.	Pounds of Wool.	Pounds of Worsted.	Dozens of Hose.
From May 15 to Dec. 31																	
1822	9,640	329,910	26,803	1,434	31,081	..	316,755	213	8,614	4,644	354	13,113	260	10,720	11,334	50	5,090
1823	29,836	987,432	64,477	4,529	180,044	7,880	441,137	825	27,663	17,824	832	28,425	361	14,880	12,324	145	13,914
1824	35,639	1,139,624	70,203	3,680	159,417	19,796	289,352	590	22,696	8,773	633	31,259	..	..	40,180	222	15,109
1825	28,479	1,068,960	120,126	3,442	147,002	12,557	322,580	910	28,152	12,980	950	37,886	..	..	128,627	66	21,367
1826	31,561	922,729	49,665	2,239	87,220	12,741	352,770	839	27,228	6,418	1,020	40,890	..	..	27,679	1,483	13,622
1827	22,347	667,984	36,924	3,008	119,236	4,842	519,914	586	26,551	..	1,418	58,724	..	..	9,598	240	17,386
1828	24,442	891,120	23,714	6,158	233,826	3,289	452,360	142	6,702	..	1,215	48,318	..	..	68,476	138	15,045
1829	25,530	902,055	12,686	5,047	198,061	3,397	355,018	378	14,753	..	745	21,298	258	9,984	29,941	..	3,196
1830	25,590	933,057	3,222	5,139	220,274	..	330,799	362	15,123	..	3,737	78,030	624	22,408	4,796	..	20,789
1831	37,104	1,278,131	5,446	5,683	246,322	..	383,122	749	24,737	..	313	12,592	813	26,272	23,829	10,960	16,206
1832	36,887	1,322,096	1,568	8,356	330,721	..	433,181	1,279	50,932	..	596	23,680	199	7,162	27,046	30,120	15,949
1833	28,363½	1,018,158	12,474	6,102	242,693	1,920	35,550	2,632½	104,510	..	119½	4,760	184	6,624	37,415	30,583	164
1834	40,952½	1,461,584	38,092	9,629½	380,834	5,280	..	1,715	67,754	..	195	7,770	154	5,532	38,631	46,146	164
1835	33,336½	1,224,283	40,820	9,329	373,787	7,680	79,909	2,917½	115,709	..	80	3,200	531	19,138	17,544	31,246	..
1836	34,195½	1,233,738	52,033	7,496½	296,454	7,600	141,589	3,860	153,421	..	290½	8,913	632½	22,770	14,573	21,876	..
1837	27,032	966,683	79,174	6,941	279,587	16,498	299,876	1,789	73,251	2,740	89	4,007	748½	27,392	13,491	16,640	..
1838	19,254	742,063	121,380	8,426	340,476	17,623	284,620	553	23,065	17,804	126	6,040	1,193	39,523	3,474	9,240	11,206

Excise Office, London.

(Signed) G. A. COTTRELL, Gen.-Accountant.

The decrease of felted yards in 1838, in comparison with the averages of the previous 10 years is 191,334 yards, equal to 258,300 woven yards, so that allowing an out-door weaver to perform 837 yards per annum if at constant work, this decrease threw 308 weavers last year out of employment. In addition to the average surplus number, namely 338, to that of the total population of weavers, namely, 3000, it may be presumed that 646 last year were unemployed. This may in some measure account for the increase of 1691 pauper cases in the Stroud union in 1838 over 1837, and also of 917 cases in the Dursley union. *Vide* pages 411 and 412.

Surplus of Labour.

The greatest quantity of cloth was made in 1832, being 442,037 yards above the average quantity of sixteen years' produce, and 742,651 yards more than the smallest quantity. The smallest quantity produced was in 1833, being 300,614 yards less than the total average quantity. It may, however, be presumed, that as the minimum quantity follows the year of the excess produced, the speculation in 1832 forestalled the markets in the following year, and it will be found to be in a great measure correct, because the average quantity of the two years only gives a surplus of 71,712 yards. Since, however, the year 1832, three of the largest firms have failed, and the over speculation of that year was probably the cause of their downfall.

Quantity produced as proof of prosperity.

It does not follow as a consequence that the manufacturers are wealthy in proportion to the quantity produced, because formerly profits were greater, and now it is only from quantities that profits can be obtained. Mr. Millman, and Mr. Long, manufacturers at Kingswood, state, that formerly there was more profit on five ends of cloth than there is now on fifteen ends, which corroborates my previous remark, that profits must now arise from quantity more than quality, so that, unless a manufacturer has sufficient capital to make that larger quantity, he must fall back upon the wages of labour for a portion of his expected profits.

Mr. William Playne, sen., an extensive manufacturer, observes, that the larger capitalist has great advantages over the smaller manufacturer, inasmuch as he buys his own wool, he establishes his own agency in London, thereby saving the commission of the wool-broker, and the profits of the cloth factor; whereas the minor manufacturer, before he can attempt to compete with the larger manufacturer who has this advantage, must have by some means or another exacted that amount of profit from some source, and that source is generally wages of labour.

Advantages of the large Capitalist.

Mr. Nat. Marling, another large manufacturer, considers that the primeval cause of low wages was the reduced profits of the manufacturers, and the consequent decrease of capital in the district. Mr. Peter Playne, one of the principal manufacturers, said that the low condition and bare profits of the market cause him to reduce wages.

Low Profits cause of low Wages.

In corroboration of the opinion that there is a want of capital in the district, John Skelton, the sheriffs'-officer in the Stroud district, informed me that he thought many manufacturers were in a tottering condition:—

> "I think one half of them," said he, "are as badly off as their workpeople; with this difference, however, that they do not appear so, because they keep up an outward show, and must aim at it, in order to hold together for a time; but ruin comes upon them sooner or later. I have served many writs and executions against them."

In reference, however, to the actual and present state of trade (November, 1838), Mr. Berry, of Caincross, agent to the Commercial Inland Carrying Company, considers it to be rather reviving, probably owing to the American orders again coming into the market. He says, within the month of November considerable quantities of wool have come down by water by the Inland Carrying Company; but he does not consider this supply to be the periodical quantity, but rather from a sudden increase of trade. The carrying trade by water has not been so brisk during the preceding part of the year; neither has it been so brisk by land. The wool brought into the district during the quarter is double the quantity of the corresponding quarter last year.

Quantity not decreased.

Messrs. Tanner and Baylis, very extensive land carriers, state they experience no decrease in their departments.

The principal fabrics of woollen in Gloucestershire are,—felts, or broadcloths, such as medleys, ladies' pieces and stripes, and army clothing; cassimeres, or narrows, ratteens, patent twill, and a new make, called doeskins or buckskins.

Fabrics.

There are some minor manufacturers who pick out the best portions of flight or refuse, and by mixing some new wool with it, produce blankets and coffin-cloths.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

TRADE.

About forty years ago a fancy cloth was made in this district for waistcoat pciees called lappett-work, in which flowers and various patterns were interwoven. None has been made of late years. A weaver named Keene stated that he worked at this work, and that he earned 30*s.* a-week.

The principal districts in which cloth is manufactured in Gloucestershire are, Stroud, Wootton, and Dursley. All the larger establishments have factories attached; and when trade is brisk they give chain to the out-door weavers at their own cottages. These men live scattered over a large district, generally in small houses, in lone or secluded situations, or skirting upon the edges of greens or commons, for the sake of cheaper rent. Their work is precarious; their wages low; and their condition poor in the extreme.

Messrs. Cripps, of Cirencester, have a small factory for the preparing stripe cloths. The work is all put out to be woven; price 1*l.* per piece; and it is conducted on the humane feeling of giving employment to the poor, rather than for profit.

Sacking Prices and Earnings.

James Wood, rope-spinner and sacking-maker, at Cirencester, employs about three weavers; manufactures sacking, wool, sheeting, or bagging. His men are generally employed. The wages are, for a piece of double bed-sacking, containing twenty-seven yards and a half, 2*s.* 6*d.*, and it can be made in a day. The manufacturer pays the quilling, and finds loom and shuttle. For a piece of wool-bagging, about the same length, the wages are 2*s.* 2*d.* There has been no reduction in wages for the last twenty years; and witness has frequently paid a weaver 1*l.*, being the amount of his weekly earning.

Carpet Factory at Cirencester.

There is a small carpet factory at Cirencester: wages regulated by the Kidderminster prices. The drawboys receive about a shilling a-week more than at Kidderminster, because juvenile labour is more scarce.

Power Looms in Gloucestershire. *Vide* page 435, *et seq.*

Within the last two years power-looms have been introduced into the district. The total number is 100: girls and women attend them; with a male weaver to superintend, who can overlook a considerable nnmber. The effect of power-looms is not materially felt, further than they have fixed the maximum price of wages for weaving; and if by any means wages are forced up, or there should be a tendency to exceed that maximum, it is probable that power will be immediately adopted. There are many opinions, however, concerning the expediency and benefit of power-looms: they are more adapted to the coarser makes, requiring coarser thread than to the fine work, the thread of which, by reason of its tenderness, can hardly bear the strike. Mr. Peter Playne says,—

"My opinion has always been that though cloth can be made by power it will not be worth the expense of extra machinery, mechanics, &c. &c. I do not consider power will greatly reduce the price of weaving, or throw the population out of employment. If it throws a weaver out of work, it employs mechanics, such as millwrights, carpenters, and blacksmiths."

Mr. Playne also observes that the men are racing against power, and that any disturbance would cause the general introduction of power-looms.

In order to submit to you the general condition of the working classes, and the relative state of wages, I will now narrate the different operations requisite to produce a piece of felt cloth, finished ready for the market, and you will there perceive in each process the machinery now used, the cost of that machinery, the presumed amount of human labour displaced by it; and I have also set forth the amount of quantity of work that each person averages per week or day, and their consequent weekly earnings.

I beg to call your attention to the table which immediately succeeds this narrative of the manufacture, as it will be found to contain the wages of all classes of labour connected with cloth-making from 1808 to 1838. *Vide* page 374.

Process of Manufacture.

There are many processes in converting wool into broadcloth, and nearly every process, especially in the early state of the manufacture, is performed by distinct classes of workpeople. Formerly many hands were required to perform labour which is now done by fewer hands, aided by machinery. The various operations of the cloth-trade may be classed under four general heads, namely:—

I. Preparing the wool.
II. Spinning and preparing the yarn for the loom.
III. Weaving.
IV. Preparing the woollen material or cloth for the market.

The following are the various processes to which the wool is subjected :—

I. Preparing the wool.	Sorting, Scouring, Dyeing, Twillying, Beating and Picking, Scribbling, Carding.
II. Spinning and preparing the yarn for the loom.	Spinning abb or Slubbing, Spinning Warp and Warping, Reeling abb.
III. Weaving.	Sizing, Weaving.
IV. Preparing the woven material or cloth for the market.	Scouring, Drying, Burling, Picking, Felting, Roughing or Raising, Cutting, Mozing, Cutting (again), Roller Boiling, (If not Wool-dyed) Dyeing, Cutting (again), Picking, Marking, Brushing, Pressing.

Sorting.

Sorting the Wool.—This work is performed by men, who by reason of the advantages arising to the manufacturers by a judicious selection of the different wools, receive good wages, in proportion to their skill. Some sorters earn as much as 2*l.*, or even 3*l.* a-week, and few less than 1*l.* 5*s.* A man and a boy can sort one pack of German wool in two days, and one pack of English wool in one day; the price is about 8*s.* 6*d.* a pack.

Scouring.

Scouring the Wool.—Stale human urine, provincially called "seg," together with a small proportion of soap, is heated, and the wool is immersed in it at a temperature rather above blood heat—in order to remove from it the animal grease. The wool is then handed over to a person called "a swiller," who places it in a large open wire basket, and moves it backwards and forwards in a running brook, by which means the grease, already loosened by the previous operation, is effectually removed. Great attention is requisite to the temperature and the due admixture of the soap and seg; for if it be too warm, or not properly mixed, the wool would become hard and "stringy." This work is performed by men. The price for cleansing a pack, or 240lbs. of wool, is 2*s.* 6*d.*; the time required is about five hours, or two packs in a day; and the respective earnings of the scourer and the swiller, who share equally, would be 15*s.* per week.

Dyeing.

Dyeing.—If the piece of cloth is to be "wool-dyed," this process is now performed; if "piece-dyed," the woven material is sent to the dyers. The wool after being cleansed is sent to the public dyers. Some few of the larger manufacturers dye their own wools. The price paid for woaded medleys is 10*d.* per pound; for wool-dyed blacks 1*s.* 1*d.*; and for blue dye 1*s.* 2*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per pound.

When "piece-dyed," the average price is 4*d.* per yard.

This is the sum paid to the dyers, and not referable to wages.

Twillying.

Twillying.—The wool is now put into a rotatory cylinder armed within with large spikes and teeth, which tear and hollow the wool into small particles, and at the same time separate from it the dust and extraneous matter of the dye-wares. Formerly this labour was done by hand; but the "Devil," the name given to the cylinder, was invented about thirty-five years ago, and displaced about 50 per cent. of labour. The work is generally done by a man or full-grown lad. A person can twilly about one pack in a day; the earnings are about 7*s.* per week, and the cost of the machine, when new, is from 20*l.* to 40*l.*, according to the size.

Beating.

*Beating and Picking.**—The wool is beaten with wooden rods by women, after which it is placed on a wire screen or hurdle, and patted with the hands, so as to

* "Cloth that commeth from the weving is not comely to wear
Till it be fulled under fote, or on fulling stocks;
Washen well with water, and with tazels cratched,
Souked and teynted, and under Taylour's hande."—*Visions of Pier's Plowman*, fol. 84.

Process of Manufacture.

cleanse the wool from every particle of burs and pitch, or other dirt which falls through the screen. This operation must be carefully done, because, unless the small lumps of pitch so frequently found in wool are removed, injury would be done in the scribbling process by turning the fine wire of the cards, and thus making a groove in the barrel round which they are fastened. This work is performed by women, and their earnings are about 6*s*. per week.

Oiling.

Oiling.—A man now receives the wool and mixes it with Galipoli oil, in the proportion of 3 to 4 lbs. of oil to 20lbs. of wool. The price of oil is sixpence per pound, and the wages are three-halfpence for every 20lbs. weight of wool; and a man can oil twenty score of lbs. in a day, and earn 15*s*. a-week. This is a process more of trust than judgment, inasmuch as the wool is not weighed again till it have become yarn, so that it would be difficult to detect a deficiency; and, as trustworthy, steady men are selected for this work, the wages are proportionably high.

Scribbling.

Scribbling.—The oiler then takes the wool to the scribbling-machine, which is attended by a boy or a girl, who places the wool on a cloth which is called a feeder, from whence it passes between the cylinders of the machine, by which operation the knots or lumps are broken, and the wool is rendered more tough and equal in texture. It leaves the machine in appearance resembling a thin fleece, but the wool is light and scarcely holds together. "Weak as a roller" is a provincial term, implying want of strength. This machine, together with the carding and slubbing machine, came into use about fifty years ago, and displaced male labour about 75 per cent. A scribbling machine would scribble about two packs a-week, and the wages paid for the labour of the boy or girl is about 4*s*. The cost of the machine, a good six-top worker, is about 75*l*., and to clothe it with cards would cost about 75*l*. more.

Carding.

Carding.—This light and gossamer wool is now transferred to a carding machine, which is similar to the scribbling machine in plan and construction, only narrower. The wool is now re-scribbled, or carded in a finer manner; and, instead of leaving the machine in a broad fleece, it presents itself in "rollers," or rolls. In order to secure a regularity in the size of the thread, which is so essential in the future operations of spinning and weaving, this machine is fed in separate quantities of wool, consisting of four ounces each. Carding, as well as scribbling, was formerly done by hand, and, like the scribbling machine, it displaced about 75 per cent. of labour. The work is now done by juvenile labour at 4*s*. a-week wages. This machine, a six-top worker, prepares about a pack per week, and the original cost is 40*l*. for the frame, and the cards would cost about 35*l*. more. The cards last about five to six years.

Spinning.

Spinning.—The rollers are next prepared either for warp or for abb. The warp is the longitudinal thread, and finer in texture than the abb, which is the transverse thread, and which gives the texture to the cloth. This is the case in broad cloth; but the reverse in cassimere. The first process in spinning is called slubbing, which completes the abb for the coarser cloth; but in order to produce the warp or finer thread, or sometimes abb for cassimere or finer goods, the process is carried on another stage, namely, spinning from the jenny, or the mule. It is requisite to use a hollow, or lightly-compressed, or less twisted thread for abb, because it is this thread which yields the principal pile or face in the dressing of cloth: (the chain is sometimes prepared from a coarser wool than the abb).

The slubber attends to the billy, or the jack, a machine which twists and lengthens the rollers into a long weak thread. He is assisted by three or four boys or girls, who dextrously piece the rollers in order to produce this continuous thread.

The slubber is paid a penny a pound, and earns from 12*s*. to 16*s*. a week; the boys earn about 3*s*. 6*d*. a week. The price of the machine is 17*l*.

The spinner receives the naps from the slubber, and spins the threads to the required size for weaving. It is useless to enter into details concerning the jenny or the mule: the latter, however, has in many cases superseded the jenny. It came into use in this district about 1828, and displaced jenny labour about 60 per cent. The cost of the mule, carrying 200 spindles, is 75*l*.; and the spinner earns the same wages as the slubber, namely, 12*s*. to 16*s*. per week. Formerly, when yarn was spun at the farm-houses, the cost per pound was 1*s*. 2*d*.; it is now spun, and better spun, for 1*d*. per pound, and a spinner can earn as much at this reduction as at the higher price, so great are the facilities given by machinery to production.

About thirty or forty years ago the yarn was distributed to various persons at their own dwellings, the families and farm servants used to weave during the evening, and the manufacturers used to employ persons called spinning-house-men, to meet the isolated spinners at various rendezvous for many miles round the county, to select, fortnightly, the spun yarn.

It is presumed that the mule has superseded labour altogether in the proportion of nearly 750 per cent.

Reeling—Is the operation of winding off the naps, and bringing the yarn into skeins. This work is generally performed by girls; their earnings are about 3*s.* a-week.

Process of Manufacture.

Warping.—The yarn is now measured upon the warping bar, in order to fix the length of the chain. It is either a circular frame, or drum, or else two posts with pegs, round which the yarn is placed, stretching from peg to peg. The space between these pegs ought to be 3 yards 3 inches, but in some cases the manufacturer places them wider apart, in order to take a fraudulent advantage of labour, by giving a longer chain than the measure specified. The following illustrates the fraud of long warping bars:—Mr. Saml. M—— had occasion to purchase some cassimeres which he knew were made by a low-paying manufacturer in the vicinity. The cassimeres of this person were found to be 5 yards longer than those manufactured by Mr. M——, and he ascertained that his wages for weaving were 7*s.* less per piece than his; so that this manufacturer not only had the profit on the piece of 7*s.*, but also 5 yards woven for nothing, and also subsequently dressed for nothing: the consequence was that Mr. M—— desired that the pieces of cassimere in his factory should be worked an ell longer, and to be woven at the usual price. The fraudulent scheme of the long-warping bar is said to have been first invented or tried by a manufacturer named Jackson, at Uley, who subsequently failed. The weavers, at his sale, bought the bars, the pins of which were of an enormous circumference, and after a mock ceremony of a trial, whereat the bars were arraigned for being invaders of the public peace, they were sentenced to be burnt forthwith, which was accordingly done, amid much merriment, on Uley Green. The yarn or threads thus stretched form the chain, and the number of threads is in proportion to the intended fineness of the cloth. These threads are counted by the hundred, and form the standard by which the weaver is to be paid; there are 38 threads in a beer, and 5 beers make a hundred.

Reeling.

Warping.

The warping and spooling is done by women, who are paid according to the hundred; the average is about 1*s.* 6*d.* per chain, and a good warper can do a chain in a-day.

The bar costs about 2*l.*, and the circular frame, or drum, about 5*l.*

There is care and art required in warping, as it influences the weaving and dressing operations. Every thread should be at an equal tension, in default of which the ground of the cloth would be uneven.

At every two ells the chain is marked with ruddle, and thus, if the bars are too wide and the weaver is paid by the ell, it will be seen how he is cheated by his employer.

Sizing.

Sizing.—Before the chain can be turned on or fixed to the loom, it must be sized, that is, diluted glue is applied to the threads, which are then beat, and clapped together, like in starching linen.

In most cases the sizing is done at the factory by weekly labour, at 12*s.* a-week; it requires care: some few weavers size their own chains at home; a chain of 38 ells would take about 2½ lbs. of glue at 6*d.* per lb.

Weaving.

Weaving.—The weaver winds the chain to a circular beam at the end of his loom, called the "fore beam;" the threads are then drawn through the "harness," that is, between a certain number of perpendicular worsted loops, which are oiled, and fastened between two wooden rods, top and bottom, dependent from the top of the loom. This "harness" is worked up and down by the foot pedals, and alternately depresses and raises one-half of the number of threads in the chain; each thread of the chain passes through one loop.

The chain is now carried through the slay, an instrument composed of steel reeds, placed together like the teeth of a comb, and between each reed or tooth two threads are drawn for broad work, and four for cassimeres. The slay is made according to the width and hundred of the chain, and is fixed to the beam which the weaver moves backwards and forwards when he shoots the abb from side to side, and beats it firm together. The beam near the weaver is called the nether beam, and round it the weaver winds the cloth as it is made.*

The weaver has an assistant called a quill-winder, who prepares or winds the abb or weft upon a "quill," that is a round turned piece of wood, about four inches long, and which is placed in a shuttle. The shuttle is made of apple-tree, or other

* Montfaucon and Ciampini have described an ancient loom, copied from the illumination of MSS. of the 5th century. It has four treadles, the beam, the windlass, and a slay and harness. Bowditch, in the Ashantee Missions decribes the African loom as being nearly similar to the English loom.

Process of Manufacture.

hard wood; it is about a foot long, and an inch and a quarter wide, hollow in the middle for the quill, tapering at both ends, and tipped with metal. It conveys the abb between the alternate threads of the chain, and the operation of weaving is in principle the same as darning; the threads of the stocking are the chain, and the abb is the thread carried between them by the needle.

The only improvement in the hand-loom occurred about 1796, when the "spring shuttle" was introduced, and became generally adopted, diminishing labour 50 per cent. Previous to this improvement, two men sat in the broad loom, about eleven feet asunder, and threw the shuttle from one to another, but one man now seated in the middle of his loom, throws the spring shuttle from side to side with force and facility.

The outer edges of every piece of cloth have a list border about a nail wide, made of goat hair. This hair is "turned on" with the chain, and passes through the harness and slay, as the chain does, and like it, it receives the abb; the purport of this list is to protect the cloth in the future operations of cutting, milling, dressing, and racking, when it is subjected to much tension. At one of the ends of a piece is woven a head or forrell composed of goat or mohair. It takes about 4 lbs. of goats' hair for the list, and about 1 lb. for the forrell. The best goats' hair comes from Turkey or the Pyrenees.

The wages of the weavers differ, and their earnings constantly vary. Brittle chain, damp weather, frost, all materially affect the weaver's earnings, as they impede his progress.—*See* Wages and Earnings.

The cost of a new hand-loom is about 10*l.* The harness costs about 19*s.*, and the slay 1*l.*, but the slay is generally hired at the rate of 10*d.* a-piece, and very often at $\frac{1}{2}d.$ a-day.

Scouring.

Scouring and Washing.—The woven cloth is now purged or cleansed from the oil, and glue used in sizing and oiling. The cloth is now wetted and covered with a mixture of urine and pig's dung;—the pig, however, must be fed on grains and wash, but no meal: the price for two buckets-full varies from 3*d.* to 4*d.* The cloth is afterwards pressed between two horizontal cylinders, each revolving in a different direction, and it is then finally cleansed with fuller's earth.*

The price of a "Washer" is about 25*l.* It is attended by a millman, whose weekly wages are about 24*s.* a-week. It requires half a-day to scour a piece.

The washer was invented about thirty years ago by Mr. Lewis, of Brimscombe, previous to which it was scoured in the stocks. The washer does not abridge labour.

Burling.

Burling.—The cloth, cleansed and dried, is now taken to the burlers (women), who perch it before a strong light, and pick out irregular threads, and any dirt or filth which may remain in the fabric. The pay is 6*s.* per piece for coloured, and 3*s.* for white: the time requisite to pick or burl a coloured piece is six days, and three for white, equal to 6*s.* per week earnings.

Felting.

Felting or Milling.—After being burled the cloth is saturated with shaved or planed soap and a little water; it is then folded up, or "torqued up," to use the technical term, and placed in a fulling mill. This mill is made of iron, though formerly it was composed of wood: it consists of an upright block, in which are inserted two shafts, called the feet of the stocks, which by alternately moving up and down on the cloth, which is in a semicircular chamber in the block, cause it to revolve till it is properly felted, or become of a proper thickness. It is essential, in order to facilitate the thickenings or milling of the cloth, that it should be kept during this process at a certain and regular temperature. The cloth from the loom generally measures 12 quarters or 3 yards in width, and about 54 yards in length; but when milled and felted, it contracts to 7 quarters, or $1\frac{3}{4}$ yard wide, and 40 yards in length.

The expense of the machine is about 20*l.* A man and a boy can attend about three pair of stocks; the pay is 3*s.* per piece, and out of that sum he pays the boy about 4*s.* per week. The time required to mill a piece is twenty-four working hours for white, and thirty-six working hours for coloured. The quantity of soap required is 7lbs. for white, and 10lbs. for coloured, at sixpence per pound; the soap is found by the manufacturer.

This is a very important branch of the trade, and requires much care.

Roughing.

Roughing and Mozing.—After the cloth has been purged of the soap used in the previous operation of milling and felting, it is then put to the gig-mill, a

* Fuller, in his 'Church History,' p. 110, says, 'Here the Dutchmen found Fuller's earth, a precious treasure, whereof England hath better than all Christendome besides; so that nature may seem to point out our land for the staple of drapery, if the idlenesse of her inhabitants be not the only hindrance thereof.'

machine containing a cylinder about a yard in diameter, covered with teazles, and revolving with great rapidity between two upright posts. Above and below this cylinder are two others, round which the cloth is gradually wound, and, being kept at a certain tension, comes in contact with, or "breasts" the hooks of the teazles in the centre cylinder, whereby the smooth surface or face of the cloth is roughed up, and a pile is thereby produced, which is called the "dress." In the operation of *roughing*, the cloth is torn by the teazle both ways; by *mozing*, it is brushed in one direction. Process of Manufacture.

The expense of a gig-mill, independent of the teazles, is about 45*l.*

A man and a boy generally attend one gig-mill; the wages are 10*s.* per piece; the lad or assistant is paid by the man (about 4*s.* a week, or 3*s.* 6*d.*). The time required is about two days, earnings 30*s.* a-week (from which deduct the boy's wages), nett 26*s.* per week. Some men are paid by time, namely, 4½*d.* an hour.

This is one of the most responsible duties, and requires great skill and judgment; hence, the higher rate of wages paid to the operative.

The teazles fluctuate in price; they are chiefly raised in Somersetshire, requiring a stiff clay soil; they grow about five feet high; the stems are useless. It is a tender plant of the thistle species, requiring much care and manual labour in the maturing. The head is a cone armed with numerous little hooks.

They are sold in packs containing 20,000 heads, and average about 6*l.* Some years ago the crops failed, and the price was 22*l.* per pack, (many in consequence imported from France.) Owing to this enormous high price, the market soon became stocked, and the prices fell to 3*l.*

The cylinder of the gig-mill, when loaded with teazles, contains three staves, or 1500 heads; each staff is 500 heads, and it is calculated that a piece of felted cloth, measuring 40 yards, would consume 6 staves, or 3000 heads of teazles, value 18*s.*

Shearing or Cutting.—This operation is to shear or cut the pile raised by the gig-mill to an even and a close surface. Formerly this operation was performed by shearmen, who passed the shears over the cloth, which was tightly stretched upon an inclined plane. The shears weighed from 30lbs. to 40lbs., and consisted of two blades, one, the larger blade, resting on the cloth, the other, a moveable blade, and nearly perpendicular, worked by the shearer's hand, and at each blow it removed a certain portion of the pile. Shearing.

This labour was performed by two men whose wages were about 24*s.* a-week each man. It was a laborious operation, and only applicable to the coarse manner in which cloth was then manufactured for the market. This plan was superseded about forty years ago by an improved plan, namely, placing the shears in a frame, which travelled over the cloth, and cut or sheared it as by hand.

About fourteen years ago Mr. Lewis, of Brimscombe, invented a new machine for shearing cloth, for which he obtained a patent which has since expired; the first cost was 100*l.*, the price is now 25*l.* This machine is an horizontal iron cylinder, round which is a hollow spiral blade, revolving with great velocity and cutting the pile of the cloth immediately in contact beneath it, and which is stretched upon a horizontal moving frame.

One man and a boy now attend two machines, and they are paid by the piece or kerf; sometimes weekly. A man and a boy can cut a kerf in an hour, that is, traverse the piece under the knife, the pay for which is 2¼*d.*; the man pays the boy 3*d.* out of every shilling.

In former years the cloth was thinly dressed, it was not cut more than six times, but now it is cut fifteen or twenty times.

The shearmen, before the introduction of machines in that department, were notorious for their drunken and careless habits. They would sometimes refuse to work when they knew that their employer was under contract and penalties as to time, unless he gave them drink; and it was to clear themselves from these drunken dictatorial liabilities that the manufacturers eagerly adopted the use of machinery to rid themselves of the shearmen.

Patenting in Hot Boilers.—This plan was adopted about fifteen years ago. It is an operation which gives the cloth a permanent gloss, preventing it from taking the rain spots, &c. The cloth is tightly rolled round cylinders and then immersed in water for twenty-four hours at 180° Fahrenheit. The cost of the machine is about 10*l.*, and average cost of labour per piece would be about 1*s.* Patenting.

Drying.—The cloth is now stretched upon tenters or racks (in open fields generally), to be dried. The pile is brushed or mozed, and the price of wages is about 1*s.* per piece. Drying.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A Miles*, Esq.

TRADE.

Process of Manufacture.

Picking.

Drawings.

Marking.

Picking.—The cloth is hung over a beam called a perch, where it is carefully examined against a strong light by women who remove all blemishes, white threads, &c., &c., by means of an iron picker, or sharp pointed tweezer. It takes about a day to examine a piece, and the pay is 1*s.*

Drawings.—The cloth is now sent to the cloth drawers, who examine the piece and fine-draw any hole or break in the fabric. The earnings are about 2*s.* a-day.

Marking.—Close to the forrell or head end of the cloth, it is customary to mark in white or yellow silk the fabric of the cloth, such as "Saxony," &c. &c. &c., and also the number of the piece. Every chain is numbered and entered in the books of the weaving department when given out. It is inserted or sewn into the forrell by the weaver, and this number is the means of constant reference to the piece. The earnings of the markers are about 12*s.* a-week.

Brushing.

Brushing, Mozing, or Mossing.—The pile is again brushed between many cylinders set with brush bristles; by this operation the pile is regularly laid, and the final dressing is given to the fabric.

Pressing.

Pressing.—The cloth is now placed in a press (generally an hydraulic press, which costs about 70*l.*). Between each fold of the cloth is placed a peculiar sort of glazed paper called press papers costing about 1*s.* each paper, but they serve for many years; between each piece of cloth are two iron plates, each one-half the width of the cloth, and if the cloth is required to be "hot-pressed," these plates are heated. Patenting, however, in hot water, supersedes the process of hot-pressing, which only gives a gloss, but renders the cloth more liable to spot. The earnings of the pressers are about 10*s.* to 12*s.* a-week.

A piece of cloth, or two ends (1800 make), containing forty saleable yards, requires about 2½ lbs. of wool, and the average price might be about 3*s.* 6*d.* per lb., equal to 17*l.* 10*s.* 4*d.* The labour to produce that piece would average about 5*l.* 12*s.* The materials used and consumed, such as teazles, oil, soap, amounts to 2*l.* 16*s.* 10*d.* Rent, and wear and tear, may be reckoned at 18*s.* per piece. The usual width of broads is from six to seven quarters: the narrows are half the width.

In centesimal proportions labour is 17 per cent. on the cost; the materials used are about 64 per cent.; and rent about 3 per cent. On coarser cloth, where less material or inferior material is used, labour forms a much greater portion than in the finer cloth above alluded to.

In reference to the decrease of wages of labour I submit the following table:—

STATEMENT of the AVERAGE EARNINGS of different CLASSES of WORKPEOPLE connected with the Manufacture of WOOLLEN CLOTH, in the County of GLOUCESTER, from the Year 1808 to 1838, showing the Decrease per Cent. in the Wages of each Class.

Wages from 1808 to 1838.

DESCRIPTION OF WORKPEOPLE.	By whom the labour is performed.	AMOUNT OF EARNINGS.							
		1808 to 1815.	1816 to 1818.	1819 to 1828.	1829 to 1835.	1836.	1837.	1838.	Total Decrease per Cent.
		s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	
1. Sorters	Men	30 0	30 0	30 0	30 0	30 0	30 0	30 0	
2. Scourers	Men	15 0	15 0	14 0	13 0	13 0	13 0	13 0	13
3. Beaters and Pickers	Women	8 0	7 0	6 0	6 0	5 6	5 6	5 6	31
4. Engine Man	Men	..	..	24 0	24 0	24 0	24 0	24 0	
5. Feeders to Scribblers	Children	4 0	4 0	3 6	3 0	3 0	3 0	3 0	25
6. „ „ Carders	Children	4 0	4 0	3 6	3 6	3 6	3 6	3 6	12·5
7. Roller Joiners	Children	3 0	3 0	3 0	3 0	2 6	2 6	2 0	34
8. Slubber or Abb Spinner	Man	24 0	23 0	22 0	21 0	20 0	20 0	20 0	17
9. Spinner at the jenny	Women	14 0	14 0	12 0	10 0	8 0	7 0	6 0	57
10. Mule Spinners*	Men	..	..	25 0	25 0	22 0	22 0	22 0	12
11. Mule Piecers	Women	..	..	6 0	5 0	5 0	5 0	5 0	18
12. Warpers	Women	10 0	9 0	8 0	7 0	7 0	7 0	7 0	30
13. Master Weavers†	Men / Women	16 0	16 0	13 0	12 0	11 0	10 0	10 0	37·5
14. Millmen	Men	21 0	21 0	20 0	20 0	20 0	20 0	20 0	
15. Burlers	Women	10 0	10 0	10 0	7 0	6 0	6 0	6 0	40
16. Rowers or Roughers	Men	21 0	24 0	24 0	24 0	24 0	24 0	24 0	
17. Dyers	Men	24 0	24 0	20 0	18 0	16 0	14 0	12 0	50
18. Cutters	Men	21 0	20 0	20 0	18 0	16 0	14 0	13 0	38
19. Brushers	Men	15 0	15 0	15 0	14 0	14 0	14 0	14 0	7
20. Markers and Drawers	Women	10 0	10 0	9 0	9 0	8 0	8 0	8 0	20
21. Pressers and Packers	Men	18 0	18 0	16 0	14 0	13 0	13 0	13 0	28

* The mules have superseded the jennies.

† The factory weaver averages about 11*s.* 9*d.* per week, and the out-door master weaver 8*s.* 1*d.* Average of the two, 9*s.* 11*d.*, including all play or waiting time.

It will be seen, on reference to the preceding table, that out of the twenty-one different working classes engaged in the manufacture of cloth only four classes have continued at the same rate of wages, namely, the sorter, the engine-man, the rougher or rower, and the millman. The reason of this is, that much depends upon the judgment and skill of these operations: the sorters, moreover, by combination, prevent the influx of too many hands, and require a person to have been a given time with a master sorter before he can enter the trade or calling. The next class who have suffered the least reduction are the brusher, 7 per cent., and the scourers, 13 per cent.: these operations also require skill and judgment. In none of the above-mentioned branches does female compete with male labour; but in the next decrease, namely 17 per cent., is the slubber. Here we find the effect of machinery and female labour; for when the mules were invented the jenny-spinners fell into the slubbing market of labour; and numbers were also displaced by female labour at the jennies; so that the slubbers would probably have remained nearly stationary but for these causes. The overstock of labour in the work at the spinning jennies is caused by the mule, and proved by the excessive decrease of wages, namely, 57 per cent.

The decrease per cent. on labour, in reference to the different classes, will be better shown in the following manner:—

Sorters,
Engine-men,
Roughers,
Mill-men,
} no decrease.

Male Labour.			Female Labour.			Juvenile Labour.		
Brusher,	7	pr. ct. decrease.	Mule Piecer,	18	per cent.	Carder Boy,	12·5	per ct.
Mule Spinner,	12	„	Marker,	20	„	Scribbler Boy,	25	„
Scourer,	13	„	Warper,	30	„	Roller Joiner,	34	„
Slubber,	17	„	Beater,	31	„			
Packer,	28	„	Weaver,	37·5	„			
Weaver,	37·5	„	Burler,	40	„			
Cutter,	38	„	Jenny Spinner,	57	„			
Dyer,	50	„						

From this it will be seen that the average decrease of wages is thus:—More than 33 per cent. on female labour, more than 25 per cent. on male labour, and less than 24 per cent. on youthful labour.

I found great difficulty in arriving at the actual earnings of a weaver. I allude more especially to the out-door weaver. The men have always endeavoured to depreciate their condition before me, and the masters to make it appear better. I have been supplied with the wages nominally given and paid to the weaver; but even this is no proof, because different masters make various deductions; and my object has been to ascertain how much a weaver (when he has finished his chain) puts into his pocket, for food, rent, rates, &c. &c. &c. I therefore obtained the deductions of each master, and I refer you to the tables of wages, under the head of "wages and earnings." *Vide* page 390.

The weavers have a great objection that any person should know in what time they can weave a chain. There is a regulation existing among the men in one factory that no weaver should take his cloth in under ten days: this feeling proves the effect of a surplus population; for it is founded on the dread that if employers find a man can earn more in a given time than is actually required for subsistence, their wages will be inevitably lowered. Other trades are not at the mercy of their masters; nor would the weaver dread the fiat of his employer as to wages, if, like other trades, there was no surplus of labour.

It is this surplus of labour that would render any board of trade abortive, and not only ineffectual but even injurious to the weaver, inasmuch as the result of such a measure would be to lower wages, and render his condition still more deplorable; for if the actions of such a board interfered with the manufacturer, he would introduce steam, and dispense with the services of the weaver.

The following is a table of the number of power, the number of hand-looms employed in the different factories in the county of Gloucester, together with the number of weavers employed both in hand and power-looms:—

Name of the Manufacturer.	Name of Mill.	Power-Looms, by Steam and Water.		Hand-Looms.		Totals.		
		Employed.	Unemployed.	Employed.	Unemployed.	Total number of Steam & Water-power Looms.	Total number of Hand-Looms.	General total of Looms.
		At the time of Inquiry.		At the time of Inquiry.				
Apperley, J. and D.	Dudbridge Mills	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Austin, H.	Alderley ,,	..	..	27	32	..	59	59
Barnard and Son	Nailsworth ,,	2	..	38	31	2	69	71
Bowerbank, D.	Capels ,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brown and Tucker	Lightpill ,,	..	..	..	2	..	2	2
Cam, J. T.	Cam ,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Counsell and Co.	Nind ,,	..	..	10	10	..	20	20
Cumley, George	Nibley ,,	..	..	8	..	..	8	8
Dartnall, Henry	Cam ,,	..	..	13	3	..	16	16
Dauncey, James	Uley ,,	..	..	15	..	..	15	15
Davies, R. S. and Co.	Stonehouse ,,	..	..	18	..	..	18	18
Derrett, R.	Wootton ,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Derrett, R., Jun.	Ditto ,,	..	..	22	4	..	26	26
Fletcher, H. and Son	Mead ,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Fluck, William	Pitchcombe ,,	3	..	33	2	3	35	38
Francis and Flint	Frogmarsh ,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Gazard, Cornelius	Nibley ,,	..	..	2	6	..	8	8
Harris, S. and Co.	Dursley ,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Helme, W. and Co.	New ,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Hooper, C. and Co.	Eastington ,,	..	..	59	..	..	59	59
Howard Brothers	Dursley ,,	..	..	13	2	..	15	15
Howard, John, Jun.	Ditto ,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Hunt, William	Dye-House ,,	8	..	22	..	8	22	30
Jones, Nathaniel	Chalford ,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Lewis and Dutton	Wootton ,,	..	..	42	8	..	50	50
Lewis, W. and Co.	Brimscombe ,,	1	..	31	29	1	60	61
Lewis, John F.	Oil ,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Long, S. and W.	Charfield ,,	..	..	16	..	..	16	16
Marling, J. F.	Ebley ,,	..	..	42	29	..	71	71
Marling, N. S.	Vatch ,,	6	..	55	..	6	55	61
Marling, T. and S.	Ham ,,	45	..	17	12	45	29	74
Partridge, J. and Co.	Bowbridge ,,	..	..	1	1	..	2	2
Playne and Smith	Dunkirk ,,	2	..	67	4	2	71	73
Playne, W. and Co.	Longford ,,	1	..	80	10	1	90	91
Smith, R. P. and Co.	Stroud ,,	4	..	..	..	4	..	4
Smith, Samuel	Uley ,,	..	..	2	2	..	4	4
Stanton and Sons	Stroud ,,	24	4	67	21	28	88	116
Stephens, C. and Co.	Stanley ,,	..	..	90	10	..	100	100
Webb, John	Bourne ,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
White, Mr.	Monks ,,	..	..	8	6	..	14	14
Wight, J. and Co.	Sheepscomb ,,	..	..	8	..	..	8	8
Wise, Mr.	Bonds ,,	1	..	..	..	1	..	1
Woodwark and Bird	Southfields ,,	..	..	18	6	..	24	24
	Total	97	4	824	230	101	1054	1155

The following is an analysis of the above table:—

FACTORIES.

Statement concerning Power-Looms, Shop Hand-Looms, number of Weavers, &c. &c. &c.

Of 43 manufacturers, 11 employ power-looms; the total number of power-looms is 101, and the first introduction was in 1836.

The total number of persons employed on these power-looms are 18 men, 72 women, and 11 children; total number of persons engaged in weaving and attending to 101 power-looms, 101.

Period of the Introduction of Power-Looms.	Number of Weavers thrown out of Employ by Steam or Water-power.	Average Number of Weavers Employed in: Steam and Water-power Looms. Men.	Women.	Children.	Total employed by Power.	Hand-Looms. Men.	Women.	Children.	Total employed by Hand.	General Total.	Average number of the Hundreds in the Chain, Woven by: Steam and Water.	Hand.
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	27	..	..	27	27	..	..
Jan., 1838.	1	1	..	2	3	54	15	..	69	72	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1300
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	10	..	..	10	10	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1800 1300
..	..	..	..	..	..	12	1	..	13	13	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	15	..	..	15	15	..	1300
..	..	..	..	..	..	18	..	..	18	18	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	16	6	1	23	23	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1800
May, 1838.	..	1	4	9	14	30	8	..	38	52	1800	1500
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1300
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1400
..	..	..	..	..	..	52	7	..	59	58	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	9	4	8	21	21	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1700
Jan., 1836.	..	5	3	..	8	7	15	..	22	30	1600	1600
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
..	..	..	..	..	..	26	15	1	42	42	..	1800
..	..	1	..	..	1	31	16	15	62	62	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	16	..	7	23	23	..	1700
..	..	..	..	..	..	25	17	30	72	72	..	1800 1300
Oct., 1838.	..	..	..	..	..	55	..	..	55	55	1800	1800
Sept., 1836.	..	..	45	..	45	17	4	..	21	66	1800	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1300
March, 1838.	..	1	1	..	2	40	27	..	67	69	1800	1800
March, 1838.	..	1	..	..	1	70	10	..	80	81	1800	1600
Dec., 1837.	..	3	1	..	4	..	..	..	..	4	1800	..
..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	2	4	4	..	1800
July, 1836.	7	5	18	..	23	67	..	..	67	90	1800	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	70	20	42	132	132	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
..	..	..	..	..	..	8	5	..	13	13	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	8	4	4	16	16	..	1800
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1800
April, 1837.	..	..	..	..	..	10	8	6	24	24	..	1500
..	..	..	..	..	..							
	8	18	72	11	101	694	184	116	994	1094		

3 manufacturers have	. .	1 loom each	. .	total 3
2	,,	2	,,	,, 4
1	,,	3	,,	,, 3
1	,,	4	,,	,, 4
1	,,	6	,,	,, 6
1	,,	8	,,	,, 8
1	,,	28	,,	,, 28
1	,,	45	,,	,, 45
11 number of manufacturers.				101 total number of looms.

The hundred made by power is 1800, except in one case, where it is applied to 1600.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

TRADE.

Hand-Looms in Factories.

Of 43 manufacturers, 29 have hand-looms in their shop factories. The total number of shop-looms is 1054; of which 824 were employed at the period of the returns, and 230 were unemployed. The employed looms afford labour to 694 men weavers, 184 women, and 116 children.

Manufacturers employing looms.	Total.	Manufacturers employing looms.	Total.
2 2	4	1 29	29
1 4	4	1 35	35
3 8	24	1 50	50
1 14	14	1 55	55
2 15	30	2 59	118
2 16	32	1 60	60
1 18	18	1 69	69
1 20	20	2 71	142
1 22	22	1 88	88
1 24	24	1 90	90
1 26	26	1 100	100
		Total amount of shop-looms .	1054

Total number of power-looms 101
„ „ hand-looms 1054

1155 total of looms in factories.

In conclusion I submit the following tables of the value of mill property in the different manufacturing districts in the county of Gloucester:—

VALUATION and ASSESSMENT of MILL PROPERTY in the Parish of STROUD.

Name of Mill.	Former Occupier.	Annual Value, 1822.	Assessment, 1822.	Present Annual Value, 1838.	Present Assessment, 1838.	Present Occupier.	REMARKS.
			£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.		
Puck's Hole Mill .	Ellary .	..	68 0 0	42 0 0	31 0 0		
Sands „ .	Stanton .	..	77 0 0	100 0 0	75 0 0	Void	
Arundell's „ .	Gordon .	..	138 0 0	230 0 0	172 10 0	Smith & Co.	
„ „ .	„	..	18 0 0				
Capel's „ .	Capel .	..	177 0 0	230 0 0	172 10 0	Bowerbank	
Badbrook „ .	Barnfield	..	87 0 0	70 0 0	52 10 0		
Toadsmore „ .	Evans .	..	39 0 0	120 0 0	90 0 0	Evans	
„ „ .	„	..	48 0 0				
Winn's „ .	Winn .	..	59 0 0	80 0 0	60 0 0		
Bourne „ .	Harris .	..	115 0 0	200 0 0	150 0 0		
Brimscombe „ .	Lewis .	..	222 0 0	500 0 0	375 0 0	Lewis	
Ham „ .	Wathen .	..	169 0 0	500 0 0	375 0 0	Marling	
Griffin's „ .	Wood .	..	151 0 0	280 0 0	210 0 0	Baylis . .	Timber Cutting
Stafford's „ .	Stanton .	..	226 0 0	500 0 0	375 0 0	Stanton	
Mason's at Vatch „ .	Mason .	..	66 0 0	120 0 0	105 0 0		
Vatch „ .	Wyatt .	..	110 0 0	475 0 0	356 5 0	N. Marling	
New „ .	Helme .	..	130 0 0	130 0 0	113 15 0	Helme	

Valuation and Assessment of Mill Property in the Parish of Wooton-under-Edge, in the Year 1837.

Names of Mills.	Gross Estimated Rental.			Assessment to Poor-Rate.			Present Occupier.
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Folly Mill .	12	0	0	8	0	0	Void
Sym Lane ,, .	12	0	0	8	0	0	Void
Huntingford ,, .	60	0	0	40	0	0	Brinkworth
Park ,, .	90	0	0	60	0	0	John Smith
Old Town ,, .	33	0	0	22	0	0	Henry Beavan
Steep ,, .	120	0	0	80	0	0	Void
Water Lane ,, .	16	10	0	11	0	0	Void
,, ,, .	69	0	0	46	0	0	Thomas Palser
Dudley ,, .	45	0	0	30	0	0	S. and W. Long
Pound's Ground ,, .	74	0	0	49	0	0	Void
,, ,, .	62	10	0	41	13	4	Lewis and Dutton
Holywell ,, .	42	0	0	28	0	0	W. Strange
Monk's ,, .	135	0	0	90	0	0	Thomas White

Valuation and Assessment of Mill Property in the Parish of Woodchester, in the Year 1838.

Name of Mill.	Annual Value.			Assessment to Poor-Rates.			Present Occupier.
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Woodchester Mill .	300	0	0	240	0	0	Void
Southfields and Churches ,, .	250	0	0	190	0	0	Woodwark and Bird
Frogmarsh ,, .	180	0	0	135	0	0	Francis and Flint
Playne's Little ,, .	90	0	0	75	0	0	Playne and Co.

Valuation and Assessment of Mill Property in the Parish of Minchin Hampton.

Name of Mill.	Present Rental.			Assessment to Poor-Rates.			Present Occupier.
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
Holcombe Mill .	207	0	0	138	0	0	Barnard and Son
Longford's ,, .	573	0	0	382	10	0	Playne and Co.
Addition to Do. ,, .	33	15	0	22	10	0	,,
Iron ,, .	99	0	0	66	0	0	,,
Brimscombe ,, .	157	10	0	105	0	0	W. Lewis
St. Mary's ,, .	247	10	0	165	0	0	Samuel Clutterbuck
Wimberley ,, .	90	0	0	60	0	0	John Webbs
Dark Mill ,, .	60	15	0	40	10	0	Thomas Jones
Spring's ,, .	157	10	0	105	0	0	N. and J. Jones
Ballinger's ,, .	121	10	0	81	0	0	H. and J. Davis
Barnard's ,, .	261	0	0	174	0	0	Barnard and Son
Haycock's ,, .	108	0	0	72	0	0	William Hunt
Dunkirk ,, .	405	0	0	270	0	0	P. Playne and Smith
Addition to Do. ,, .	11	5	0	7	0	0	,,
Dye House ,, .	38	5	0	25	10	0	William Hunt
Iles ,, .	121	10	0	81	0	0	Thomas Jones

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

TRADE.

VALUATION and ASSESSMENT of MILL PROPERTY in the Parish of RODBOROUGH

Name of Mill.	Old Valuation.	Present Valuation.	Old Assessment.	Present Assessment.
	£. s. d.			
King's Mill .	138 18 0			
Halliday's ,, .	119 5 10			
Additional Do. .	53 11 6			
Lodgemore ,, .	210 8 0			
Smith's ,, .	135 14 3			
Lightpill ,, .	112 17 1			
Frigg's Mill ,, .	66 15 9			
Rooksmoor ,, .	98 18 9			
Hope ,, .	164 2 0			

VALUATION and ASSESSMENT of MILL PROPERTY in the Parish of ULEY.

Name of Mill.	Valuation in 1831.	Assessment in 1831.	Valuation in 1838.	Assessment in 1838.	REMARKS.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	
Sheppard's Mill .	513 0 0	342 13 4	90 0 0	72 0 0	Void, except a part used as an Iron Foundry.
Dauncey's ,, .	130 0 0	93 6 8	90 0 0	72 0 0	In occupation by Mr. Dauncey.
Adey's ,, .	181 0 0	120 0 0	50 0 0	72 0 0	Partly occupied by Mr. S. Smith.
Jeen's ,, .	48 12 0	32 8 0	Void.	Void.	
Leonard's ,, .	107 11 0	71 14 0	70 0 0	52 0 0	Now used as a corn-mill and sawing mill by Mr. Leonard.

The following is an ALPHABETICAL LIST of the PRINCIPAL MANUFACTURERS of WOOLLEN CLOTHS in the County of GLOUCESTER:—

Name.	Address.	Name.	Address.
Apperley, J. and D. . .	Dudbridge Mills	Jeens, Henry	Uley
Austin, H.	Alderley Mills	Jones, Nathaniel . . .	Chalford
Barnard and Son . . .	Nailsworth ditto	Jones, Thomas . . .	Ditto
Bowerbank, D. . . .	Capel's Mill	Lewis and Dutton . . .	Wootton
Brown and Tucker. . .	Lightpill ditto	Lewis, J. F.	Ebley Oil Mill
Cam, J. T.	Cam Mills	Long, S. and W. . . .	Charville
Cox, Daniel	Chalford	Marling, John . . .	Ebley Mills
Counsell and Co. . . .	Nind Mill	Marling, N. S. . . .	Vatch Mills
Cripps, Messrs. . . .	Cirencester	Marling, T. and S. . .	Ham Mills
Cumley, George . . .	North Nibley	Palling, William . . .	Painswick
Dartnall, H.	Cam Mills	Partridge, Joseph . . .	Bowbridge
Dauncey, James . . .	Uley	Playne and Smith . . .	Dunkirk Mills
Davies, R. S. and Co. . .	Stonehouse	Playne, W. and Co. . .	Longford Mills
Derrett, R.	Wootton	Shipway, Thomas . . .	Badbrook
Derrett, R., jun. . . .	Ditto	Smart, William . . .	Chalford
Fletcher, H. and Son . .	Mead Mill	Smith, R. P. and Co. . .	Wallbridge
Fluck, William . . .	Pitchcombe	Stanton and Sons . . .	Stafford's Mill
Foxwell, Mr.	Painswick	Stephens, C. and Co. . .	Stanley Mills
Francis and Flint . . .	Frogmarsh	Wathen, Joseph . . .	Rock Mills
Harris, S. and Co. . .	Dursley	Webb, John	Wimberley Mill
Helme, W. and M. . .	New Mills	White, W.	Monk's Mill
Hooper, Charles . . .	Eastington Mills	Wight, Messrs. . . .	Sheepscombe
Howard Brothers . . .	Dursley	Wise, Mr.	Bond's Mill
Howard, John, jun. . .	Ditto	Woodwark and Bird . .	Southfield's Mills
Hunt, William . . .	Dye House Mills		

List of the Principal Manufacturers of Woollen Cloth in the different Districts in the County of Gloucester.

District.	Name of Manufacturer.	Address.
CHALFORD	Cox, Daniel	Chalford
	Jones, Nathaniel	Ditto
	Jones, Thomas	Ditto
	Smart	Ditto
	Webb, John	Ditto
CIRENCESTER	Cripps, Messrs.	Cirencester
DURSLEY	Cam, J. T.	Cam Mills
	Cumley, George	North Nibley
	Dartnall, Henry	Cam
	Dauncey, James	Uley
	Harris, S., and Co.	Dursley
	Howard Brothers	Ditto
	Howard, John, jun.	Ditto
	Jeens, Henry	Uley
NAILSWORTH	Barnard and Son	Nailsworth
	Brown and Tucker	Lightpill Mills
	Francis and Flint	Frogmarsh ditto
	Hunt, William	Dyehouse ditto
	Playne, W., and Co.	Longford's ditto
	Playne and Smith	Dunkirk ditto
	Woodwark and Bird	Southfield's ditto
PAINSWICK	Foxwell	Painswick
	Palling, William	Ditto
	Wight, Messrs.	Sheepscomb
STONEHOUSE	Davies, R. S., and Co.	Stonehouse
	Fletcher, H., and Co.	Mead Mill
	Hooper, Charles	Eastington
	Lewis, J. F.	Oil Mills
	Marling, J. F.	Ebley Mills
	Stephens, C., and Co.	Stanley Mills
	Wise	Bond's Mill
STROUD	Apperley, J. and D.	Dudbridge Mills
	Bowerbank, D.	Capel's Mill
	Fluck, William	Pitchcombe
	Helme, W. and M.	New Mills
	Marling, N. S.	Vatch Mills
	Marling, T. and S.	Ham Mills
	Partridge, Joseph, and Co.	Bowbridge
	Shipway, Thomas	Badbrook
	Smith, R. P., and Co.	Wallbridge
	Stanton and Sons	Stafford's Mill
	Wathen, Joseph	Rock Mills
WOOTTON-UNDER-EDGE	Austin, Humphrey	Alderley
	Counsell and Millman	Kingswood
	Derrett	Wootton
	Derrett, jun.	Ditto
	Lewis and Dutton	Ditto
	Long, S. and W.	Charville
	White, T.	Monk's Mill

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Wages.

WAGES.

I have already stated that every step of inquiry in the woollen fabrics involves a contradiction. The following remarks upon wages, and subsequently on the state of the trade, will confirm the assertion.

The amount of wages paid for any specified hundred is no criterion of earnings, because good or bad yarn requires more or less time, and the weaver is paid piece-work, and not time wages.

Amount of Wages no proof of Amount of Earnings.

I have returns from two factories, where, on the same work, one pays 2*l.* 3*s.*, and the other 1*l.* 8*s.*, and yet the weekly earnings of some of the best workmen under the lower-priced master are as much as the average of the higher-priced manufacturer: then again the nominal amount of wages is no criterion of the weaver's actual earnings, because some manufacturers, under the pretence of paying good wages, impose heavy and arbitrary deductions. Factory weavers have frequently stated their wages in the gross amount, and then say, "*Out of that we pay our master 5d. in the shilling*," besides 3*s.* per loom, and 6*d.* for light, weekly, as the case may be. This is a method calculated to confuse all inquiries, and even the weaver. Some manufacturers pay a certain sum clear of all deductions, but this is not usual in the district.

The weaver whose wages per piece are higher may earn less money, not through idleness or want of skill, but on account of the tenderness of the chain, or the fineness of the abb; in one case taking more time to piece, and in the other more shoots in an inch, consequently more time is required, while a man at lower wages, with firmer and thicker abb, may earn a greater amount with less labour.

This is one of the most serious and unavoidable evils against which the weaver has to contend, because, when he takes a chain, the uncertainty of the period to weave it causes an uncertainty in the amount of his earnings.

The amount of earnings, moreover, depends upon the period that a weaver may have to wait between each chain, owing to the occasional scarcity of work.

The earnings, however, of the factory weaver I have correctly ascertained from the books of the employers. Average all the year round 11*s.* 9¾*d.* weekly. Some men average 17*s.* a-week, and occasionally earn 1*l.*

The earnings of the out-door weaver cannot be so easily obtained, because his work is less regular than in the factory, and he may obtain chain from different manufacturers.

The amount of earnings is therefore best obtained by averages.

Test of Earnings by Averages.

The average length of a chain, cassimere and broad, is 54 yards, or 1944 inches; there are 50 shoots in an inch; upon the average "make," a quick and steady workman will throw the shuttle, that is, place 30 shoots in a minute, so that if the threads did not break, and his arm went with the regularity of steam, a piece of cloth would be woven in 54 hours; but the average time is 150 hours, so that 96 hours of the time are occupied in piecing and attending to the loom.

S. Pearce, a weaver of Chalford, complained of the brittleness of chain, which he says makes a difference of nearly a quarter of his time, and a consequent diminution of his earnings. Edward Smith, a weaver at Wootton-under-Edge, makes a similar observation.

In corroboration of these remarks I quote the following evidence upon the quantity of cloth that a man *can* weave. Some of the cases I admit to be extreme, but they will lead to a general average. The evidence of Thomas Cole, a weaver, is clear and satisfactory. He also states that weavers endeavour to conceal from their employers the time that is required to weave a chain, as they imagine it would tend to the reduction of wages. I have invariably found the same feeling among the weavers; and, in nearly every case, directly I touched upon the subject of the requisite time or average period to weave a chain, the most extreme cases have been cited in order to mislead me. Many aver that a month is the average time to weave a chain. This, however, is not the case, 20 days being the average time for the out-door weaver, and 15 for the factory weaver.

"Thomas Cole, a weaver, says that a man, by close application for one hour, could weave 6 nails of 1800 work, 50 shoots to the inch, but to do this the chain must be very good; con-

siders it would be more than a man would do for 10 hours consecutively, yet a good workman might do it in that time, which would be equal to 4 yards a day, but it must be good work to accomplish this.

"Formerly the weavers were jealous that a manufacturer should know how quick the work *could* be done, but the weavers cannot now help themselves, as the manufacturer has his looms at home. In the factories more work is done, as the men are emulating each other, which was not the case when they worked at home. Looms are in much better order in the shop factories than they were at the houses of the weavers; people years ago had not the notion of putting them in order; a man can earn more now at a loom than formerly, from the improvements in the tackle; at a good loom three-fourths of a yard more may be now woven than could formerly; there is no stopping in the improved looms to wind the cloth on the nether beam, it being done by weights regulating both the fore and the nether beam. The weavers did not like the masters to know in what time a chain could be woven, because they considered if the master knew that they could earn a given sum in a short time, the price of the next chain would be lowered.

"Does not think the work is done better in the factory, but the men *are better off* than when they worked at the master-weavers'; their tools are kept better in order, and the work more regular; has been a factory weaver, but did not continue, in consequence of some strife with the foreman; was formerly a master weaver, and kept two looms, but went into the factory because his emyloyer put out but little work.

"The greatest injury, witness thinks, in the factory system, is the walking to and fro to the shop; but the men do earn more money than they could out; in short, they settle their minds more to work than ever they did under the old system; they did not use to be so active at work in the master weavers' houses; they often would get out of the loom and daudle their time, and have a drop of beer, &c. Thinks the factory system has given the men more settled habits, and there is not so much time spent in the public-houses as used to be; has heard many of the shop weavers say that if the wages were a little higher, they would be much more content to work in a factory than out of it; has heard many of the men who work for Mr. Playne say so; Isaac Kaynton and Joseph Cole, my son, are of the same opinion."

Mr. Weeks, at Stanley Mills, says,—

A good weaver, not an extraordinary one, if he has good white felt chain, can weave six yards a day: he could do this work all the year round without bodily injury, if such chain could be given to him, but it is rare to have such chain. The same man on another chain, though working as industriously, might not weave more than three yards; the greatest impediment in bad chain is the tenderness and irregularity of the thread. On average chain he would weave four yards a-day; there are many weavers who do this amount of work daily, but they are not general, say one in ten; some are sickly, some are less skilful in the work, and the generality have not that quickness and energy which other classes of labouring men possess. The weavers are a listless set, which is attributable in some measure to the undisciplined manner in which they were first trained to work."

Mr. Peter Playne, an extensive manufacturer, says,—

"That in consequence of the improvements in the loom of the fly shuttle, one man can now do more in 10 hours than two could formerly do in 12 hours. Formerly two men worked in a loom, and shared the amount of their wages between them—say 2*l.* for a Spanish stripe. He states that he has timed the number of shoots in the present loom, and found them to be repeatedly from 45 to 48, and even 50, in a minute."

This, however, cannot be a fair criterion of labour, as the weaver would work under the immediate glance of his master at a more furious rate than he could maintain for a lengthened period.

As to the amount of earnings, it is requisite to observe that there are three different classes of weavers; 1st, the shop-loom weaver; 2nd, the out-door master-weaver; 3rd, the out-door journeyman weaver; and the average earnings of each class vary.

1*st.*—*Factory, or Shop-loom Weavers.*

The following is a statement of the average amounts of prices paid by the manufacturers for weaving a piece of 54 yards, or 36 ells, long (1,800 felt and 1,400 cassimeres).—*Vide* Tables of Wages, page 390:—

Coloured	£2	0	0
White	1	12	7½
Cassimeres	1	11	7
	3)5	4	2½
Average . .	£1	14	8¾ say £1 14 9

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Wages.

There are various deductions to be made from these sums, such as winding, &c. These expenses average thus :—

Coloured . 6*s.* 10*d.* | White . 4*s.* 11*d.* | Cassimeres . 3*s.* 11¾*d.*
Average of deductions . . . . . 5*s.* 3*d.*

Shop-loom Weavers' Earnings per week.

Price Paid by Manufacturer per Piece of 36 Ells.	Deductions, &c. &c., per Piece.	Net Sum Earned per Piece.	Net Amount Earned per Week, Averaging 15 Days to a Piece.
£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Coloured . . 2 0 0	6 10	1 13 2	0 13 3
White . . 1 12 7½	4 11¼	1 7 7¾	0 11 0
Cassimeres . 1 11 7	3 11¾	1 7 7¼	0 11 0
3)5 4 2½	3)15 9½	3)4 8 5	3)1 5 3
Averages . 1 14 8¾	5 3	1 9 5¾	Per week 0 11 9

It is proper to observe that, on coloured work, a weaver actually earns less than on white, inasmuch as it requires longer time, and he is not always so long as 15 days weaving white work. I find the average, however, to be correct, as it agrees within three-farthings of the average of factory earnings, supplied by the manufacturers from their wages' books, namely 11*s.* 9¾*d.* *Vide* p. 387.

Mr. Weeks states that—

"A person of common capacity could learn to be a weaver in twelve months as well as in twelve years. He considers that a factory man ought to earn never less than 10*s.* a-week, at 10 hours a-day, that is, 2*d.* per hour, and that in 12 months a person could become sufficient master of his trade to earn that amount."

An agricultural labourer has only 8*s.* a-week, but he has comparative advantages; he may have a pig, some poultry, a plot of ground, and so forth, but the factory weaver must buy everything that he requires, and that too in small quantities, at a consequently heavy price.

Relative to the effect of the factory system upon the habits and improvement of the weavers (a system which they invariably deprecate), Mr. Weeks continues to observe—

"The factory system decidedly tends to improve the men, to break through the sluggish habits for which weavers have been so notorious; it tends to make the men at once punctual and industrious. This I know to be the case. Many weavers, to my knowledge, have been taken into shop-factories as indifferently-skilled weavers, and in 12 months have become first-rate weavers, which would never have been the case if they had remained as out-door weavers.

Corroboration of computed Average.

A low-paying manufacturer, near Stroud, informed me, that within the last week his men required an advance of wages, when he offered, instead of paying them by the piece, to pay them weekly wages amounting to 11*s.* per week, at 12 hours a-day, and to allow one hour for meals out of that time. No weaver offered to accept the proposition, or to enter into any bargain of the sort, except one man, who offered to come at 12*s.* a-week wages. The average earnings, I calculate, for shop-weaving, to be 11*s.* 9*d.* a-week: the offer was below the mark, and I consider that the refusal of the offer confirms my computed average.

2*nd.*—*Out-door Master Weaver.*

The following is a statement of the average amounts of prices paid to out-door weavers, by the manufacturer, for weaving 1,800 felts and 1,400 cassimeres (the usual hundreds made in the district) :—

Coloured, 36 ells	£2 4 9
White, 36 ells	1 17 0
Cassimeres	1 12 0
	3)5 13 9
Average per piece . .	£1 17 11

There are, however, many deductions to be made from these respective sums, which must be incurred by the master weaver before he can return his chain as cloth, such as glue, winding, hire of stay, candles, &c. &c. &c., and the average of these deductions are—

7*s.*	0*d.*	on coloured chains,
6	$2\frac{1}{2}$	on white,
3	$7\frac{1}{2}$	on cassimere.
3)16	10	
5	$7\frac{1}{4}$	Average deductions on a piece;

Or thus, in tabular form:—

Out-door Master Weavers average Earnings per week when in work.

Price paid by Manufacturer per Piece of 36 Ells.				Deductions.		Net amount per Piece earned by Master Weaver.			Net Amount Earned per Week, Averaging 20 Days to a Piece.		
	£.	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	£.	*s.*	*d.*	£.	*s.*	*d.*
Coloured	2	4	9	7	0	1	17	9	0	11	3
White	1	17	0	6	$2\frac{1}{2}$	1	10	$9\frac{1}{2}$	0	9	3
Cassimeres	1	12	0	3	$7\frac{1}{2}$	1	8	$4\frac{1}{2}$	0	8	6
	3)5	13	9	3)16	10	3)4	16	11	3)1	9	0
Averages	1	17	11	5	$7\frac{1}{4}$	1	12	4	Per week 0	9	8

3rd.—Journeyman Out-door Weaver.

There is, however, another class of weaver, namely, the journeyman, who works for the master weaver, and suffers a deduction of fivepence in the shilling, which the master weaver charges for winding, rent of loom, harness, stay, candles, &c. &c. &c. This deduction is made from the gross amount paid by the manufacturer, and the wages of the journeyman are as follow:—

Out-door Journeyman Weaver's average Earnings per week, when in work.

Amount paid by Manufacturer.				Deductions of 5*d.* in 1*s.*			Net Amount received by Journeymen.			Net Amount Earned per Week, Averaging 20 Days to a Piece.		
	£.	*s.*	*d.*	£.	*s.*	*d.*	£.	*s.*	*d.*	£.	*s.*	*d.*
Coloured	2	4	9	0	18	$7\frac{3}{4}$	1	6	$1\frac{1}{2}$	0	7	$10\frac{3}{4}$
White	1	17	0	0	15	5	1	1	7	0	6	$4\frac{1}{2}$
Cassimeres	1	12	0	0	13	4	0	18	8	0	5	$7\frac{1}{2}$
	3)5	13	9	3)2	7	$4\frac{3}{4}$	3)3	6	$4\frac{1}{2}$	3)0	19	$10\frac{3}{4}$
Averages	1	17	11	15	10		1	2	$1\frac{1}{2}$	Per week 0	6	$7\frac{1}{2}$
				Say 42 per cent.								

The above averages of prices paid, and the deductions, are calculated from the returns of prices and deductions made, chiefly from personal inquiry of every manufacturer in the district.—See Table of Wages, pages 390 and 391.

The deductions of the master weaver, of five pence out of the shilling in the journeyman's wages, are in the following proportions:—

Deductions.

Quilling	1*d.*
Glue	$0\frac{1}{2}$
Harness and slay	$0\frac{1}{4}$
Rent of loom	$0\frac{1}{2}$
Peckers, bobbins, oil, and shuttle	$0\frac{1}{4}$
Candles	$0\frac{1}{4}$
Firing, in winter	$0\frac{1}{4}$
	3*d.*
To master weaver, for fetching and carrying home work, &c, &c.	2
	5*d.*

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

WAGES.

Mr. Weekes states, that—

"The journeyman is always in so depressed a state, that the moment the master weaver employs him he is obliged to give him his daily food; and hence, in a great degree, the origin of truck. The master weavers, in some cases, have taken as much as 6*d.* out of 1*s.*—always 5*d*; not for the food, which is charged extra, but for rent of loom and technical assistance, such as tying on, quilling, and attending to the loom. The master weaver brings home and carries back the chain, and is responsible for all damages. Mr. Weeks has known master weavers pay 2*l.* and 3*l.* for damages done by journeymen."

Surplus of Out-door Weavers.

Thus far I have been enabled to show you the average amount of earnings, presuming that the weavers are in full employment; this, however, is not the case, more especially with the out-door weavers.

Every weaver is subject to loss of time, but neither manufacturer or workman were enabled to furnish me with data as to the amount of time thus lost.

I have endeavoured to supply it from the following data, 1st, the excise returns of the quantities woven; 2nd, the population of weavers.

The following is the quantity of cloth woven in Gloucestershire in 1833-4-5-6-7.

1833	felted yards	1,426,680	woven yards	1,926,030
1834	,,	1,966,846	,,	2,655,242
1835	,,	1,864,525	,,	2,517,109
1836	,,	1,916,518	,,	2,587,299
1837	,,	1,749,218	,,	2,361,444
Average quantity of felted yards		1,784,760,	woven yards	2,403,965

The average number of unfelted yards is 2,409,422; the population of weavers is considered to amount to 3,000.

A factory male weaver averages 3 yards, 1 foot, 1 inch, per diem, or 1,044 yards in 310 days. A female factory weaver averages 3 yards per diem, or 930 per annum.

By returns supplied from the manufacturers, I am furnished with the number of weavers employed in the manufactories, viz. 911.

The following statement will show the presumed quantity annually woven in the factories, and the quantity of yards to be woven by the out-door weavers:—

			Yards.
	655	male weavers, 1044 yards per man	683,820
	167	female weavers, 930 yards per female	155,310
	89	persons attending 100 power looms, say 1,044 yards per loom	104,400
Factory weavers	911		
Total of weavers	3,000	Total quantity woven in factories	943,530
Total of out-door weavers	2,089	Average quantity woven in the county, calculated from excise returns of last 5 years	2,409,422
		Total quantity to be woven by the out-door weavers	1,465,892

It now remains to be seen what quantity of labour is requisite to produce this surplus quantity, namely, 1,465,892 yards.

The out-door weaver, whose cottage does not afford the same facilities as the weaver experiences in the factories, does not return his chain, upon an average, under 20 days or 200 working hours; this difference of time between that of the factory weaver may be attributed chiefly to inferior looms and the time lost in bringing home and carrying back his work, and also to the ill-regulated temperature in his cottage. Thus the out-door weaver produces 2 yards, 2 feet, and one inch per diem, or 835 yards in 310 days, so that 1,755 (instead of 2,089) out-door weavers are sufficient to perform the work. The following statement will show the surplus of labour in the district:—

		Yards.
911	Shop-loom weavers, &c. weave per annum	943,530
1,755	Out-door weavers	1465,892
2,666	No. of weavers requisite to produce the cloth.	Average annual No. of yards woven in the county of Gloucester 2,409,422

3,000 Total number of weavers in the county of Gloucester. — Gloucestershire.

334 Surplus number of weavers, or 16 per cent. on the out-door weaving population, namely, 2,089. — Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

WAGES.

This surplus of labour injures the earnings of the out-door workman, in the same proportion, viz. 16 per cent: and, after deducting that amount from the earnings already arrived at of the master out-door weaver and the journeyman, the average amount of the weekly earnings is obtained thus:— — Surplus of Labour

	s.	d.	Net Average per week. s.	d.
Average of master weaver's earnings when at work per week	9	8		
Deduct 16 per cent	1	6½		
			8	1½
Average of journeyman weaver's earnings when at work per week	6	7½		
Deduct 16 per cent	1	0½		
			5	7
			2)13	8½
Average amount of the weekly earnings of the out-door weaver			6	10¼

Master Weaver.

Journeyman Weaver.

Consequent Amount of Earnings.

This average amount, namely, 6*s.* 10¼*d.*, is confirmed by the statements personally made of 1,135 weavers. (*Vide* tables of "income and expenditure," page 406.) The average there stated by the weavers is 6*s.* 6*d.* (*Vide* table 2, page 406.) This average amount is also confirmed by relieving officers and persons well acquainted with the district. — Confirmed.

The following table exhibits a summary of wages and net earnings:—

GENERAL Average of WAGES (supplied by the Manufacturers, p. 382), and Average EARNINGS of WEAVERS.

Table of Wages, Deductions and Earnings of Factory Weaver, Out-door Master Weaver, and Out-door Journeyman.

	Sum paid by the Manufacturer per Piece. £.	s.	d.	Deduction for Quilling and other requisite Expenses. s.	d.	Net Amount to the Weaver per Piece. £.	s.	d.	Average Amount of Earnings per Week. s.	d.	
Factory Wages.											
1800 Coloured	2	0	0	6	10	1	13	2	13	3	Factory Weavers, 11*s.* 9*d*
1800 White	1	12	7½	4	11¼	1	7	7¾	11	0	
1800 Cassimeres	1	11	7	3	11¾	1	7	7¼	11	0	
Averages	1	14	8¾	5	3	1	9	5	11	9	*Vide* Returns from Factories, page 379.
Out-Door Masters' Wages.											
1800 Coloured	2	4	9	7	0	1	17	9	11	3	Out-Door Master Weaver.
1800 White	1	17	0	6	2½	1	10	9½	9	3	
1800 Cassimeres	1	12	0	3	7½	1	8	4½	8	6	
Averages	1	17	11	5	7¼	1	12	4	9	8	Deduct for Surplus Population 16 per Cent. 1*s.* 6*d.* . . 8 1½
Out-Door Journeymen's Wages.											
Coloured	2	4	9	18	7¾	1	6	1½	7	10	Out-Door Journeyman.*
White	1	17	0	15	5	1	1	7	6	4	
Cassimeres	1	12	0	13	4	0	18	0	5	7	
	..			15	10	1	2	1	6	7	Deduct for Surplus Population 16 per Cent. 1*s.* 0½*d.* . . 5 7
											Total Average of Out-Door Weavers † 6 10¼

* The deductions of the Out-Door Journeyman are 5*d.* out of the 1*s.*
† Vide Table 2, p. 406.

I here subjoin returns from some of the principal manufacturers, showing the amount of earnings of their weavers in the factories.

With regard to the factory weavers, though they rank among the lowest paid mechanics, they are far above the distressed condition of the out-door weaver, inasmuch as they have more constant employment, with good looms, &c.; shops well regulated in temperature, which is a material point in the weaving woollen threads.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

WAGES.

The prejudice against the shop-loom system is extreme, and it is fostered by the out-door master weaver, who is ruined by the manufacturer having taken the trade out of his hands.

Mr. Lewis, of Brimscombe, has informed me that his factory weavers weave a piece of felt, coloured, in 12 working days, that the pay is 2*l.* for the piece minus 6*s.* for quilling and other deductions, but that the weavers nett 1*l.* 14*s.* in 12 days. The occasional slackness of trade is of course injurious, but, with these earnings, and where there may be collateral income from a wife and some of the family, I cannot give way to the prejudices of factory weavers who are doing so well, when their fellow workmen, the out-door weavers, are in such deep distress.

STATEMENT concerning Factory Weavers' EARNINGS from the RETURNS supplied by Manufacturers, including working time, &c. &c. &c.

Factory Weavers' Earnings.

Name of Mill.	No. of Men.	No. of Weeks.	Amount Paid.	Deductions.	Net Sum.	Weekly Earnings.
			£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Eastington . . .	12	52	479 0 6	39 18 10	440 1 8	0 14 1
Lodgemore . . .	11	50	372 18 0	31 1 6	341 16 6	0 12 5
Stanley	14	52	476 12 7	39 14 4	436 18 3	0 12 0
Iron Mills . . .	20	52	663 8 8	No deductions.	663 8 8	0 12 9
Ditto	22	26	326 0 5		326 0 5	0 11 5
Dunkirk Mills . .	16	52	488 18 5		488 18 5	0 11 9
Ditto	16	52	483 10 0		483 10 0	0 11 $7\frac{1}{2}$
Ditto	16	52	429 10 6		429 10 6	0 10 $3\frac{3}{4}$
Ditto	16	26	210 17 11		210 17 11	0 10 $1\frac{1}{2}$
	143	414				5 6 5
				Average Weekly Earnings		0 11 $9\frac{3}{4}$

In reference to the above table they are the averages of earnings of the factory weavers, but it is proper to observe that the earnings range from 9*s.* 11*d.* to 15*s.*; and, in a few extreme cases of extraordinary skilled or quick and industrious workmen, the nett earnings amount to 16*s.* 6*d.* per week, for the 12 months, including all the play or waiting time.

Skilled Workman with a Family.

Taking an extreme case, a weaver at the above wages of 16*s.* 6*d.* with an industrious wife and a child at work in a factory, might earn between them a moderate weekly income.

	£.	s.	d.
Man	0	16	6
Wife at weaving or burling .	0	7	0
Child carding	0	2	6
	1	6	0

Average Workman with a Family.

But, taking the average of the earnings, namely 11*s.* $9\frac{3}{4}$*d.*, and supposing the wife and child to be at work, which is generally the case (most of the weavers being married), the earnings for the family per week would be—

	£.	s.	d.
Man	0	11	$9\frac{3}{4}$
Wife	0	7	0
Child	0	2	6
	1	1	$3\frac{3}{4}$

Low Earnings of an Out-door Weaver's Family.

The entire earnings of a family of the out-door weaver, consisting of 5 persons, is only 10*s.*, and yet the factory weavers are the most discontented.

I now subjoin, first, the wages of other working classes in the district to compare them with the factory weaver, and also, secondly, the wages of all classes connected with the manufacture of cloth from 1808 to 1838 :—

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

WAGES.

STATEMENT of the WEEKLY WAGES of various Trades and Callings in STROUD, from 1836 to 1838.

Trade or Calling.	Average No. of Working Hours.	Amount of Wages or Earnings per Week.					
		1836.		1837.		1838.	
		s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
Agricultural Labourers .	12	9	0	9	0	9	0
Bargemen	12	14	0	14	0	14	0
Blacksmiths	13	15	0	15	0	15	0
Boot-closers	12	15	0	15	0	15	0
Bricklayers	10	15	0	15	0	15	0
,, Labourers . .	10	10	0	10	0	10	0
,, Makers . . .	12	18	0	18	0	18	0
Carpenters	10	15	0	15	0	15	0
Dyers	10	10	0	10	0	10	0
Joiners	10	15	0	15	0	15	0
Masons	10	15	0	15	0	15	0
Nailors	12	16	0	16	0	16	0
Plasterers	10	15	0	15	0	15	0
Sawyers	10	16	6	16	6	16	6
Shoemakers	12	14	0	14	0	14	0
Stonecutters	12	20	0	20	0	20	0
Tailors	13	18	0	18	0	18	0
Watchmakers*. . . .	10	25	0	25	0	25	0

I now submit the following tables of wages paid at the present period by the different cloth manufacturers in the county of Gloucester, together with the deductions and nett amounts on 1,800 work. In the subsequent set of tables you will also see the average prices on every hundred set forth in their respective districts. I have adopted this method for the sake of brevity and clearness.

Nominal Wages reduced by actual Deductions.

With regard to the stated prices of wages, and the apparent larger amounts paid by some manufacturers, it is requisite to observe, that the deductions must be taken into account, including quilling, &c. There are some manufacturers who nominally pay high wages, but whose deductions are great in proportion. There are many ways adopted by some few masters to lower earnings, while apparently and nominally they keep up prices. In some cases they charge the weaver so much per week for loom-rent in their factories or in their houses, say 3*s*. a week; or else the rent of the cottage may be exorbitant, the weaver paying that amount in order to be well supplied with work; or in some cases, the weavers and work-people must purchase their provisions at some shop, not openly but covertly connected with the factory-owners or the wool-loft men. These are the subterfuges to obtain profits out of labour, and at the same time to carry a good name in reference to the rates of wages.

The following tables of wages refer to 1,800 felt, and 1,400 cassimeres. I divide the weavers into two classes, namely, factory weavers and out-door weavers. The fabrics are broads (coloured), broads (white), and cassimeres.

* There is a pin-factory in the vicinity of Stroud, where the work-people earn, I believe, good wages, but the information I sought upon the subject has not been supplied to me.

WAGES.—Shop-Looms.

MANUFACTURES.

	No.	Broad Cloth—Coloured. 1800.			Broad Cloth—White. 1800.				Cassimeres. 1400.			
		Price per piece of 36 ells of 1800.	Deductions.	Net Sum Earned by the Weaver.		Price per Piece of 36 Ells of 18 Hundred.	Deductions.	Net Sum Earned by the Weaver.		Price per Piece of 54 Yards 13 and 14 Hundred.	Deductions.	Net Sum Earned by the Weaver.	
				Per Piece.	Per Ell.			Per Piece.	Per Ell.			Per Piece.	Per Ell.
		£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.
Messrs. A. & B.	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	2	1 16 0	..	1 16 0	1 0	1 10 0	..	1 10 0	0 10	1 10 0	..	1 10 0	0 6½
,, ,,	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	4	2 14 0	15 6	1 18 6	1 0¾	..	..	..	..	1 16 0	8 9	1 7 3	0 6
,, ,,	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	8	2 0 0	4 0	1 16 0	1 0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	9	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	10	..	..	..	..	1 10 6	6 0	1 4 6	0 8	1 10 0	4 0	1 6 0	0 5¾
,, ,,	11	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1 10 0	4 0	1 6 0	0 5¾
,, ,,	12	..	..	..	..	1 14 1	4 0	1 10 1	0 10	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	13	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	14	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	15	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	16	1 17 0	4 6	1 12 6	0 10¾	1 12 0	4 0	1 8 0	0 9¼	1 12 0	3 6	1 8 6	0 6¼
,, ,,	17	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	18	..	..	..	..	2 0 0	8 0	1 12 0	0 10½	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	19	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	20	2 3 0	6 0	1 17 0	1 0¼	1 16 0	5 0	1 11 0	0 10¼	1 16 0	4 0	1 12 0	0 7
,, ,,	21	1 14 0	4 0	1 10 0	0 10	1 10 0	4 0	1 6 0	0 8½	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	22	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	23	..	..	..	..	1 10 0	3 6	1 6 6	0 8½	1 6 6	2 0	1 4 6	0 5½
,, ,,	24	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	25	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	26	2 14 0	13 6	2 0 6	1 1½	..	..	..	..	1 16 9	7 9	1 9 0	0 6½
,, ,,	27	1 15 0	5 4	1 9 8	0 9¾	1 13 0	4 6	1 8 6	0 9¾	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	28	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	29	1 19 0	6 6	1 12 6	0 10¾	..	..	..	..	1 16 0	2 6	1 13 6	0 7½
,, ,,	30	1 14 0	4 6	1 9 6	0 9¾	1 12 0	4 0	1 8 0	0 9¼	1 10 10	2 0	1 8 10	0 6¼
,, ,,	31	1 17 6	4 6	1 12 0	0 10½	1 13 9	4 0	1 9 9	0 10	1 14 6	2 6	1 12 0	0 7
,, ,,	32	1 14 9	..	1 14 9	0 11½	1 10 6	..	1 10 6	0 10	1 9 3	..	1 9 3	0 6¼ *
,, ,,	33	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	34	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	35	1 8 0	..	1 8 0	0 9¼	1 2 0	..	1 2 0	0 7¼	1 6 0	..	1 6 0	0 5¾
,, ,,	36	1 8 0	..	1 8 0	0 9¼	1 2 0	..	1 2 0	0 7¼	1 6 0	..	1 6 0	0 5¾
,, ,,	37	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	38	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,	39	2 4 0	7 6	1 16 6	1 0¼	1 18 0	6 0	1 12 0	0 10½	1 7 0	4 0	1 3 0	0 5
,, ,,	40	1 15 0	5 4	1 9 8	0 9¾	1 13 0	4 6	1 8 6	0 9½	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	41	1 18 0	4 2	1 13 10	0 11¼	1 16 0	4 2	1 11 10	0 10½	1 13 6	2 6	1 1 11	0 6¾
,, ,,	42	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	43	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	44	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	45	2 11 0	9 0	2 2 0	1 2	2 2 0	9 0	1 13 0	0 11	1 17 6	4 0	1 13 6	0 7½
,, ,,	46	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	47	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	48	..	..	..	..	1 5 0	3 6	1 1 6	0 7	1 5 0	4 0	1 1 0	0 4½
Average Prices .		2 0 0	6 10	1 14 4½	0 11½	1 12 7½	4 11¾	1 8 6¼	0 8¾	1 11 7	3 11¾	1 7 1½	0 6$^{12}_{17}$

* Price paid by Messrs. T. and S. Marling for doe skin fabric is £1 12 0
Less 0 2 6 quilling.
£1 9 6 net.

Those numbers where the prices are not inserted will be found in the Table of Out-door Weavers' Wages.

WAGES.—Out-Weavers.

MANUFACTURES.

	No.	Broad Cloth—Coloured. 1800.			Broad Cloth—White. 1800.			Cassimeres. 1400.			
		Price per Piece of 36 Ells, 18 Hundred.	Deductions.	Net Sum Earned by the Weaver.	Price per Piece of 36 Ells, and 18 Hundred.	Deductions.	Net Sum Earned by the Weaver.	Price per Piece of 54 Yards, 13 and 14 Hundred.	Deductions.	Net Sum Earned by the Weaver.	
				Per Piece. Per Ell.			Per Piece. Per Ell.			Per Piece.	Per Yard.
		£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d. s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d. s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.
Messrs. A. & B.	1	1 19 0	7 6	1 11 6 0 10½	1 19 0	6 6	1 12 6 0 10¾	1 16 0	4 0	1 12 0	0 7
,, ,,	2	2 17 0	7 6	2 9 6 1 4½	2 8 0	6 6	2 1 6 1 1¾	1 9 2	4 0	1 5 2	0 5½
,, ,,	3	1 18 0	7 6	1 10 6 0 10¼	1 9 0	6 0	1 3 0 0 7½	1 5 0	3 6	1 1 6	0 4¾
,, ,,	4	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	5	1 16 0	8 0	1 8 0 0 9¼	1 7 0	7 0	1 0 0 0 6½	1 5 0	4 0	1 1 0	0 4½
,, ,,	6	..	..	.. ..	1 5 0	6 0	0 19 0 0 6¼	1 8 0	3 6	1 4 6	0 5½
,, ,,	7	2 7 6	7 6	2 0 0 1 1¼	2 2 0	6 0	1 16 0 1 0	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	8	2 4 4	6 6	1 17 10 1 0½	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	9	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	10	..	..	.. ..	1 16 0	7 6	1 8 6 0 9½	1 5 0	4 0	1 1 0	0 4½
,, ,,	11	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	12	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	13	2 6 0	7 6	1 18 6 1 0¾	1 16 0	6 6	1 9 6 0 9¾	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	14	2 14 0	7 6	2 6 6 1 3½	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	15	2 8 0	7 6	2 0 6 1 1½	2 2 0	6 6	1 15 6 0 11¾	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	16	..	..	.. ..	2 1 0	6 6	1 14 6 0 11½	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	17	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	18	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	1 5 0	4 0	1 1 0	0 4½
,, ,,	19	..	..	.. ..	2 0 0	8 0	1 12 0 0 10½	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	20	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	2 4 0	4 0	2 0 0	0 9
,, ,,	21	2 14 0	7 6	2 6 6 1 3½	2 8 0	6 6	2 1 6 1 1¾	1 16 0	4 0	1 12 0	0 7
,, ,,	22	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	23	..	..	.. ..	2 0 0	8 0	1 12 0 0 10½	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	24	..	..	.. ..	1 10 0	3 6	1 6 6 0 8¾	1 6 6	2 0	1 4 6	0 5
,, ,,	25	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	26	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	27	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	28	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	29	..	..	.. ..	1 10 0	6 0	1 4 0 0 8	1 7 0	4 0	1 3 0	0 5
,, ,,	30	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	31	1 17 0	4 6	1 12 6 0 10¾	1 12 0	4 0	1 8 0 0 9¼	1 10 10	2 0	1 18 10	0 6¼
,, ,,	32	1 17 6	4 6	1 13 0 0 11	1 13 9	4 0	1 9 9 0 10	1 14 6	2 6	1 12 0	0 7
,, ,,	33	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	34	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	35	2 7 3	6 6	2 0 9 1 1½	2 2 0	5 6	1 16 6 1 0¼	1 16 0	0	1 12 0	0 7
,, ,,	36	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	37	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	38	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	39	1 14 2	7 6	1 6 8 0 9	1 11 3	6 6	1 4 9 0 8¼	2 0 3	4 0	1 16 3	0 8
,, ,,	40	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	41	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	42	2 8 0	7 6	2 0 6 1 1½	1 16 0	6 6	1 9 6 0 9¾	1 15 0	4 0	1 11 0	0 6¾
,, ,,	43	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	44	..	..	.. ..	2 5 2	6 6	1 18 8 1 0¾	1 14 0	4 0	1 10 0	0 6½
,, ,,	45	..	..	.. ..	1 18 0	6 6	1 11 6 0 10½	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	46	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	47	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
,, ,,	48	2 8 0	7 6	2 0 6 1 1½	1 19 0	6 6	1 12 6 0 10¾	1 19 0	4 0	1 15 0	0 7¾
,, ,,	49	..	..	.. ..	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..
Average Prices to Out-door Master Weavers .		2 4 9	7 0	1 17 8½ 1 0½	1 17 0	6 2½	1 10 9 0 10	1 12 0	3 7½	1 8 5	0 6¼
Average Price to Out-door Journeyman after taking 5*d.* out of 1*s.* (*Master-Weavers' charges*)		1 6 1½	..	.. ..	1 1 7	..	.. ..	0 18 8	..	..	..

The Average Price paid for Stripes is £1., and about 18*s.* by the few Manufacturers who pay in truck.
Those Numbers where the Prices are not inserted will be found in the Table of Factory Weavers' Wages.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

WAGES.

No. 1.—DISTRICT WAGES TABLE.—SHOP-LOOMS.

CHALFORD DISTRICT.

	Hundreds.	Price per Piece of 36 Ells, or 38 Selling Yards.	Deductions in Factory.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Piece.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Ell.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Broad Cloth, Coloured.	16				
	17				
	18	1 13 0	. .	1 13 0	0 0 11
	19				
	22				
Broad Cloth, White.	16				
	17				
	18	1 9 0	. .	1 9 0	0 0 9½
	19				
	20				
					Per Yard.
Cassimeres.	13	1 8 7	. .	1 8 7	0 0 6½
	14				
Stripes.					

DURSLEY DISTRICT.

	Hundreds.	Price per Piece of 36 Ells, or 38 Selling Yards.	Deductions in Factory.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Piece.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Ell.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Broad Cloth, Coloured.	16				
	17				
	18	1 18 9	0 3 10	1 14 11	0 0 11¾
	19				
	20	2 14 0	0 7 6	2 6 6	0 1 3¼
Broad Cloth, White.	16				
	17				
	18	1 14 0	0 6 0	1 8 0	0 0 9¼
	19				
	20	2 10 0	0 6 0	2 4 0	0 1 2½
					Per Yard.
Cassimeres.	13	1 11 3	0 3 1	1 8 2	0 0 6¼
	14				
Stripes.					

NAILSWORTH DISTRICT.

	Hundreds.	Price per Piece of 36 Ells, or 38 Selling Yards.	Deductions in Factory.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Piece.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Ell.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Broad Cloth, Coloured.	16				
	17				
	18	1 13 0	0 2 3	1 10 9	0 0 10
	19				
	20				
Broad Cloth, White.	16				
	17				
	18	1 2 0	. .	1 2 0	0 0 7½
	19				
	20				
					Per Yard.
Cassimeres.	13	1 9 6	0 2 6	1 7 0	0 0 6
	14				
Stripes.					

STONEHOUSE DISTRICT.

	Hundreds.	Price per Piece of 36 Ells, or 38 Selling Yards.	Deductions in Factory.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Piece.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Ell.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Broad Cloth, Coloured.	16				
	17				
	18	2 3 10½	0 6 7½	1 16 3	0 1 0
	19	2 7 8	0 7 0	2 0 8	0 1 1½
	20				
Broad Cloth, White.	16				
	17				
	18	1 16 7½	0 6 1½	1 10 6	0 0 10¼
	19				
	20				
					Per Yard.
Cassimeres.	13	1 11 6	0 4 0	1 7 6	0 0 6
	14				
Stripes.					

STROUD DISTRICT.

	Hundreds.	Price per Piece of 36 Ells, or 38 Selling Yards.	Deductions in Factory.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Piece.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Ell.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£ s. d.	£. s. d.
Broad Cloth, Coloured.	16				
	17				
	18	2 4 10½	0 5 3½	1 19 7	0 1 1¼
	19				
	20				

WOOTTON DISTRICT.

	Hundreds.	Price per Piece of 36 Ells, or 38 Selling Yards.	Deductions in Factory.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Piece.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Ell.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Broad Cloth Coloured.	16				
	17	5 0	0 7 6	1 17 6	0 1 0½
	18	2 5 9½	0 7 7	1 18 2½	0 1 0¾
	19	2 17 0	0 7 6	2 9 6	0 1 4½
	20				

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

WAGES.

STROUD DISTRICT—(*continued*).

	Hundreds.	Price per Piece of 36 Ells, or 38 Selling Yards.	Deductions in Factory.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Ell.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Ell.
		£. s. d.	£ s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Broad Cloth, White.	16				
	17				
	18	1 15 6	0 3 4	1 12 2	0 0 11½
	19				
	20				
					Per Yard.
Cassimeres.	13	1 15 5½	0 3 2	1 12 3¼	0 0 7¼
	14				
Stripes.					

WOOTTON DISTRICT—(*continued*.)

	Hundreds.	Price per Piece of 36 Ells, or 38 Selling Yards.	Deductions in Factory.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Piece.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Ell.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Broad Cloth, White.	16				
	17	1 19 0	0 7 6	1 11 6	0 0 10½
	18	1 19 0	0 8 3	1 11 9	0 0 10¾
	19				
	20				
					Per Yard.
Cassimeres.	13	1 13 2½	0 3 1½	1 9 10½	0 0 6½
	14				
Stripes.					

SUMMARY.—SHOP LOOM OR FACTORY WEAVING.—The Net Amount of Wages, after *all* Deductions, for Weaving, per Ell, according to the various Hundreds.

Summary.—Shop Loom Weaving.

District.	Broad Cloth, Coloured. No. of Hundred. 16	17	18	19	20	Broad Cloth, White. No. of Hundred. 16	17	18	19	20	Cassimeres. Hundred. 13	14	Stripes.
		s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.		s. d.	s. d.		s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	
Chalford	..	..	0 11	..	..	..	..	0 9½	..	..	0 6½	..	..
Dursley	..	..	0 11¾	..	1 3¼	..	..	0 9¼	..	1 2½	0 6¼	..	..
Nailsworth	..	..	0 10	..	..	..	..	0 7½	..	..	..	..	..
Stonehouse	..	..	1 0	1 1¼	..	..	..	0 10¼	..	..	0 6	..	..
Stroud	..	..	1 1¼	..	..	..	..	0 11½	..	..	0 7¼	..	..
Wootton	..	1 0½	1 0¾	1 4½	..	..	0 10½	0 11¼	..	..	..	0 6½	..

NOTE.—By these Tables it will be seen that, in some cases, there are apparent discrepancies, which will be accounted for from the fact that almost every manufacturer has a different price. In some cases, also, one manufacturer only in a district makes a particular hundred: consequently he will stand alone in the Table, and his price may appear conspicuous in comparison with the average of a district comprising from eight to ten manufacturers: the average of a district must therefore be low, as some are paying 50 per cent. more than others.

No. 2.—DISTRICT WAGES TABLE.—OUT-WEAVING.

CHALFORD DISTRICT.

	Hundreds.	Price per Piece of 36 Ells, or 38 Selling Yards.	Deductions in Factory.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Piece.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Ell.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Broad Cloth, Coloured.	16				
	17				
	18	2 4 0	0 6 0	1 18 0	0 0 10½
	19				
	20				
Broad Cloth, White.	16				
	17				
	18	1 16 0	0 5 6	1 10 6	0 0 10
	19				
	20				
					Per Yard.
Cassimeres.	13	1 12 0	0 2 6	1 9 6	0 0 6½
	14				
Stripes.	..	0 18 8	0 2 0	0 16 8	0 0 4

DURSLEY DISTRICT.

	Hundreds.	Price per Piece of 36 Ells, or 38 Selling Yards.	Deductions in Factory.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Piece.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Ell.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Broad Cloth, Coloured.	16				
	17				
	18	2 4 0	0 6 0	1 18 0	0 1 0½
	19				
	20	2 14 0	0 7 6	2 6 6	0 1 3¼
Broad Cloth, Coloured.	16				
	17				
	18	2 2 0	0 6 0	1 16 0	0 1 0
	19				
	20	2 12 0	0 6 9	2 5 3	0 1 3
					Per Yard.
Cassimeres.	13	1 10 0	0 2 6	1 7 6	0 0 6¼
	14				
Stripes.					

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

WAGES.

NAILSWORTH DISTRICT.

	Hundreds.	Price per Piece of 36 Ells, or 38 Selling Yards.	Deductions in Factory.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Piece.	Per Ell.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Broad Cloth, Coloured.	16				
	17				
	18	1 18 0	0 4 6	1 13 6	0 0 11¼
	19				
	20				
Broad Cloth, White.	16				
	17				
	18	1 10 0	0 5 0	1 5 0	0 0 8¼
	19				
	20				
					Per Yard.
Cassimeres.	13				
	14	1 11 0	0 2 6	1 9 6	0 0 6½
Stripes.					

STONEHOUSE DISTRICT.

	Hundreds.	Price per Piece of 36 Ells, or 38 Selling Yards.	Deductions in Factory.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Piece.	Per Ell.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Broad Cloth, Coloured.	16				
	17	2 5 0	0 7 6	1 17 6	0 1 0½
	18	2 7 6	0 6 6	2 1 0	0 1 1¼
	19				
	20				
Broad Cloth, White.	16				
	17	1 19 0	0 7 0	1 12 0	0 0 10½
	18	2 2 0	0 7 0	1 15 0	0 0 11½
	19				
	20				
					Per Yard.
Cassimeres.	13	1 14 0	0 4 6	1 9 6	0 0 6½
	14				
Stripes.					

STROUD DISTRICT.

	Hundreds.	Price per Piece of 36 Ells, or 38 Selling Yards.	Deductions in Factory.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Piece.	Per Ell.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Broad Cloth, Coloured.	16				
	17				
	18	1 19 4½	0 6 4½	1 13 0½	0 0 11
	19	2 0 0	0 7 6	1 12 6	0 0 10¾
	20				
Broad Cloth, White.	16				
	17				
	18	1 16 4½	0 5 7½	1 10 9	0 0 10¼
	19	2 17 0	0 8 0	2 9 0	0 1 4¼
	20				
					Per Yard.
Cassimeres.	13	1 12 2¼	0 2 10¼	1 9 4¼	0 0 6½
	14				
Stripes.					

WOOTTON DISTRICT.

	Hundreds.	Price per Piece of 36 Ells, or 38 Selling Yards.	Deductions in Factory.	Net Amount of Earnings. Per Piece.	Per Ell.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Broad Cloth, Coloured.	16				
	17				
	18	2 11 3	0 7 6	2 3 9	0 1 2¼
	19				
	20				
Broad Cloth, White.	16				
	17				
	18				
	19				
	20				
					Per Yard.
Cassimeres.	13				
	14	1 14 0	0 5 0	1 9 0	0 0 6¼
Stripes.					

Summary.—Out-door Weaving.

SUMMARY.—OUT-WEAVING.—The Net Amount of Wages, after *all* deductions for Weaving, according to the various Hundreds.

Districts.	Broad Cloth, Coloured, per Ell. No. of Hundred. 16	17	18	19	20	Broad Cloth, White, per Ell. No. of Hundred. 16	17	18	19	20	Cassimeres, per Yard. Hundred. 13	14	Stripes, per Yard.
		s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.		s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Chalford	..	..	1 0½	..	..	..	..	0 10	..	..	0 6½	..	0 4
Dursley	..	..	1 0½	..	..	..	..	1 0	..	1 3	0 6¼	..	..
Nailsworth	..	..	1 0½	..	1 3¼	..	0 10½	0 8¼	..	..	..	0 6½	..
Stonehouse	..	1 0½	0 11¼	..	..	..	..	0 11½	..	..	0 6½	..	..
Stroud	..	..	1 1¼	0 10¾	..	..	..	0 10½	1 4¼	..	0 6½	..	..
Wootton	..	..	1 2½	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0 6¼	..

Amount of Deductions per Piece.

Districts.	Broad Cloth, Coloured, per Ell. No. of Hundred.					Broad Cloth, White, per Ell. No. of Hundred.					Cassimeres, per Yard. Hundred.		Stripes, per Yard.
	16	17	18	19	20	16	17	18	19	20	13	14	
		s. d.	s. d.	s. d.			s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Chalford	..	..	6 0	..	..	..	..	5 6	..	..	2 6	..	2 0
Dursley	..	..	6 0	..	..	..	..	6 0	..	6 9	2 6	..	..
Nailsworth	..	..	4 6	..	..	..	..	5 0	..	..	..	2 6	..
Stonehouse	..	7 6	6 6	..	..	..	..	7 0	..	..	4 6	..	..
Stroud	..	..	6 4½	7 6	..	..	7 0	5 7½	8 0	..	2 10¼	..	..
Wootton	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

Doe-skins.

There is a species of fabric recently made in the county of Gloucester, called "Doe Skins." It is eight-treadle work, and different in some degree to the plain felt work. It requires a greater degree of skill, but less labour; and the weavers, who are jealous of any alteration, and unwilling to be "put out of their way," have a dislike to undertake the work: in fact, a weaver in the woollen trade has no aptitude; and he thinks that work must be found him of that sort to which he has been most accustomed."

Messrs. S. and W. Long, of Charfield Mills, state that they have been manufacturers of doe-skins for nearly two years; that they employ from 70 to 100 persons to weave this sort of work, which is a recently introduced fabric. The weavers now employed on this work were previously broad and cassimere weavers. The doe-skin work is more difficult and skilful than the common sort of fabric, but is less laborious. The work was objected to at first, simply because they were unaccustomed to it; but afterwards it was preferred to all other weaving. In a month the men could earn more on this work than on any other. The alterations of the looms, harness, &c. were in the majority of cases made at our own expense. A weaver, if constantly employed at doe-skin weaving, and if a good hand, might earn 11*s.* a week, and if constantly employed on other work, 8*s.* a week. The price per piece is 1*l.* 18*s.*, and the deductions for quilling and tying, &c., 3*s.* per piece. Women can weave this kind of work as well as men, and it is done both in and out of the factory Quantity annually made by them is about twenty pieces a week.

Inaptitude of weavers

Messrs. T. and S. Marling, of the Ham Mills, near Stroud, state respecting the manufacture of the doe-skin fabric, that they have made it for two years, and employ 30 persons: these weavers were previously employed on cassimeres; the doe-skin is also a cassimere fabric, but requiring more skill, but is not more laborious. They have repeatedly offered it to out-door weavers, but they refused it. There is a decided dislike among the weavers to turn to any work but what they have been accustomed to: there is an inaptitude to learn, and they are compelled to have it done by persons over whom they have controul, such as tenants and factory weavers. The expense in the altering of looms is paid by themselves when done in the factory, and by the weavers if done at home. It takes a person 14 days to weave a piece 54 yards. Price is 1*l.* 12*s.*, less 2*s.* quilling, and it is woven both out and in the factory. Women can weave it, but they employ men. Quantity annually made by them is 728 pieces.

confirmed.

This is the present state of wages, but they have been much reduced since 1825; and many severe struggles have occurred between men and masters upon the subject.—*Vide* "Combinations and Strikes."—p. 448.

I now submit the following lists of wages said to have been agreed to by the manufacturers in 1825 and 1828, when the weavers returned to work after the strikes in each of those years.

The list of prices in 1834 is a statement of the wages then paid in the district.

Mr. Marling, Mr. Playne, and other manufacturers, affirm, that the prices signed and agreed to, in 1825 and 1828, were not long adhered to by master or man; *a fact which proves the difficulty of regulating wages by restrictive rules.* Mr. Marling gave me the list of wages paid by him, and I collate them in a subsequent table, with the prices demanded by the weavers.

The following is taken from printed lists of prices furnished to me by the weavers, and said to have been agreed to by the manufacturers. Two of these papers are in the years 1825, and 1828, years in which strikes occurred—the last rate in 1834, is stated to be the prices paid, but not to have been signed by the manufacturers.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

WAGES.

No. 1.—The Broad and Kersey Weavers' List of Prices, approved of by the Manufacturers of the Lower Districts (Dursley), and signed by them.—1825.

Chains coloured in the Wool.

	s.	d.
1600, at per Ell	1	9
1700, ..	1	10
1800, ..	1	11
1900, ..	2	0
2000, ..	2	1

White Chains.

	s.	d.
1500, at per Ell	1	3
1600, ..	1	5
1700, ..	1	6
1800, ..	1	7
1900, ..	1	8
2000, ..	1	9

Wages in 1825.

Odd Beers as follows.

Beers.	s.	d.
1600, and 2	1	9½
1600, 4	1	10
1700, 2	1	10½
1700, 4	1	11
1800, 2	1	11½
1800, 4	2	0
1900, 2	2	0½
1900, 4	2	1
2000, 2	2	1½
2000, 4	2	2

Odd Beers as follows.

Beers.	s.	d.
1500, and 2	1	3½
1500, 4	1	4
1600, 2	1	5½
1600, 4	1	6
1700, 2	1	6½
1700, 4	1	7
1800, 2	1	7½
1800, 4	1	8
1900, 2	1	8½
1900, 4	1	9
2000, 2	1	9½
2000, 4	1	10

Kerseymere from 12 to 1300, ready for the Loom, 11*d.* per Yard.

Odd Beers as follows:—

Beers.	s.	d.
1300, and 2	0	11½
1300, 4	1	0
1400, 2	1	0½
1400, 4	1	1
1500, 2	1	1½
1500, 4	1	2

These prices were also agreed to by the Mannfacturers in the Town Hall, Stroud, June 7th, 1825.

No. 2.—The County Price for the Broad and Kerseymere Weavers, approved of by the Manufacturers of the Lower and Upper Districts, and signed by them.—1828, same in 1830.

Chains coloured in the Wool.

	s.	d.
1500, at per Ell	1	9
1600, ..	1	9
1700, ..	1	10
1800, ..	1	11
1900, ..	2	0
2000, ..	2	1

White Chains.

	s.	d.
1500, . . . Per Ell	1	3
1600, ...	1	5
1700, ...	1	6
1800, ...	1	7
1900, ...	1	8
2000, ...	1	9

In 1830.

Odd Beers as follows.

Beers.		s.	d.
1600, and 2	Per Ell	1	9½
1600, 4	..	1	10
1700, 2	..	1	10½
1700, 4	..	1	11
1800, 2	..	1	11½
1800, 4	..	2	0
1900, 2	..	2	0½
1900, 4	..	2	1
2000, 2	..	2	1½
2000, 4	..	2	2
Spanish Stripes		£2	0 0
Super Stripes		1	9 0

Odd Beers as follows.

Beers.		s.	d.
1500, and 2	Per Ell	1	3½
1500, 4	..	1	4
1600, 2	..	1	5½
1600, 4	..	1	6
1700, 2	..	1	6½
1700, 4	..	1	7
1800, 2	..	1	7½
1800, 4	..	1	8
1900, 2	..	1	8½
1900, 4	..	1	9
2000, 2	..	1	9½
2000, 4	..	1	10

Kerseymere, from 1200 to 1300, ready for the loom, 11*d.* per yard for white, and 1*s.* per yard for blue, and in proportion as the hundreds rise. If any odd Beers between the 100, one halfpenny advance; that in two Beers, and not exceeding three, one halfpenny; if four Beers, one penny.

Odd Beers as follows.

BLUE.

Beers.				s.	d.
1300, and 2	. .	Per Yard		1	0½
1300, 4	. .	..		1	1
1400, 2	. .	..		1	1½
1400, 4	. .	..		1	2
1500, 2	. .	..		1	2½
1500, 4	. .	..		1	3

Odd Beers as follows.

WHITE.

Beers.				s.	d.
1300, and 2	. .	Per Yard		0	11¼
1300, 4	. .	..		1	0
1400, 2	. .	..		1	0½
1400, 4	. .	..		1	1
1500, 2	. .	..		1	1½
1500, 4	. .	..		1	2

No. 3.—Prices for Weaving, in 1834, paid by the principal Manufacturers in the county of Gloucester.—March 4th, 1834; same in 1835.

Casserene.

			s.	d.
Coloured	. .	Per Ell	1	10
White	. .	..	1	7

Cassimere.

		s.	d.
Double milled, ready for the loom	Per Yard	0	10
Single ditto, ditto	. .	1	0

FELT OR BROAD CLOTH.

Coloured.

			s.	d.
1900	. .	Per Ell	1	9
1800	. .	..	1	8
1700	. .	..	1	7
1600	. .	..	1	6

White.

			s.	d.
2000	. .	Per Ell	1	6
1900	. .	..	1	5
1800	. .	..	1	4
1700	. .	..	1	3
1600	. .	..	1	2

Four Beers to be paid for as a full hundred.

SPANISH AND SUPER STRIPES.

Spanish.

Beers.				s.	d.
1400, and 0	. .	Per Ell		0	11
1400, 2	. .	..		0	11½
1400, 4	. .	..		1	0
1500, 0	. .	..		1	0
1500, 2	. .	..		1	0½
1500, 4	. .	..		1	1

Super.

Beers.				s.	d.
1100, and 0	. .	Per Ell		0	9
1100, 2	. .	..		0	9½
1100, 4	. .	..		0	10
1200, 0	. .	..		0	10
1200, 2	. .	..		0	10½
1200, 4	. .	..		0	11

Ninepence out of each shilling is paid to Weavers in the factory.
No reduction to be made for Reeling, or Temples, nor is the Weaver bound to time.

In reference to the preceding lists (and of which printed copies having been given to me in evidence, I consider it my duty to insert), many manufacturers state that it was not long adhered to, and that the weavers took chain as usual upon the employers' terms. This is another proof of the surplus of labour, and consequently total inefficiency of any regulating standard of wages. Mr. Samuel Marling, of Ham Mills, writes to me thus in reference to the printed lists, and other manufacturers confirm him:—

Not adhered to by Masters or Men.

"DEAR SIR,—With regard to the prices of weaving, I would observe that for a few weeks after a strike the prices stated in the weavers' printed list *may* have been paid in some cases, yet they pere *never generally* paid, and by *none* for any long period. These prices were above the value of the work to be performed, allowing the value to be determined by the amount of work required by the manufacturers to be done and the number of weavers to do it, and consequently prices began to decline almost immediately; and the average prices paid in the country you will find to be very near what I have stated at the respective periods."

"I remain, yours truly,
(Signed) "SAML. MARLING."

Mr. Marling supplied me with his prices, which I here insert, together with the average prices of corn during the periods:—

A TABLE showing the annexed Prices of CORN and Rates of WAGES in 1825, in 1830, in 1835, and in 1838, showing the Rates said to have been agreed to at the periods of the Strikes, and also the Prices actually paid by Mr. MARLING at those periods.

	1825.		1830.		1835.		1838.		Total decrease per cent. on Wages, out-door Weaving.
	Average Price of Corn from 1820, 55*s.* 7*d.*		Average Price of Corn from 1826, 61*s.*		Average Price of Corn from 1831, 52*s.* 3*d.*		Average Price of Corn from 1836, 55*s.* 9*d.*		
	Price per piece 36 ells.	Price per ell.	Price per piece 36 ells.	Price per ell.	Price per piece 36 ells.	Price per ell.	Price per piece 36 ells. Weaving out-door.	Price per ell.	
Coloured 1800.	£. *s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	£. *s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	£. *s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	£. *s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	per cent.
Price agreed to . . .	3 9 0	1 11	3 9 0	1 11	3 0 0	1 8	2 4 9	1 3	By printed statements, 35
Price paid by Mr. Marling	2 19 0	1 7¾	2 19 0	1 7¾	2 10 0	1 4½	..	..	By Mr. Marling's wages, 24
White 1800.									
Price agreed to . . .	2 17 0	1 7	2 17 0	1 7	2 8 0	1 4	1 17 0	1 0¼	By printed statements, 35
Price paid by Mr. Marling	2 11 0	1 5	2 4 6	1 0	2 4 6	1 2	..	..	By Mr. Marling's wages, 27
	Price per piece 54 yards.		Price per piece 54 yards.		Price per piece 54 yards.		Price per piece 54 yards.		
Cassimeres.									
Price agreed to . . .	2 11 9	0 11½	2 11 9	0 11½	2 5 0	0 10	1 12 0	0 7¼	By printed statements, 38
Price paid by Mr. Marling	2 8 9	0 10¾	1 13 0	0 7¼	1 13 0	0 7¼	..	..	By Mr. Marling's wages, 34
Stripes.									
Price agreed to . . .	2 0 0	..	2 0 0	..	1 0 0	..	1 0 0	..	By printed statements, 50
Price paid by Mr. Marling	1 5 0	..	1 0 0	..	1 0 0	..	1 0 0	..	By Mr. Marling's wages, 20

Women can easily weave cassimeres and stripes, and hence the greater decrease in the wages paid for those fabrics.

Having thus shown the former state of wages, and the present state of wages, together with the amount of earnings, I now proceed to the causes, or the reasons why, in my opinion, the labour of the weaver is so unequally paid, and why there is a constant tendency to the depression of his wages.

Fluctuations in Trade

It is shown by the returns from the Excise that the cloth trade, or rather the total amount of cloth made, has felt little or no variation; and that it may be considered for the last 10 years (that is, from 1828 to 1837, inclusive), to be stationary, the decrease being only 342 yards on more than 1,700,000 yards (*vide* p. 365); but it is *not* a steady trade, because on reference to each year's produce, during the period above mentioned, it will be seen that the amount varies in very large proportions; so much so than in one year the decrease was so great that nearly 900 men must have been unemployed, and in another case the increase must have required between 600 and 700 men more than in the preceding year. *Vide* p. 399.

This constant fluctuation renders the trade apparently unsteady; although I have shown that, on the average, it is more steady perhaps than any other trade; and the result of this annual vibration, if I may use the term, is a corresponding uncertainty with the manufacturer as to his annual returns and profits. In some years the demand for labour is great, in other years the supply exceeds it.

This fluctuation in the labour-market is as injurious to the workman as the fluctuation in the trade is injurious to the master.

Injurious to Masters:

In bad years both are equally depressed: the master sells at a loss, the weaver works for less; necessity may force abatements, but it is very difficult to command an advance; hence the tendency to low prices and low wages, especially as each quarter brings pecuniary engagements upon the master, and each day the weaver must sell his labour to purchase food.

Induces the Weavers to overstock the Market.

The effect of this fluctuation of labour is injurious to the weaver, inasmuch as Hope in bad times induces him to follow his precarious calling rather than turn at once to other employment of a more steady nature. His habits are as unsettled as his earnings; he feels little or no inducement to set his house in order this year, because his goods might be seized the next. It is not so, however, with the mechanic or an agricultural labourer, whose earnings are more regular and steady; he knows what he has to depend upon; his habits become fixed; he supplies his cottage more or less with furniture, and adds to the comforts of his home with a conviction that necessity will not compel him to dispose of them. This remark holds good to all classes of work-people who earn certain, as well as those who earn precarious, wages. The brickmaker, for instance, obtains good earnings in the summer-time; the sawyer is a roving and uncertain trade; the postboy earns money one week,

Unsteady Earnings induce unsettled Habits, and *vice versâ*.

and none the next; and the consequence is, their houses are dirty and ill-conditioned, and their habits loose and unsettled. On the contrary, the mason, the carpenter, and the agricultural labourer, obtain regular wages, and in most of their houses there is a degree of comfort, and amongst the men a stability of conduct.

In the following Table I show the fluctuation of labour for 16 years, varying from nearly 900 decrease, to between 600 and 700, increase; and yet the average of increase is 251, and the average of decrease is 248, which confirms the apparent contradictory fact of a steady and yet a fluctuating trade.

Table shewing the Quantity of Labour fluctuating with the unsteadiness of the Cloth Trade in Gloucestershire, allowing that an out-door Weaver weaves on the average 835 yards annually.

Table of Quantity of Cloth, showing the annual increase and decrease.

Year.	Price of Wheat.	Total Number of Yards.	Increase or Decrease in reference to the preceding Year.		Fluctuation of Labour in reference to Increase and Decrease.	
			Increase of Quantity.	Decrease of Quantity.	Increase of Labour.	Decrease of Labour.
	s. *d.*					
1823	51 9	1,769,762	..	..	..	..
1824	62 0	1,741,120	..	28,642	..	34
1825	66 6	1,750,243	9,123	..	11	..
1826	56 11	1,499,661	..	250,582	..	300
1827	56 9	1,434,175	..	65,486	..	79
1828	60 5	1,659,329	225,154	..	261	..
1829	66 3	1,517,252	..	142,077	..	170
1830	64 3	1,602,953	85,701	..	104	..
1831	66 4	1,976,622	373,669	..	447	..
1832	58 8	2,169,340	192,718	..	230	..
1833	52 11	1,426,689	..	742,651	..	889
1834	46 0	1,966,846	540,157	..	646	..
1835	37 0	1,864,526	..	102,320	..	122
1836	48 4	1,916,518	51,992	..	62-	..
1837	54 6	1,749,208	..	167,310	..	200
1838	64 5	1,593,594	..	155,614	..	186
		Average	211,216	206,835	1761	1980

I therefore consider the primary cause of low wages to be the fluctuating peculiarities of the cloth trade. These fluctuations have recently caused many heavy failures, and there is a want of real capital in the district. There are some manufacturers who pay their workmen at long dates, or obtain time by paying shopkeepers the amount of the bills contracted by the work-people for food and the necessaries of life; and there are other masters who openly deal in truck, after they have forced wages to the lowest point. One manufacturer acknowledged to me that he made stripes at a contract price so low, that he only undertook it in order to obtain a profit out of truck and labour. Effect of fluctuating trade.

Trade for masters and work for men being irregular and unsteady, wages are in like proportion affected. Mr. Wyatt, one of the partners in a banking firm at Stroud, stated that a stationary trade would induce a standard of wages; but that, in his opinion, the cause of deviation was the invidious competition among the manufacturers to undersell each other. In former periods this competition was not so great. Each manufacturer then found a ready market for his produce, and now he finds one with difficulty and frequently at a loss.

There are other circumstances which tend to the decrease of wages, one is surplus of labour, which I have already shown to be about 16 per cent. on the out-door weaving population. This surplus was improvidently created by the out-door weavers, who, for the sake of obtaining cheap labour, put young persons into the loom to weave, but who were never taught the trade in its various branches; these persons are called "colts."

I now subjoin the following evidence:—

Observations of Mr. Charles Stanton and Mr. Nat. Marling, manufacturers, upon Wages and the Woollen Trade of Gloucestershire.

Do you attribute the distresses of the weavers to any legislative enactments which have been made, or repealed, such as the Spitalfields Act, or do you consider their distress to arise from any regulation among themselves?—I do not think either the one case or the other has had any tendency or influence in determining the present distressed condition of the hand-loom weavers in this vicinity. Surplus of Labour.

Do you consider that manufacturers require labour at a lower rate than is actually called for by the governing price in the market?—As tradesmen, we endeavour to have our work done at as cheap a rate as possible; but as men, many of us keep this principle in abeyance."

(Assented to by Mr. Marling.)

(Mr. Marling considers that the commission manufacturing has a decided tendency to the reduction of wages.)

Mr. Stanton states that, on returning from Germany last year, he found that, from the pressure of trade, the returns were not sufficiently remunerative, and he reduced wages where he found or considered they were too high, and amongst them were the weavers.

Can you explain why the weaver is the operative who is chiefly reduced?—The wages paid to the weavers constitutes a large portion of the amount of manufacturing a piece of cloth; his wages therefore naturally attract our first attention, but wages have been much reduced in other branches in the last 10 years, viz.—

	Per week.
Slubbers from	18*s.* to 16*s.*
Cutters	16*s.* to 13*s.*
Mule Men	25*s.* to 18*s.*

Are manufacturers generally forced to regulate their prices of wages by the example of those amongst them who give the lowest rate?—There is a natural tendency with all of us to reduce wages when it can be done without trenching upon the means of obtaining the necessaries of life.

What are the peculiarities which give to the employers of hand-loom weavers a superior power, not possessed by the employers of other labour, of fixing the wages of those whose labour is essential to them?—I do not conceive that there are any peculiarities possessed by the employers. *The supply of weavers is in excess to the demand in the labour-market.*

Do you not consider that there is an excess of labour in other employments?—Nothing like to the same extent.

(Mr. Marling considers there is no excess of mechanics and handicraftsmen in other labour.)

To what causes do you attribute this excess of hand-loom weavers?—Mr. Marling said that the primeval cause was the reduction of manufacturers, and the consequent decrease of capital from the district.

Mr. Stanton concurred in this answer; but there is a redundancy of every class in the factory. A skilful man, however, is almost always sure of employment, and so are the best weavers.

Is there a great proportion of weavers who are not well skilled in their trade?—There are, of course, gradations in skill; the most skilful of the weavers are seldom unemployed.

Does weaving require much skill?—Yes, a certain portion, but it is very easily acquired.

Has not that facility of acquiring the trade increased the number of hands in the labour-market?—Yes, it has undoubtedly.

Cannot women and young persons weave as well as adults?—Yes, if they possess physical strength.

Do you consider there are any, and what, circumstances calculated in this district to keep up a redundancy of hand-loom weavers' labour?—None that I am aware of.

Does not the expectancy of work of out-door weavers cause them to labour on in a calling little better than starvation to them?—I should say the difficulty of obtaining labour in other employ is the reason, and not from any hope of an improved state of things. The weavers, generally, are totally unfit for any other employment.

Facilities of learning to Weave.

What period of practice is necessary to enable a person at hand-loom weaving to earn 8*s.* a-week?—The young persons have obtained it imperceptibly by quilling to weavers, and getting into the loom at meal-times occasionally.

Suppose a young person who had not seen a loom was put to work, when would he be able to earn 8*s.* a week, supposing him or her to be of an apt disposition?—He might be left to himself in an hour, and at the end of a week be a perfect workman as a *journeyman*. It is singular with what facility young children whom I have put into the power-looms have learned their business.

How long would it take a person to become a *perfect* weaver?—There are some who would never learn, but an apt person would in six months; the skill lies in tying on the threads, preparing and setting to work: the weaving part is mechanical.

Surplus of Labour causes men to undersell each other.

Mr. Peter Playne, on being asked whether he considered wages to be at the lowest point, observed:—I hope so, and that there will be no cause to compel us to go lower; we could go lower to-morrow, but should be very sorry to attempt it. There are a great number of hands unemployed; and whenever we have raised wages the weavers have been the first to come to us, and undersell each other.

By the words raising wages, is it to be understood being *compelled* to raise wages?—Yes, when we have in consequence of strikes; but then the weavers have been the first to offer to take our work at a lower price, and to undersell each other; and I firmly believe that if we gave encouragement to the out-weavers, many of them would offer to take chain cheaper than our present rate of wages. "I should wish," said Mr. Playne, "to alter the word *low* rate of wages, because I cannot use that term to men who earn 12*s.* a-week, and when I consider the agricultural labourer is satisfied with from 8*s.* to 9*s.*"

(This remark concerning the weaver's earnings is applicable to the shop weaver, but not to the out-door weaver.)

Mr. Peter Playne states that they employ both females and young persons in the looms, and that children come to them as quillers and winders; these children gradually get into

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

WAGES.

the loom, and are employed at reduced wages for the space of 3 years, advancing 1*s.* on a piece each year. They are brought up to the coarser and inferior work. They commence at about 18*s.* a piece, the full price being about 22*s.*

A woman receives 3*s.* a piece less on the white work than a man, and 4*s.* less on coloured. This has always been the case, and the example was set by the master weavers. Women are not so regular in their time as men, nor so able to perform the work in the same time. Thirty men will do as much work as forty women, and the outlay for looms, buildings, &c. is greater for a number of females than for the male weavers, but that this outlay for looms, buildings, &c. is not considered to be equal to the difference in pay to the same extent.

Wages of Women Weavers less than Male.

Mr. Hyde, wool-loftman at Mr. Peter Playne's observed, that the longer a piece is on the loom the heavier is the loss on the capital sunk under it.

Mr. Playne also stated that theirs is an expensive fabric, and it is their interest to weave and sell in as short a time as possible after they have purchased the wool. It is not on the weaving only, but on other portions of the fabric; in fact it is on the capital expended in buying the wool, and the whole expenditure of the fabric. They have 40,000*l.* embarked in trade, and if it hangs back for a week or ten days the loss must be considerable, and to compensate for this delay they make this deduction in a woman's wages.

Commission Houses tend to the reduction of Wages.

In reference to the acknowledged and proved surplus population, I will now trace the evil tendency of the commission houses upon wages of labour. This system is to work wool in Gloucestershire into cloth at a contract price for London houses, who send down the raw material to the manufacturer, and he works for that London firm, as a weaver works for a master. The one receives the raw wool, the other receives his chain; both are indifferent as to the markets, and both, for want of capital, work for hire.

By this system the London firm, in point of fact, becomes the manufacturer, and the manufacturer the workman.

What is the first consequence of this system? It is this:—The London houses seek the cheapest method to have their wool made into cloth, and the Gloucestershire manufacturer finds keen competition among his neighbours, so he calculates the lowest price at which labour can be obtained, or profit obtained, in order to obtain the work.

The second consequence is, that the regular manufacturer, whose wages have been steady, is compelled to compete with the commission maker.

The ultimate, and most serious consequence is, that as the commission maker is deprived of the profits of wool and state of the market, he has no source of profit, owing to the very nature of his contract, except from labour, glue, size, or teazles, or the advantage of a cheap rental. It is wages that suffer, and by this system there must inevitably be the strongest tendency to reduce every description of labour. So that, in fact, the London house becomes the arbiter of wages.

Yet from this pernicious system, by which manufacturers admitted persons into the knowledge of the trade, no good has resulted to them by the reduction of wages, because the London firms are in as keen competition as the manufacturers are in Gloucestershire; and they have as little interest for the manufacturer as the manufacturer may have for his weaver, or his "seg carrier."

Mr. Derret, a manufacturer, observes that though a manufacturer may lower his wages, it is only a temporary advantage, because the cloth buyers in the London market soon learn the fact, and lower their prices in proportion.

Joseph Rickett, a weaver, observes that the manufacturers derive no substantial benefit from cheap labour, because both draper and factor, when they ascertain that a reduction of wages has been made, immediately lower their prices, so that all the working classes suffer by this system, and nobody, after all, is benefited. He further observes, that by reason of the competition among all parties, the weavers are driven into competition, and that they undersell each other to their own ruin.

The result of this system is, that it became a test of the minimum price of wages, and it also tested or proved, by that low minimum, that there was a surplus of labour among the weavers. This fact once proved, the usual rate of wages became disturbed. It was like cutting through a bank, and converting a smooth lake into a turbulent stream.

The following is the testimony of Mr. Charles Stanton, and Mr. Nathaniel Marling, both leading manufacturers, upon the tendency of the commission system to the reduction of wages.

Is not the market price of cloth frequently governed by the price of wool, and does not the manufacturer seek to derive profit from the fluctuations in the wool market?—The price of

cloth ought to be entirely governed by the price of wool in a neighbourhood like this, where wages have not been very unsteady, but competition in a circumscribed market frequently compels us to sell our goods at a return inadequate to the capital and skill employed.

(Mr. N. Marling here observed that skill has as much to do with profit as the fluctuations in the wool market. Two men may buy the same kind of wool, and make it up at the same cost of manufacture, yet the one shall lose, and the other gain.)

Then may I say that the profits of trade arise from the skill in the production, or from profits arising from the judicious and well-selected purchases of wool?—Yes, a judicious selection of wool, and a good manufactured article will now command a ready sale, and a fair profit.

In that case what are the sources of profit to that manufacturer who has wool sent to him from a London house to make into cloth, and who, having made the article on commission, has no interest or connexion with the market price of the fabric?—*In that case he can have no other source of profit than by trenching on the wages of labour.*

Mr. Nathaniel Marling here agreed with Mr. Charles Stanton, that the commission manufacturers have a decided tendency to the reduction of wages.

In further corroboration, Mr. William Playne, sen. considers the *makers of cloth upon commission have no means of profit except the profit upon wages,*—that they therefore must employ low-priced workmen; and other manufacturers in the district, in order to meet the commission cloths in the markets, must also employ the cheapest labour.

So far it is clear that the want of capital introduced the commission system, and the commission system lowers wages.

Young Persons brought up to the Loom.

The out-door weavers, in order to increase their wages or weekly earnings, stocked their extra looms with young persons (boys and girls), who worked at low wages, and who never learned the trade, but always worked under the eye of the master weaver. But, by this improvident plan, the weavers were increasing the evil; they were heaping fuel upon fire; and, instead of studying how to *reduce*, they were imprudently using every means to *increase* the weaving population. Hence so much distress, such scarcity of work and such depression in the wages.

Low state of Wages.

This surplus population in a trade so fluctuating must of necessity tend to the lowest rate of wages. Mr. Charles Stanton thinks, from what he has heard of the prices paid by some masters, that wages are not sufficiently remunerative for the amount of labour given, but he considers that the state of trade will not allow more. Mr. Weeks, at Stanley Mills, is of the same opinion.

Mr. Peter Playne says he hopes that wages are now at their lowest, and that he shall not have cause to lower them, that he *could* lower them to-morrow, but should be sorry to attempt it. He attributes the power of lowering them to *the great number of unemployed hands*, and states that when, by strikes, they have been obliged to raise wages, the weavers have been the first to ask for work under the price. He further states that many out-door weavers would would take chain at lower prices than he is paying in the factory.

Mr. Lewis of the Oil mills states that men undersell each other. He pays 18*s.* for stripes, and in the summer a weaver offered, if Mr. Lewis would give him constant work for 4 looms, to weave the pieces for 13*s.* a piece. Mr. Lewis attributes this low rate of wages, and depressed condition of the weavers to the fact that "there are more hands than are wanted."

In reference to the training of young persons to the loom, I must observe, that the weavers marry younger, I think, than any other class of people. Their children are employed to quill and attend about a loom till they imperceptibly obtain a sufficient knowledge to begin weaving. The weavers assert that a person cannot learn the "art and mystery" of weaving under four years, and I believe they are correct, if it is requisite for a man to take the raw chain, and return it as cloth without assistance, because there is judgment required to size and tie on; but, by the present improved system of working in the factories, there is a division of labour, and the weaver is not required to size, and he has assistance in tying on; therefore the "art and mystery" is not required, as weaving can be learned in a short time sufficiently to earn slight wages. Mr. Samuel Marling, a manufacturer, states that a girl of 16 or 17 years of age, to his knowledge, after she had been about six months in a loom, earned 5*s.* or 6*s.* a week with occasional assistance, but she had been previously quilling and attending to the loom for about six months. Mr. Charles Staunton states that it is astonishing with what facility a child or young person may learn to weave. Mr. Smart, a manufacturer at Chalford, states that a stout girl can weave stripes as well as any man in the county, and women likewise at broad cloth. This is confirmed by Mr. N. Jones, and many others.

Young persons can learn to weave with great facility.

As the master out-door weavers introduced young labour into the loom, so

they proved that female labour and young persons at lower wages could perform the work.

Power-looms have fixed the maximum of wages; they have proved at what cost a piece can be woven. Mr. Stanton observes, with reference to the effect of power upon hand-loom weaving, that the latter is not in a marketable position in consequence of power; that the hand-loom weaver must compete with power or abandon the loom; that whatever it costs to weave a piece by power, the hand-loom weaver must work for *nearly* that sum, whether bread be dear or cheap, whether labour be in demand or not.

In your instructions, page 21, it is stated,—

"Thus, if it be true, according to the statements of many of the witnesses examined by the Committee of the House of Commons, that the wages of the weavers depend on the will of the master manufacturers, and that the master manufacturers are forced to follow the example of those among them who offer the lowest wages, it must follow that the wages of the weavers can never long exceed the minimum of subsistence, for the instant they exceed that point, it certainly would be to the interest, and is supposed to be in the power of some masters to lower wages in order to undersell their rivals, and it is supposed that all the rest must follow their example."

And I am further directed to ascertain,—

"The peculiarities which give the employer of hand-loom labour a facility—not possessed by employers of labourers in other trades—of fixing wages of those whose labour is essential to him, or which enable the master who reduces wages to force others to follow his example."

Rate of Wages not regulated by Supply and Demand, owing to Surplus of Labour.

In reply to this important passage, I beg to observe, that the masters have the power (and use it moreover), of lowering wages, especially of the out-door weavers; that other masters are compelled, or say they are compelled, to follow their example; but as the fabric of one species of cloth differs from the make of another master, he may produce a finer cloth and obtain his profit without pinching it out of the labourer. When this is not the case, and a profit by such means is not attainable, the weaver is lowered in his wages. The price of wages depends upon the master, and not upon the bargain that a weaver could make if his individual labour was in demand. There is a surplus of labour. Mr. Charles Stanton, above quoted, and who is one of the principal manufacturers in the county, observed,—

"I always take care that my men shall average above 12*s.* a week (factory weaving), but if the other manufacturers undersell me by lowering their wages, and by thus compelling me to lower mine under that price which I consider a man ought to earn, that moment I shall cease employing human labour, and will immediately adopt steam."

Then again, Mr. Peter Playne, another very considerable manufacturer, stated to me, in reference to a recent reduction made by him in his weavers' wages, that he was compelled to reduce in consequence of surrounding reductions, and the competition of power-looms; adding, that as long as his men can afford to work as cheap as cloth can be produced by power, he should retain human labour.

Thus, in fact, it is the masters who can fix the price of wages, owing to the superabundance of labour. This peculiarity or facility chiefly arises from the plain fact that there is a surplus population of weavers. As long as this is the case, the weaver is in a different position to other labourers; he is below the reach of those principles which regulate the wages of other classes; his employer can depress him, and the weaver has no means to withstand him, or uphold his condition. I therefore consider that, in the present condition of the weaver, the question of cheap food does not apply to him; because, let food be reduced to any price, he will not be allowed to earn more than will purchase him that same quantity which he can now obtain. This will be the case as long as a surplus exists, and the truest remedy will be to place him in the same position as other labour, and that can only be effected by removing the primary evil, namely, the surplus, or, by stimulating trade, to employ it.

Bread and Wages.

The price of bread does not appear to possess any regulating power, or to cause any corresponding fluctuation in wages, except that when bread is low-priced, it is quoted as a reason for low wages; but, when bread rises, wages seldom rise, except in extraordinary times, as occurred this winter in Gloucester, when bread was 9½*d.* a loaf; an addition of 1*d.* an ell was made by a few masters, but, when bread lowered, the weavers were in some cases immediately reduced.

Nathan Oldham, a weaver at Chalford, observed that,—

"Three years ago, when bread was 5*d.* a quartern, manufacturers referred to the price of

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Wages.

provisions, and said our wages were sufficient, but now that bread is 8*d.* a quartern, there is no rise in our wages."

On reference to the prices of corn and wages, it further appears that wages have decreased, while corn has maintained its price. I quote the average of five years in regard to corn, and prices of coloured work, 1800 make broad, from 1825 to 1838.

Prices of Corn. Prices of Wages.

		s.	d.				£.	s.	d.
1820 to 1825,	average price of corn per quarter	55	7	1825	Out-door Weavers. Wages per piece 1800 coloured		3	9	0
1826 to 1830,	do. do.	61	0	1830	do.	do.	3	9	0
1831 to 1835,	do. do.	52	3	1835	do.	do.	3	0	0
1836 to 1838,	do. do.	55	9	1838	do.	do.	2	4	9

The following are the opinions of Mr. Dauncey, manufacturer at Uley:—

Decrease of Wages.

"1st. I believe up to the year 1820, the weavers in the west of England had pretty well work enough, and, provisions being reasonable, the weavers did not complain so much as at the present time; neither had they occasion to do so, for at the present time *wheat* is now selling from 8*s.* to 8*s.* 6*d.* per bushel, and at that time it was only 5*s.* 6*d.*, which makes about 30 per cent. difference; and at that period the manufacturers paid 40*s.* for what they now pay 30*s.*, which makes about 25 per cent. difference more to the weaver; and both sums together make it full 55 per cent.; besides, the weaver has not so much employment now as at former times, which makes it still the worse for them. Up to the year 1820, the manufacturers could get about 50 per cent. more for the same goods as they are now selling.

"2nd. I have no doubt that the present distress of the weavers is the want of more labour, and provisions cheaper; and how are they to obtain those two things?

Repeal of Corn Laws proposed.

"3rdly. I answer, *repeal the corn laws*, for ever since those obnoxious laws have been in existence, the poor man has been getting *poorer and worse off.*

"4thly. The generality of the weavers are a sober, industrious, and peaceable set of people; and, if the corn laws were repealed, the manufacturer would find a better market for his goods, and the weaver would have more employment in consequence."

Condition of the Weavers.

CONDITION OF THE WEAVERS.

Under the foregoing head of "Wages," it will be seen that there are three classes of weavers, namely, the factory, the out-door master, and the out-door journeymen weavers,—their average earnings are shown to be as follow:—

	s.	d.		
Factory weavers	11	9	per week, pages	27, 83
Out-door master, including "play" time	8	1½	„ page	30
Journeyman, including "play" time	5	7	„ page	30

Factory Weavers.

The condition of the factory weaver, though low, in comparison with other labour, is not, I presume, so depressed as to require your immediate attention,—yet, of the three classes of weavers, though he is the best off, yet he is the most dissatisfied with his lot, and with his master. He considers the factory system to be an infringement upon the trade of weaving, and a "breaking up" of his domestic comforts. The factory system is a recent introduction, and though offensive to the present will not be the cause of complaint with the next generation of weavers.

The earnings of the factory weaver are more regular than the earnings of the out-door weaver, because his work and wages are more steady.

The wages are more steady, because a manufacturer finds that it is more difficult to lower 30 or 40 men working under a roof, &c., who are in communication with each other, than to lower the wages of 30 or 40 isolated out-door weavers, whom he separately supplies with chain, and who, owing to a surplus of hands, are struggling for existence, and are ever ready to undersell each other. It is a temptation, of which the manufacturer can more readily avail himself with the out-door weaver than with the factory weaver.

It might, however, be presumed that the manufacturer would therefore prefer employing out-door weavers in preference to the factory men; but there are advantages in the factory system counterbalancing the difference of wages, such as the profits on the looms,—the convenience of having the work under immediate superintendence, and the saving of material, by checking embezzlement on "sling-

ing." These are fair advantages felt by every master. There are, however, other advantages, of which some manufacturers avail themselves, namely, the certain trade of a collected number of persons to a shop, in which a manufacturer or a wool-loft man may have a "sleeping interest;" a plan too subtle to be called truck, but truck it is to all intents and purposes. Then, again, the master, or his wool-loft man, lets cottages to the factory weavers at high rents, which the men pay, in order to be supplied with constant work.

The convenience and the profits of the factory system may, therefore, be considered advantageous to the master.

I now turn to the subject of the condition of the out-door weavers.

Out-door Master.

The average amount of the master weaver is 8*s.* 1½*d.* per week (*vide* page 387). Joseph Hill, a master out-door weaver at Stonehouse, says, he has just completed a chain of cassimeres, which took him three weeks to weave,—price 26*s.*, length, 60 yards, deductions 3*s.*; labour each day, 13 hours; so that his nett earnings, 17 working days, 1*l.* 3*s.*, were 1*s.* 4¼*d.* a-day, or 8*s.* 1½*d.* per week. Low as this sum may be, the weaver would be better off than he actually is if this amount was regular—if he knew that every week he would have that certain sum. This is *not* the case: his work is extremely irregular, his means of subsistence are consequently precarious; he, therefore, possesses no certainty of habit or concentration of his energies.

The amount of earnings of a master weaver, presuming that he has chain, is 9*s.* 8*d.* per week (*vide* page 385),—he can exist by his labour, as long as he has work, but when he has to play for a week or ten days, his condition is deplorable. Each day brings its daily wants which must be supplied; the manufacturer, in bad or languid times, can hold back or reduce his establishment; but the poor man's cupboard must be supplied. His wages are too low to enable him to hoard his labour, but he must sell it, or lose it at the time.

Out-door Journeyman Weaver.

The average earnings of the journeyman out-door weavers are very low, namely, 5*s.* 7*d.* per week, according to the calculated amount, (see Wages and Earnings, page 387); and in confirmation of this statement, Francis Berry, a journeyman weaver, states, that he weaves stripe for his master weaver, who deducts 5*d.* out of the shillings of the gross amount, for glue, size, harness, quilling, &c., &c., &c., and he receives 10*s.* 6*d.*; that he is a fortnight earning that sum; so his wages are only 5*s.* 3*d.* per week.

Reason of his low Wages.

The journeyman is, in general, a workman whose duties require but little skill or judgment: he works under the superintendence of his master, who ties on the chain, and attends to the more intricate part of the work. All that the journeyman performs, is moving the slay, raising the treddles, and piecing the broken threads; so that, with the exception of piecing threads, he merely supplies animal strength to perform those operations which can be, and are now performed by power.

Therefore, as the journeyman is next to, and nearest in contact with, power, so it competes with him, and his wages are the lowest.

Confirmatory evidence.

The average amount of the wages of the out-door weavers, according to the calculated amount under the head of "Wages and Earnings," is 6*s.* 10¼*d.* per week, *vide* page 30. This is confirmed by the opinions of many persons of practical experience, and well acquainted with the districts. The relieving officer at Bisley thinks a weaver scarcely averages a shilling a-day. The relieving officer at Rodborough is of the same opinion. Mr. Rasher, one of the guardians of the parish of Kings Stanley, a very intelligent farmer, does not place a weaver's earnings higher than 7*s.* per week. Mr. Ross, attorney at Chalford, gives the same testimony; and nearly every person, not connected with the manufacture of cloth, considers that the earnings of the out-door weavers are insufficient for their support. Some manufacturers are of the same opinion; and many of them, that is to say, the better paying masters, agree that the wages of the lower paying masters are not sufficiently remunerative for the labour given. Mr. Wyatt, at Stroud, in reference to the condition of the poor, observed—"I look with dismay at the distress among the weavers round my property. All the mills in my vicinity are at work, but the out-door weavers can scarcely obtain a chain, and I infer there must be a surplus of hands. Since I was engaged in the cloth trade, wages have decreased 33 per cent. The wages have been gradually reduced bit by bit; they have become worse and worse; but had they been reduced suddenly or violently, the men would have risen *en masse* to protect themselves, and to oppose such reductions." He further observed, that though the weavers were never a healthy or strong class of people, they are more emaciated in their appearance than formerly, even within the last ten years.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CONDITION OF THE WEAVERS.

I caused 1135 families of out-door weavers, residing in 16 parishes, to be personally visited. They comprised a population of 5010 individuals.

My enquiries were directed to the number in each family, the number of children, male and female, number of persons employed in each family, whether in factory, in hand-loom, or at other labour,—also the amount of weekly earnings from each sort of labour. I further ascertained the weekly expenditure for rent, rates, fuel, and subsistence. I likewise obtained a return of the number of children in each family, as well as the number that attended pay schools, free-schools, and Sunday-schools.

No. 1.—STATEMENT concerning FAMILIES, INCOME, and

Name of Parish.	Number of Heads of Families.			Total Number in the Families.	Number of Children.		Number of Persons employed in each Family.				Number too young or unable to earn Money.
	Employed.	Unemployed.	Total.		Males.	Females.	In Factory.	In Hand Loom.	In other occupation.	Total number employed.	
Avening	7	..	7	31	9	9	..	8	4	12	19
Bisley	171	103	274	1215	276	339	10	243	157	410	805
Cam	42	1	43	214	72	62	1	47	30	78	136
Coaley	40	2	42	190	54	59	..	53	24	77	113
Dursley	18	..	18	72	21	21	11	20	9	40	32
Horsley	37	..	37	175	45	61	9	38	18	65	110
Minchin Hampton	51	..	51	234	49	90	2	79	12	93	141
Painswick	41	..	41	154	36	46	10	39	8	57	97
Randwick	26	..	26	131	45	37	..	29	21	50	81
Rodborough	37	..	37	164	52	48	23	41	14	78	86
Stanleys	88	..	88	437	143	124	16	94	55	165	272
Stonehouse	41	..	41	190	70	43	23	47	28	98	92
Stroud	174	..	174	788	218	253	51	196	121	368	420
Uley	26	8	34	151	28	45	1	37	9	47	104
Woodchester	14	..	14	70	20	24	..	22	2	24	46
Wootton	208	..	208	794	201	243	71	241	22	334	460
Totals	1021	114	1135	5010	1339	1504	228	1234	534	1996	3014

No. 2.—CENTESIMAL and AVERAGE STATEMENT concerning FAMILIES

Population.	Name of Parish.	Number of Heads of Families.			Average number in each Family.	Number of Children.		Number of Persons Employed in each Family.				Number too young or unable to earn Money.
		Employed.	Unemployed.	Total.		Males.	Females.	In Factory.	In Hand-Loom.	In other occupation.	Total number employed.	
						Average.		Per Cent.				Per Cent.
2396	Avening	7	..	7	4·4	1·3	1·3	..	66·66	33·33	39·0	61·29
5896	Bisley	171	103	274	4·4	1·0	1·2	2·43	59·27	38·29	33·75	66·25
2071	Cam	42	1	43	5·0	1·6	1·4	1·28	60·25	38·47	36·45	63·55
1124	Coaley	40	2	42	4·5	1·3	1·4	..	68·83	31·17	40·52	59·48
3226	Dursley	18	..	18	4·0	1·1	1·1	27·5	50·0	22·5	55·55	44·44
3690	Horsley	37	..	37	4·7	1·2	1·6	13·84	58·46	27·70	37·14	62·85
5114	Hampton	51	..	51	4·5	0·9	1·7	2·10	85·0	12·90	39·75	60·25
4099	Painswick	41	..	41	3·7	0·9	1·1	17·54	68·42	14·04	37·0	63·0
1031	Randwick	26	..	26	5·0	1·7	1·4	..	58·0	42·0	38·16	61·83
2141	Rodborough	37	..	37	4·4	1·4	1·3	29·49	52·56	18·0	47·56	52·43
3380	Stanleys	88	..	88	5·0	1·6	1·4	9·68	57·0	33·31	37·76	62·24
2469	Stonehouse	41	..	41	4·6	1·7	1·0	23·47	48·0	28·53	51·58	48·42
8607	Stroud	174	..	174	4·5	1·2	1·6	13·86	53·23	32·88	46·70	53·30
2641	Uley	26	8	34	4·4	0·8	1·3	2·13	78·72	19·15	31·13	68·87
885	Woodchester	14	..	14	5·0	1·4	1·7	..	91·66	8·33	34·29	65·71
5482	Wootton	208	..	208	3·8	0·9	1·1	21·26	72·17	6·57	42·0	57·93
54,252			Average		4½	1·3	1·4	11·40	61·85	26·75	39·83	60·17

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CONDITION OF THE WEAVERS.

The weavers, for the sake of cheap rent, live in lone or scattered cottages in retired places, or skirting on the edges of commons; therefore, I experienced greater difficulty in obtaining these returns, than I might have found if they had been living more densely.

The following tables are compiled from the statements of each individual:—

The Table No. 1. contains the gross numbers in each parish, and the totals. The Table No. 2, contains the centesimal and average proportions in each parish; and Table No. 3, contains the centesimal and average proportions of the total number of families.

EXPENDITURE of HAND-LOOM WEAVERS.

Average weekly Income.									Average weekly Expenditure for Rent, Fuel, and Subsistence.												Number of Children that attend.			
From Factory.			From Hand-Loom.			From other occupation.			Total Amount of weekly Income.			Amount of Rent per Week.			Amount of Rates per Week.			Amount for Candles, Fuel, and Soap, per Week.			Amount per Week for Food and Clothing.			Pay Schools.	Free Schools.	Sunday Schools.	Children not attending any School.
£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.				
	..		1	15	0	0	8	0	2	3	0	0	12	8	0	1	8	0	11	2	0	17	6	..	..	7	
0	2	0	62	9	0	25	14	0	88	5	0	19	2	11	0	14	8	14	15	8	53	11	9	15	36	307	
0	7	0	16	14	6	5	3	6	22	5	0	3	4	8	0	5	11	3	5	5	15	9	0	2	8	39	
	..		13	18	0	1	16	9	15	16	3	2	12	2	0	4	8	2	14	10	10	4	7	..	..	68	
0	17	6	8	9	0	9	16	0	10	2	6	1	6	5	0	2	3	1	8	2	7	5	8	1	3	31	
3	3	0	10	15	6	2	16	6	16	15	0	2	11	5	0	8	8	3	7	4	10	7	7	3	7	45	
0	14	6	21	16	6	1	9	0	24	0	0	4	5	10	0	13	2	4	16	11	14	4	1	2	5	16	
1	8	0	14	19	6	1	6	3	17	13	9	2	17	9	0	6	7	2	17	9	11	11	8	2	6	53	
	..		9	2	0	2	17	6	11	19	6	1	13	2	0	3	5	1	18	10	8	4	1	..	6	44	
3	14	3	12	2	6	1	15	0	17	11	9	3	5	7	0	3	11½	2	17	9	11	4	5	5	1	48	
1	17	6	38	9	0	3	19	0	44	5	6	7	10	9	0	14	4	6	15	8	29	4	9	3	10	147	
3	12	0	15	15	6	2	17	9	22	5	3	3	15	7	0	6	8	3	10	0	14	13	0	16	1	71	
7	16	2	75	2	0	15	0	3	97	18	5	14	2	9	1	11	3	13	17	7	68	6	10	24	23	238	
	..		11	6	6	0	14	6	12	1	0	1	17	10	0	4	3	2	1	8	7	17	3	..	6	35	
	..		7	6	0	0	10	0	7	16	0	1	4	11	0	1	11	1	13	9	4	15	5	3	1	18	
18	3	6	80	15	7	1	1	9	100	10	0	18	3	11	0	8	11	16	6	3	65	1	9	66	17	234	
41	16	11	400	16	1	68	5	9	510	18	9	88	8	4	6	12	3½	82	18	9	332	19	4½	142	130	1401	1170

INCOME, and EXPENDITURE of HAND-LOOM WEAVERS.

Average Weekly Income of each Family.					Total Amount of Weekly Income of each Family.	Average Weekly Expenditure for Rent, Fuel, and Subsistence.				Number of Children that attend.				
From Factory.	From Hand-Loom.	From other occupation.	Total amount of Weekly Income.		Amount of Rent per Week.	Amount of Rates per Week.	Amount for Candles, Fuel, and Soap per Week.	Amount per Week for Food and Clothing.	Pay Schools.	Free Schools.	Sunday Schools.	Number of children too young, or, for other reasons, not attending any School.	
									Per Cent.				
s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	d.	s. d.	s. d.					
..	4 4½	2 0	3 7	6 1¾	1 9¾	2¼	1 7	2 6	..	..	39·0		
1 2½	5 1¾	3 3¼	4 3½	10 3¾	2 4¼	1	1 8¼	6 3¾	2·4	5·8	49·9		
7 0	7 1½	3 5¼	5 8½	10 7½	1 6	1½	1 6½	7 5	1·4	6·0	29.1		
..	5 3	1 6¼	4 1¼	7 10¾	1 3¾	1½	1 4½	5 1½	..	..	60·2		
1 6¼	8 5¼	1 9¼	5 0¾	11 3	1 5½	1½	1 7	8 1	2·4	7·1	74·0		
7 0	5 8	3 1½	5 1¾	9 0¾	1 4¾	2¾	1 9¾	5 7¼	2·8	6·6	42·4		
7 3	5 6¼	2 5	5 2	9 5	1 8¼	3	1 10¾	5 7	1.4	3·6	11,5		
2 9½	7 8	3 3¼	6 2¼	8 7½	1 5	1¾	1 5	5 8	2·4	7·3	64·6		
..	6 3¼	2 9	4 9½	9 2½	1 3¼	1½	1 6	6 3¾	..	7·3	5,.6		
3 3	5 11¼	2 6	4 6	9 6	1 9¼	1½	1 6½	6 0⅝	5·0	1·0	4,.0		
2 4	8 2	1 5¼	5 4¼	10 0¾	1 8½	2	1 6⅛	6 7¾	1·1	3·9	58·0		
3 1½	6 8½	2 0¾	4 6	10 10¼	1 10	2	1 8½	7 1¾	14·1	0.9	62·8		
3 3	7 9¼	3 5¾	5 3¾	11 3	1 7¼	2¼	1 7¼	7 10¼	5·2	4·9	50·5		
..	6 1½	1 7¼	5 1½	9 2¾	1 5¼	1½	1 7¼	6 0½	..	8·2	48·0		
..	6 7½	5 0	6 6	11 1¾	1 9½	1½	2 5	6 9¾	7·0	2·2	40·9		
5 3	6 8½	0 11¾	5 11	9 7¼	1 3¼	2	1 1	6 3¼	14·8	3·9	52·7		
3 8	6 6	2 6	5 0	9 8	1 8¾	1½	1 7½	6 6¼	5·0	4·57	49·31	41·12	

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CONDITION OF THE WEAVERS.

No. 3.—STATEMENTS given by 1135 Heads of Families, Out-door Weavers, concerning their their Families, Earnings, and Expenditure, collected by individual inquiries.

Average Number in each Family, calculated from the individual statements of 1135 Heads of Families (OUT-DOOR WEAVERS.)

Centesimal Number of Children in each Family . . . . . { 1·3 Males / 1·4 Females } Total Number of Children in each Family 2·7.

		Per Cent.		Per Cent.		Per Cent.
,, ,,	attending Pay-schools .	5·7	Centesimal Average of Children receiving Education. Total	58·88	not receiving Education.	41·12
,, ,,	,, Free-schools .	4·50				
,, ,,	,, Sunday-schools	49·31				
,, ,,	Persons out of the gross Number earning Money by Labour . .					39·83
,, ,,	,, ,, not earning Money, presumed to be too young, too aged, or disabled					60·17

	Per Cent.		s.	d.
Centesimal Number of Persons in each Family working in Factories	11·40	Weekly earnings	3	8
,, ,, at Hand Loom	61·85	,,	6	6
,, ,, at other occupation	26·75	,,	2	6

Total amount of weekly income of each Family upon the gross amount of Earnings . . 10*s.*

	s.	d.
Expense for Rent	1	$8\frac{3}{4}$
,, Rates	0	$1\frac{1}{2}$
,, Fuel, Soap, and Candles	1	$7\frac{1}{2}$
,, Food and Clothing . .	6	$6\frac{1}{4}$ or 1*s.* $3\frac{1}{2}$*d.* per week, per head, for food and clothing.

The above tables might be questioned as to their accuracy, in consequence of the weavers underrating their amount of earnings—a point upon which I have experienced considerable difficulty, and concerning which I could obtain no satisfactory information, even from the masters' books; because, when chain is given to an out-door weaver he may at the same time have work from another master, and the amount of wages in a master's books, may be only a part of the actual earnings of the weaver. But, in order to corroborate or refute their statements, I obtained the opinion of various disinterested persons as to the presumed amount of their out-door earnings, and the general opinion is, that they do not earn 7*s.* a week upon hand-loom labour. By the returns of the weavers the earnings are 6*s.* 6*d.* on the average.

As a further test, I arranged a Table of Earnings in reference to the number in each family of 1135 families, according to their parishes, where it will be seen that the average amount of earnings of a family is 10*s.* per week, and that the average number of individuals in each family is 5, being the "hardest" family for a poor man (who has married young), because his three children are too young to earn money, and the parents must labour to support them.

SUMMARY TABLE of the stated Averages of EARNINGS of the FAMILIES of 1135 OUT-DOOR WEAVERS, who have been personally visited in the under-mentioned Parishes.

Amount of Weekly Earnings of OUT-DOOR WEAVERS and their Families in the Parishes of

Number of Persons in each Family.	Avening.	Bisley.	Cam.	Conley.	Dursley.	Hampton.	Horsley.	Painswick.	Randwick.	Rodborough.	Stanley.	Stonehouse.	Stroud.	Uley.	Woodchester.	Wootton.	Average earnings in reference to the number of Persons in each Family
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Single	..	5 1	8 0	5 0	3 0	5 0	5 0	6 6	5 0	5 7	8 3	6 10	7 9	..	7 0	6 2	6 2
2 in a Family	5 0	6 0	8 0	6 10	15 0	8 2	5 9	7 7	7 9	7 6	8 1	11 0	10 4	7 10	6 0	9 $10\frac{3}{4}$	8 2
3 ,,	5 6	8 0	7 9	7 4	10 8	12 0	7 4	9 8	9 8	9 0	9 0	11 7	11 0	5 0	12 0	8 $0\frac{3}{4}$	9 0
4 ,,	..	9 8	8 10	8 3	9 6	8 5	8 0	8 6	8 0	11 4	9 $10\frac{1}{2}$	8 3	11 1	8 7	..	9 $0\frac{1}{4}$	9 1
5 ,,	7 0	10 8	9 9	8 2	..	10 3	9 6	10 10	8 0	15 0	9 1	11 0	11 5	8 10	11 4	9 $7\frac{1}{2}$	10 4
6 ,,	10 0	9 0	9 3	9 8	14 6	8 3	9 3	9 8	10 0	9 0	10 11	11 7	11 8	8 6	11 0	9 $7\frac{1}{2}$	10 1
7 ,,	9 0	10 0	13 0	8 10	14 0	9 5	12 9	10 6	..	10 6	12 2	13 3	11 11	11 0	7 0	10 1	10 10
8 ,,	..	12 11	13 6	11 0	11 0	12 4	15 0	8 6	14 4	11 0	12 6	13 8	15 0	11 0	17 0	12 4	12 9
9 ,,	..	10 11	13 0	..	..	15 0	..	..	11 6	18 0	11 6	..	15 8	..	..	9 0	13 0
10 ,,	..	9 8	18 6	17 0	..	11 4	13 0	..	11 0	..	12 0	..	16 0	..	..	11 $9\frac{1}{2}$	13 4
11 ,,	..	..	18 0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	12 0	..	..	..	..	13 0	14 4
12 ,,	..	18 0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	17 6	..	..	9 0	14 10
Average in each Parish	7 4	9 11	11 $7\frac{1}{4}$	9 $1\frac{1}{2}$	11 $1\frac{1}{2}$	10 0	9 $6\frac{1}{2}$	8 $11\frac{1}{2}$	9 $5\frac{1}{2}$	10 $9\frac{1}{4}$	10 6	10 $10\frac{3}{4}$	12 8	8 $8\frac{1}{4}$	10 $2\frac{1}{4}$	9 $8\frac{1}{2}$	10 0

It had been frequently stated that at the restoration of peace many disbanded soldiers turned to their previous trades, and that they helped to overstock the labour market. I therefore obtained from each pensioner at the pay-table an account of his present calling: it is as follows—

Total number of pensioners in the district 84, namely—

Paid at Hampton	34
„ Stroud	21
„ Wootton	29
	84 total

Of this number I found that—

Pensioners.

28	were Labourers.	1	was a Baker.
19	„ Weavers.	1	„ Sawyer.
8	„ Shearmen.	1	„ Millman.
4	„ Spinners.	1	„ Turner.
3	„ Dyers.	1	„ Cabinet Maker.
3	„ Gardeners.	1	„ Plasterer.
2	„ Masons.	1	„ Slop Seller.
2	„ Tailors.	1	„ Servant.
1	was a Cloth Presser.	6	followed no trade or calling.

Total number of pensioners employed in the cloth trade is 37 out of 84.

In reference to the average amount of weekly earnings by hand-loom labour, namely, 6*s.* 6*d.*, it must be remembered that the statements are made by the out-door weavers, and might be considered fallacious. In order to test the accuracy of so important a branch of my inquiry, I ascertained from the Excise returns the annual average of cloth woven during the last 5 years, and having (with great difficulty) obtained the wages of every manufacturer and the deductions, I calculated (allowing certain periods to the factory and out-door weaving) the number of persons requisite to weave that given amount of cloth, together with their consequent earnings. I moreover found that there was a surplus of 16 per cent. on the out-door weaving population, namely, 3000, and after deducting that amount of surplus labour from the full earnings of the out-door weaver, supposing he was in work, the average obtained by this method nearly agrees with the statements of the men. I find their earnings to be 6*s.* 10*d.*, and the men state it to be 6*s.* 6*d.* (*vide* Wages and Earnings, page 387). This refers only to out-door weaving. Many of the weavers occasionally obtain intermediate work at other pursuits, of which no account has been made, and it is too precarious to be fixed at a presumed amount.

The out-door weavers are undoubtedly in deep and severe distress. Every disinterested person owns it throughout the district, and by personal observation and inquiry I have witnessed it.

Prison cost, and Weaver's condition.

Many weavers have declared that they consider the condition of a prisoner to be superior to their own, inasmuch as he is supplied with food and clothing, and they can scarcely obtain either the one or the other.

Mr. Marklove, the governor of Horsley prison, has informed me that weavers who may have been committed are actually grateful for the daily food they have received, and they leave the prison with regret, not knowing where to obtain the next meal.

The weekly cost for food and clothing, in this prison, is 2*s.* 4*d.* per head.

I have already shown in the preceding table that 5 is the average number in each family, and that the average earnings of that family are only 10*s.* per week.

The cost of 5 individuals in Horsley prison for food and clothing is more than the entire earnings of an honest family. The average weekly sum for food and clothing is only 1*s.* 3½*d.* per head, *vide* table 3, page 408.

	s.	*d.*
Prison cost of 5 persons at 2*s.* 4*d.* per head for food and clothing only	11	8
Earnings of a family of 5 persons to pay rent, rates, firing, food, and clothing	10	0
Difference	1	8

Workhouse cost.

Then, again, it will be seen that the condition of a pauper in the workhouse may be presumed to be superior to the condition of a weaver's family. The cost per head for food (exclusive of clothing) is 2*s.* 5¼*d.* weekly.

	s.	*d.*
Workhouse cost fo 5 persons at 2*s.* 5¼*d.*	12	2¼
Earnings of a family of 5 persons	10	0
Difference	2	2¼

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CONDITION OF THE WEAVERS.

The following is the dietary of the Stroud Union, and it supplies more food and nutriment than many a journeyman weaver can obtain from week to week. Moreover the cost of the articles and food furnished by the Union are at wholesale and contract prices, and the journeyman could not obtain the same quantity retail under a probable advance of 50 per cent., including paper and the "draught of the scale," or short weight, at the chandler's shop.

I, therefore, append to the dietary table, another table containing two statements; one is the contract prices of the goods supplied, the other is the price of various articles of consumption in the retail shops.

DIETARY for able-bodied PAUPERS.

		Breakfast.		Dinner.					Supper.	
		Bread.	Gruel.	Cooked Meat.	Potatoes or other Vegetables.	Soup.	Bread.	Cheese.	Bread.	Cheese.
		oz.	pints.	oz.	lb.	pints.	oz.	oz.	oz.	oz.
Sunday	Men	6	1½	..	..	..	8	1½	6	1
	Women	5	1¼	..	..	..	6	1	5	1
Monday	Men	6	1½	..	..	..	8	1½	6	1
	Women	5	1¼	..	..	..	6	1	5	1
Tuesday	Men	6	1½	6	1	..	..	..	6	1
	Women	5	1¼	4	1	..	..	..	5	1
Wednesday	Men	6	1½	..	..	1½	6	..	6	1
	Women	5	1¼	..	..	1½	5	..	5	1
Thursday	Men	6	1½	..	..	..	8	1½	6	1
	Women	5	1¼	..	..	..	6	1	5	1
Friday	Men	6	1½	..	..	..	8	1½	6	1
	Women	5	1¼	..	..	..	6	1	5	1
Saturday	Men	6	1½	Bacon 4	1	..	..	..	6	1
	Women	5	1¼	Bacon 3	1	..	..	..	5	1

Old people of 60 years of age and upwards may be allowed 1 ounce of tea, 5 ounces of butter, and 7 ounces of sugar per week, in lieu of gruel for breakfast, if deemed expedient to make this change.

Children under 9 years of age to be dieted at discretion; above 9, to be allowed the same quantities as women.

Sick to be dieted as directed by the Medical Officer.

STATEMENT of the PRICES of PROVISIONS and HOUSEHOLD STORES in GLOUCESTERSHIRE, 1838—Retail and Contract.

Provisions and Household Stores.	Retail Price.	Contract Price as supplied to Stroud Union.
	s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*
Bacon per lb.	0 6	0 6
Bread per quartern	0 8	0 6
Butter per lb.	1 0	0 11
Candles, common wick, per lb.	0 6½	0 5¾
Cheese per lb.	0 7½	0 5¼
Coals * per cwt.	1 0	1 2
Meat per lb.	0 6	0 4½
Milk † per quart	..	2 2½
Oatmeal	..	..
Potatoes, 240 lb. per sack	7 0	5 9
Rice per lb.	..	0 2¼
Soap, yellow, per lb.	0 6½	0 5¼
Sugar, moist, per lb.	0 7	0 6¾
Tea ‡ per lb.	4 6	4 8

Increase of Pauper cases in 1838.

By reference to the quarterly returns of in-door and out-door relief to the several parishes in the Stroud Union, containing a population of 40,767 persons, it appears that there is an increase of 1691 cases, and in the Dursley Union an increase of 917 in 1838, as compared with 1837. The following tables of both Unions have been compiled from the quarterly returns, and include men, women, and children.

* The expense of "hauling" increases the value of the coal.

† The summer measure is greater than the winter measure.

‡ The retail shops sell a very inferior tea to the poorer classes.

STROUD UNION.

TOTAL ABSTRACT, showing the NUMBER of PAUPER CASES, including Men, Women, and Children relieved, IN-DOOR and OUT-DOOR, in 1837 and 1838, together with the INCREASE and DECREASE, with the TOTAL COST of OUT-DOOR RELIEF, its INCREASE or DECREASE, and the TOTAL NUMBER of PAUPERS, and INCREASE or DECREASE of PAUPERISM since 1837.

Name of Parish.	IN-DOOR. Population.	IN-DOOR. Number of Paupers, 1837.	IN-DOOR. Number of Paupers, 1838.	IN-DOOR. Increase or Decrease in Numbers. Increase.	IN-DOOR. Increase or Decrease in Numbers. Decrease.	IN-DOOR. Increase or Decrease per Cent. Increase.	IN-DOOR. Increase or Decrease per Cent. Decrease.	OUT-DOOR. Number of Paupers, 1837.	OUT-DOOR. Cost of Out-Relief in 1837.	OUT-DOOR. Number of Paupers in 1838.	OUT-DOOR. Cost of Out-Relief in 1838.	OUT-DOOR. Increase or Decrease in Numbers. Increase.	OUT-DOOR. Increase or Decrease in Numbers. Decrease.	OUT-DOOR. Increase or Decrease per Cent. Increase.	OUT-DOOR. Increase or Decrease per Cent. Decrease.	OUT-DOOR. Increase or Decrease in Cost since 1837. Increase.	OUT-DOOR. Increase or Decrease in Cost since 1837. Decrease.	OUT-DOOR. Total of Paupers In-Door and Out-Door. 1837.	OUT-DOOR. Total of Paupers In-Door and Out-Door. 1838.	TOTALS. Total Increase or Decrease of Paupers since 1837. Increase.	TOTALS. Total Increase or Decrease of Paupers since 1837. Decrease.	EMIGRATION. Cost in 1837.	EMIGRATION. Number in 1838.	EMIGRATION. Cost in 1838.	EMIGRATION. Total Emigrated.	EMIGRATION. Total Cost of Emigration.
									£. s. d.		£. s. d.					£. s. d.	£. s. d.					£. s. d.		£. s. d.		£. s. d.
Avening	2,396	60	66	6	..	9	..	672	424 2 6	753	521 19 5	81	..	11	..	97 16 11	..	732	819	87	..	3 15 6	..	..		3 15 6
Bisley	5,896	296	217	..	79	..	27	3,198	1,651 16 11	3,286	1,641 11 3	88	..	3	..	..	10 5 8	3,494	3,501	7	..	35 6 1	..	13 11 6		48 17 7
Cranham	394	..	6	6	..	6	..	35	30 4 6	76	60 5 6	41	..	54	..	30 1 0	..	35	82	47	..	..	..	..		..
Hampton	5,114	285	286	1	..	..	..	1,459	876 2 6	1,731	1,115 1 10	272	..	15	..	238 19 4	..	1,744	2,017	273	..	22 2 1	4	11 8 11		33 11 0
Horsley	3,690	226	192	..	34	..	15	1,267	855 7 0	1,716	921 0 4	449	..	26	..	65 13 4	..	1,493	1,908	415	..	13 2 3	..	..		13 2 3
Miserdine	441	24	37	13	..	35	..	171	109 2 0	165	114 13 9	..	6	..	3	5 11 9	..	195	202	7	..	..	..	..		..
Painswick	4,099	202	192	..	10	..	5	1,110	782 6 7	1,174	843 17 4	64	..	5	..	61 10 9	..	1,312	1,366	54	..	11 10	6	19 3		30 13 3
Pitchcombe	224	..	..	..	..	..	..	38	19 3 6	53	29 9 1	15	..	28	..	10 5 7	..	38	53	15	..	..	..	..		..
Randwick	1,031	51	55	4	..	7	..	373	289 14 2	517	315 7 4	144	..	27	..	75 13 2	..	424	572	148	..	..	10	15 0 0		15 0 0
Rodborough	2,141	88	75	..	13	..	15	664	408 16 0	800	513 4 3	136	..	17	..	104 8 3	..	752	875	123	..	8 8 9	..	..		8 8 9
Stonehouse	2,469	100	95	..	5	..	5	468	222 11 0	466	286 14 5	..	2	..	..	64 3 5	..	568	561	..	7	..	..	20 0 0		20 0 0
Stroud	8,607	281	275	..	6	..		1,925	1,075 12 11	2,210	1,197 6 11	385	..	17	..	121 14 0	..	2,206	2,485	279	..	16 4	1	3 0 0		58 16 4
Stanley King's	2,438	93	73	..	25	..	25	919	523 12 11	1,063	572 7 5	144	..	13	..	48 14 6	..	1,017	1,136	119	..	..	..	..		..
Stanley St. Leonard's	942	10	26	16	..	62	..	163	131 11 8	200	131 11 1	37	..	18	..	..	0 0 7	173	226	53	..	..	..	..		..
Woodchester	285	53	71	18	..	25	..	360	202 8 9	365	252 19 4	5	..	1	..	50 10 7	..	413	484	71	..	10 4 6	..	..		10 4 6
Totals	40,767	1,744	1,666	64	172	144	94	13,722	7,552 12 11	14,575	8,517 9 3	1,861	8	235	3	975 2 7	10 6 3	14 556	16,287	1,698	7	160 5 6		82 3 8		242 9 2
																10 6 3				7						
											Increase of Expenditure (Out-door Relief)					964 16 4				1,691						

DURSLEY UNION.

Total Abstract, showing the Number of Pauper Cases, including Men, Women, and Children relieved, In-Door and Out-Door, in 1837 and 1838, together with the Increase or Decrease, with the Total Cost of Out-Door Relief—its Increase or Decrease, and the Total Number of Paupers, and Increase or Decrease of Pauperism since 1837.

Name of Parish.	In-Door. Population.	In-Door. Number of Paupers in 1837.	In-Door. Number of Paupers in 1838.	In-Door. Increase or Decrease in Numbers. Increase.	In-Door. Increase or Decrease in Numbers. Decrease.	In-Door. Increase or Decrease per Cent. Increase.	In-Door. Increase or Decrease per Cent. Decrease.	Out-Door. Number of Paupers in 1837.	Out-Door. Cost of the Out-Relief in 1837.	Out-Door. Number of Paupers in 1838.	Out-Door. Cost of the Out-Relief in 1838.	Out-Door. Increase or Decrease in Numbers. Increase.	Out-Door. Increase or Decrease in Numbers. Decrease.	Out-Door. Increase or Decrease per Cent. Increase.	Out-Door. Increase or Decrease per Cent. Decrease.	Out-Door. Increase or Decrease in Cost since 1837. Increase.	Out-Door. Increase or Decrease in Cost since 1837. Decrease.	Out-Door. Total of Paupers In and Out-Door. 1837.	Out-Door. Total of Paupers In and Out-Door. 1838.	Total Increase or Decrease of Paupers since 1837. Increase.	Total Increase or Decrease of Paupers since 1837. Decrease.
									£. s. d.		£. s. d.					£. s. d.	£. s. d.				
Cam	2071	121	100	..	21	..	17	621	407 1 7	803	454 9 2	182	..	23	..	47 7 7	..	742	903	161	..
Coaley	1124	85	83	..	2	..	2	397	190 13 2½	465	247 17 8	68	..	15	..	57 4 5¾	..	482	548	66	..
Dursley	3226	156	131	..	25	..	16	1436	853 13 6½	1567	892 19 8	131	..	8	..	39 6 2	..	1592	1698	106	..
Kingswood	1447	88	112	24	..	21	..	528	372 13 8¾	631	406 3 9	103	..	16	..	33 10 0¼	..	616	743	127	..
North Nibley	1562	90	97	7	..	7	..	833	397 11 2¾	1004	471 6 0	171	..	17	..	73 14 9¼	..	923	1101	178	..
Nymphsfield	454	19	17	..	2	..	10	273	196 4 4¼	251	191 12 0	..	22	..	8	..	4 12 4¼	292	268	..	24
Owlpen	255	14	43	29	..	67	..	191	100 9 0	174	108 11 7	..	17	..	9	8 2 7	..	205	217	12	..
Slimbridge	923	49	47	..	2	..	4	208	116 14 8½	236	146 15 11	28	..	12	..	30 1 2½	..	257	283	26	..
Stinchcombe	352	5	11	6	..	54	..	217	93 2 1¼	336	130 1 6	119	..	35	..	36 19 4¾	..	222	347	125	..
Uley	2641	195	268	73	..	27	..	1269	631 3 9	1155	678 6 1	..	114	..	9	47 2 4	..	1464	1423	..	41
Wootton-under-Edge	5482	230	314	84	..	27	..	2223	1,160 17 1	2320	1,348 19 7	97	..	4	..	188 2 6	..	2453	2634	181	..
	..	1052	1223	223	52	203	49	8196	4,520 4 3¼	8942	5,077 2 11	899	153	130	28	561 11 0½	4 12 4¼	9248	10165	982	65
																4 12 4¼				65	
											Increase of Expenditure Out-door Relief .					556 18 8¼		Total Increase .		917	

Relative to the general habits of the weavers as to diligence, providence, frugality, honesty, and temperance, they rank in common with their fellow workmen. Low wages, however, tend to destroy the energy requisite for active diligence. The earnings of the out-door weaver are too low to afford a surplus for provident savings, frugality and temperance are the results of necessity, and embezzlement is in some measure checked in those districts where the rural police are active in detecting the receivers of stolen yarn.

Savings' Banks.

In reference to the savings of the weavers and others engaged in the manufacture of cloth, Mr. Carpenter, manager of the Cain's-cross Savings' Bank, observes—

"We have not among our depositors a fair proportion of cloth workers, when the large number of that class in this neighbourhood, (Cain's Cross and vicinity) is taken into the account."

Not guilty of Crimes and Offences.

It might be presumed that persons in so low a condition would also sink into a low moral state. The weavers, are not, however, a race of people addicted to daring crime or hardened theft. Their pilferings are confined vegetables, or to obtain a little wood for firing, and to minor offences emanating from extreme distress. They commit no offences in order to obtain the means of riot and debauchery, and in many cases hunger is the sole and only cause. These remarks, however, do not hold good upon the subject of embezzling, which I believe is carried on to a great extent, and which the workman for the low-paying master hardly considers to be criminal, when he feels the arbitrary conduct of his employer. Mr. Wyatt, of Stroud, informed me that a dissenting minister once alluded from the pulpit to the practice of embezzlement. Many weavers were present, and on coming out of chapel, they expressed astonishment that slinging should have been denounced, saying, "Where's the harm in taking a *vew* ends?"

Prison Statistics.

By returns from the House of Correction at Horsley, I find that the total number of prisoners for the last two years from Midsummer, 1836, to Midsummer, 1838, was 782, of which number only 27 are weavers.

The following TABLES show the districts, and the offences of the Weavers who were committed during the two years.

Nature of Offences.	Names of the Parishes.										
	Bisley.	Coaley.	Dunsley.	Hampton.	Painswick.	Stanley.	Stroud.	Uley.	Woodchester.	Wootton.	Totals.
Deserting their Families	1	1	..	1	2	..	..	3	..	3	11
For Assault	2	..	2	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	6
Stealing	1	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	4
Bastardy	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Vagrancy	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Debt	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	27

The following is an analysis of the various trades, and the number in each trade committed to the house of correction at Housley, from July 1836 to July 1838:

Barber	1	Leather-dresser	1
Bakers	9	Linen-draper	1
Brick-maker	1	Masons	22
Brush-makers	2	Mechanic	1
Butcher	1	Miller	1
Cabinet-maker	1	Nailers	3
Carpenters	7	Painters	3
Collier	1	Paper-hanger	1
Cloth-workers	21	Paper-maker	1
Cutler	1	Pencil-maker	1
Edge-tool-maker	2	Pin-makers	13
Farmers	4	Plasterers	4
Grooms	2	Quarryman	1
Hawker	1	Sailor	1
Labourers	587	Lawyers	2

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CONDITION OF THE WEAVERS.

Schoolmaster	1	Tanner	1
Servant	1	Tinker	1
Shearman in cloth-factory	1	Twine-spinner	1
Shoemakers	18	Watermen	10
Smiths	2	Weavers	27
Soldiers	3	Wheelwright	1
Tailors	13	Wool-sorters	2

Gradually deteriorating.

The following is an analysis of the ages of the prisoners :—

Years of Age.	Number.	Years of Age.	Number.
8	2	30 to 34	74
9	5	35 „ 39	36
10	6	40 „ 44	46
11	5	45 „ 49	26
12	15	50 „ 54	24
13	29	55 „ 59	16
14	28	60 „ 64	15
15 to 19	160	65 „ 69	4
20 „ 24	157	70 and upwards.	10
25 „ 29	107		

The following observations of Mr. R. Hill, show the downward progress of the weaver, and that when his tenants get chain, they are less able to pay than when they seek about and obtain other labour :—

Reuben Hill, of Cam, owns 60 cottages, which he built about 15 years ago. They are in rows, in three different places in the parish. A garden is attached to each, varying from eight to twenty perches. Some of these houses were let at from 6*l.* to 9*l.* per annum, and no difficulty in getting tenants or money. Up to the strike in 1828 he always did well with his cottages. It was a 100*l.* loss, for the men could not pay. Rents have been on the decline ever since. The wages are so low, and the masters have the weavers since to work at their factories. The cottages were built to hold two looms, and now, as the workmen do not weave out, the shops are empty and the houses. His houses are too large for a weaver, unless he had his loom at home. Twenty houses are now empty. His average rent is now about 50*s.* a year; considers he has been losing 3*l.* a week for the last 12 years; thinks trade has increased; knows a weaver, Luke Butcher, one of his tenants at a 1*s.* a week, who has chain from Mr Bowelbank, 38 ells at 26*s.*, and not always that. When Reuben Hill went for his rent he assured him that he had woven two chains, and received no money; that he had to borrow sixpence of the book-keeper; has heard of three masters who cannot pay their weavers regularly; and of course it is very injurious to a poor man—it is a robbery, as he must remain in debt; and the shopkeeper charges more for the goods, which the poor man has to pay. Luke Butcher, when out of chain, used to job about at farm-houses, and Reuben Hill then could get his money, and very regularly; but whenever he *weaves* he can never pay. Witness has a similar tenant, a woman, named Smith, who regularly paid: she used to leave the ninepence a week on the shelf if she should be out; but whenever she works at weaving, she cannot pay me regularly. Witness loses half his rent by her; does not like to see his tenants take to weaving, unless they can be paid for their work; considers a farmer's labourer is worth four weavers; they always do pay when they can; but the weaver never can.

Before the strike he considered it advantageous to have weavers for tenants; Reuben Hill laid out about 4,500*l.* in purchasing land and building cottages for them; his rental was about 360*l.*; but now he does not get more than 100*l.* It is a very serious loss to him. He has a family of eight children.

Was for some time a relieving officer. Believes the weavers to be a distressed set of people since the strike. Formerly they were a respectable set of people. They had a clock in the house, a bag of flour, and a vessel of drink; but no such thing now. When trade failed, many weavers brought their clocks without the landlord seizing them. The journeymen were, in general, single persons. The master weavers used to give the journeyman seven, pence out of the shilling, and find him tea and lodging without any extra charge.

Considers a weaver earns about 8*s.* 6*d.* a week when in work; this is not the case all the year round. Has heard some weavers say, that from year's end to year's end, they do not average more than 7*s.* a week.

In the summer, when work is plentiful, they get into the fields to work. They are not good husbandmen, but they are noted good hands at corn reaping.

Poor's rates have increased ever since the strikes, and have never returned to their old standard.

"It appears to me," said Reuben Hill, "a strange fact, *that the masters are breaking "and the men are in rags, yet there is as much cloth made as ever.*"

Reuben Hill thinks the allotment system answers very well; there are about 30 or 40 acres allotted in Cam, according to their families, about three or four perch to a head. It relieves the poor by giving them a store of potatoes in the winter, and employs their leisure time in

the summer. It is a great blessing to the men. At first it was proposed to give the land to the poor, but it was overruled. There is a committee of management, consisting of the respectable inhabitants. The rent is 3*s.* a perch, clear of all taxes; but the amount, after paying repairs and expenses, is returned to the poor, as rewards for good conduct and better cultivated gardens. The effect is very good upon the men. It keeps a man of disorderly habits in check, as he would not run the risk of losing his garden; and it is a stimulus to the well-disposed man.

Allotments.

Beer Shops.

Reuben Hill thinks the beer-shops injurious to society. They are sly corners for men to drink in, and often are screens for crime. He has heard at times, on the apprehension of any offender, that up to a certain hour, he was seen lurking at some beer-shop.

Wages and Food.

Relative to the low condition of the weavers, Mr. Dauncey, a manufacturer of Uley, by letter dated July 3rd, 1838, observes that, up to the year 1820, the weavers were in good work; that provisions being then reasonable, the weavers did not so much complain as at present, neither had they cause, as wheat was then selling at 5*s.* 6*d.* a bushel, and it is now from 8*s.* to 8*s.* 6*d.*, a difference of 30 per cent.; that at that period the manufacturers paid 40*s.* for the labour they now obtain for 30*s.*, making in addition to the 30 per cent. a further loss of 25 per cent. to the weaver, or a total of 55 per cent. He states that weavers have not so much employment as formerly, which also tends to diminish the earnings; and he further states that, up to the year 1820, the manufacturers could sell their cloth 50 per cent. higher than in the present markets.

He further observes, that the present distress of the weavers arises from scarcity of work and dearness of provisions; to remedy which he proposes a repeal of the Corn Laws, stating "that ever since these obnoxious laws have been in existence, the poor man has been getting poorer and worse off. He considers that if the Corn Laws were repealed, the manufacturer would find a better market for his goods, and that the weaver would in consequence have more employment.

In conclusion, he confirms much of my other evidence, by stating that the weavers are a sober, industrious, and peaceable set of people.

Increased Poverty, but no decrease in Trade.

It will be seen in the following evidence that the distress to which so many persons bear such ample testimony, is attributed more or less to the decrease of trade. I had no means of ascertaining the correctness of that opinion till I received (though at a very late period of my inquiry) the returns from the Excise Office of the number of yards woven each year from 1823 to 1838. That return shows NO decrease in the trade; on the contrary, it shows, if the stripe trade has decreased, that there is an actual *increase* in the felt and cassimere trade. *Vide* page 365.

The growth of minor firms to their present importance confirms the fact.

Therefore, on the authority of the Excise Returns, I must consider the impression to be erroneous that trade has decreased.

Manufacturers' Weavers supported by Rate-payers in slack times.

There is no mistake, however, about the poverty of the weavers; so that *an increased trade only shows an increase of poverty;* the capital is not sufficient for the population, and the trade is fluctuating. The manufacturers take men on, and turn them off (I mean the out-door weavers) according to the sudden orders that might come into the district. The poor's rates and landed interest become taxed for the support of these men when unemployed; and when they are employed, the manufacturers only pay existing wages, by reason of the keen competition among themselves in the markets. So that there is a large population of men scarcely one shade above pauperism when employed, and who are thrown back into pauperism by the slightest decrease, till it may suit a manufacturer to require their service.

Mr. Hone, late governor of a union workhouse, considers that 7 out of 10 weavers are obliged to seek occasional relief from the parish. *Vide* page 426.

If the trade was more steady, if there was more of the ballast so essential to production and healthy commerce, namely, capital, the demand for labour would become more steady, and the self-regulating principles of supply and demand would adjust the proportionate number requisite for the labour market.

I now proceed to offer to you the opinions of many persons as to the condition of the weavers.

The Rev. H. Jeffreys, of Bisley, has furnished me with a minute account of the distressed state of the poor in his parish. He states, however, that the prudence and foresight of the people may be questioned. Many men have depended on their wives and their children to support themselves by their own earnings, independent of his wages. The wives and children consequently took to the loom, or sought work in the factories; and, now that there is little or no work in the district, the evil is felt, and the husband is obliged to maintain them out of his wages.

Weavers in Bisley Parish.

This facility which once existed for a mother and her children to procure sufficient money to support herself and the family without assistance from the father,

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CONDITION OF THE WEAVERS.

Weavers in Bisley Parish.

was naturally productive of early marriages. It was a certain income to the husband; and his own wages he employed for his own immediate purposes, be they good or be they dissolute. On this subject I am confirmed by the Rev. Mr. Jeffreys, who observes,

"They marry very young, and without that care for a provision for their families which restrains agriculturists oftentimes from marrying; for they think they have no need for a sum to begin with if both husband and wife have work; and then, as the children grow up, they suppose that they, the children, may easily support themselves in the mills. Again—the young people accustomed to work in the mills are very unwilling to exchange that mode of life for any other, and it has always hitherto been a matter of the greatest difficulty to persuade boys or girls to go out to service; the consequence is, the young people all stay at home, meet constantly at the mills, and early connexions are formed, sometimes ending in marriages before the parties are scarce out of their teens, and sometimes ending in a worse way. But though persons married young, if they had their health they ran no risk of being unable to support themselves and families, however large, *so long as work was plentiful*. The last few years of *extreme* distress seemed to have caused an alteration in this respect, and many of the young people now go out to service, though not before they were clean starved out."

In further explanation, Mr. Jeffrey observes,

"Another point I would speak about, in conclusion, is the *improvidence* of the people, which, in the begining of my letter, I think I treated rather obscurely, what I would say is simply this—

"That if work were going on well, and plenty of it, persons in this place might marry young without the particular charge of *improvidence*, inasmuch as when man and wife can both work, and the children find employ as soon as they are capable of doing anything, there is not apparently the same need to lay by a little money previously, as there would be in an agricultural district. But work has not gone on well for many years past. Beggarly Bisley has long been a proverb, and the *improvidence* of the people has been as conspicuous in the way in which they have married young in spite of this, and also in the way in which they have kept their children at home hanging on a miserable and uncertain pittance, in preference to sending them out to work for their bread elsewhere. The way in which parents will keep their grown-up children at home to this day is quite vexatious, considering that every year's experience furnishes an additional proof of the folly of it."

The fabric chiefly woven by the Bisley population is stripe cloth; and, with regard to the average amount of the weekly earnings of a loom, the Rev. Mr. Jeffreys does not consider it to be more than 6*s*. per week. He observes as follows:

As to the wages of the weavers, you were quite correct in stating that a good stripe might be wove well in eight or ten days, but usually in a fortnight, not reckoning Sundays. What I should have said was, that, what with occasional bad work, and constant playing for work, as the expression is, NO weaver's earnings in this parish run to more than 6*s*. a week on the average throughout the year for a single loom. In the winter, you must remember, the *frost* hinders their work very much, for they cannot afford fires in their shops and working by candle-light, which they are forced to do full six of their *sixteen hours* (for when a chain is wove in eight or ten days, it is supposed a day means 16 hours), takes a good deal from their earnings. Suppose a chain is 19*s*., then the quiller has 1*s*. 8*d*., which, though usually paid to a child, should still be considered in accurately fixing the amount of the weaver's earnings.

Mr. Cripps, of Cirencester, pays his work-people in *money*, and for a stripe pays 1*l*. 1*s*., but does not find the glue. The glue required for a stripe is 1¾ lb., which, at 8*d*. per lb., amounts to 1*s*. 2*d*., to be deducted from the 1*l*. 1*s*. Mr. Jones, of Chalford, finds glue, so that he pays in reality only 10*d*. less than Mr. Cripps, if 19*s*. is now his price for a stripe, which I believe is the case. The people prefer ready money very much to *truck*, but I find on close inquiry that Mr. Jones's *articles are very good*, and the prices as low as any of the small retail shops.

Mr. Cripps gives out work very scantily, and I never could discover that any of his weavers living in our parish earned on an average more than 4*s*. a week. I may have been mistaken, but I have often inquired about it. From every chain must be deducted 1*s*. 3*d*. for donkey hire; for they make so many journeys to Cirencester, that it runs nearly to that. If they could always bring a chain back when they take one home, it would only amount to 6*d*. a chain. Oakridge is about seven miles from Cirencester, and it is at Oakridge that Mr. Cripps' weavers chiefly dwell.

With regard to the agricultural districts, and the condition of the agricultural labourers in the parish of Bisley, Mr. Hall, one of the most respectable and most intelligent farmers, afforded the following information:

Agricultural Labourers.

"His carter is hired by the year at 9*s*. a week, in addition to which he has a cottage, house, and garden *rent free*, which may fairly be reckoned another 1*s*. making full 10*s*. a week, further perquisites which may fairly be reckoned at 9*d*. a week; in all 10*s*. 9*d*. per week.

	s.	*d.*
'Shepherd's wages by week	9	0
'Good cottage, large garden, *rent free*, well worth	1	0
Other perquisites full	1	0
"Per week	11	0

	s.	d.
"A Herdman, Rick Maker, Thatcher, &c., standing wages	8	6
"House, large garden, rent free	1	0
"Other perquisites	0	6
	"10	0

"The before-mentioned men have been regular Winter and Summer.

"Mr. Hall has four able-bodied labourers, as thrashers, mowers, whose earnings, will average very nearly 10*s.* a week, is quite certain 9*s.* 6*d.*, from last *Michaelmas* up to *next*, these four men were mowing hay for five weeks, during which time they earned 15*s.* a week and four quarts of beer a day, they have one quart of beer regular in the winter, and two quarts from Lady-day till mowing time. Agricultural labourers.

"John Gardner, of Bisley, works for Mr. Hall at 8*s.* standing wages with beer, he shall probably make it 9*s.* during the harvest, he is a man that can do some kind of work very well, but can neither *mow, thrash*, or *reap;* the four men before alluded to, when at day work, have been paid only 8*s.* a week, but they do little day work. Thrash by the bushel, mow by the acre.

"Women have 7*d.* a day before haymaking, and 8*d.* a day after haymaking commences, 10*d.* a day during corn harvest.

We have migrated, I think, about 70 persons, men, women, and children, to Mr. Marshall's mill at Shrewsbury, and about 30 into the neighbourhood of Leeds, all of whom I hope are doing pretty well.

"Such was the statement with which Mr. Hall kindly furnished me. I suspect it is more favourable than other of our farmers would have been able to produce, though I cannot say for certain. The day wages are, with all the most respectable, 7*s.* a week, and beer. They have at present not raised them in consequence of the price of bread, but Mr. Hall told me that his intention was to make his workpeople a present after the corn harvest was over, by way of compensation."

The following table shows the number of cases relieved in the parish of Bisley from December 1837 to March 1838, and I regret that I had not time or means to cause a similar analysis to be made for the last two years in every parish.

Statement of the Number of Weavers and Quillers, Spinners, Burlers, and other Persons connected with Factories; Mechanics and In-door Labourers; Agricultural Labourers, Quarrymen, and other Out-Door Labourers who have received Out-Relief in the Parish of Bisley, from December 1837 to March 25, 1838.

NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RELIEVED.

	Weavers and Quillers.		Total.	Spinners, Burlers, and other persons engaged in Factory Labour.		Total.	Mechanics and In-Door Labourers.		Total.	Agricultural Labourers, Quarry Men, and Out-Door Labourers.		Total.	Total Males.	Total Females.	General Total.
	Male.	Fem.		Male.	Fem.		Male.	Fem.		Male.	Fem.				
	140	93	233	9	51	60	6	2	8	166	94	260	321	240	561
Relative Decimal Proportion	·66	·34	..	·18	·82	..	·66	·34	..	·43	·57	..	..	..	..
Total Decimal Proportion	..	..	·41	..	..	·11	..	..	·1	..	..	·47	..	..	..

CAUSES OF APPLICATION.

	Weavers and Quillers.		Total.	Spinners, Burlers, and other Persons engaged in Factory Labour.		Total.	Mechanics and In-Door Labourers.		Total.	Agricultural Labourers, Quarry Men, and Out-Door Labourers.		Total.	General Total.
	Male.	Fem.		Male.	Fem.		Male.	Fem.		Male.	Fem.		
Old Age and Debility	20	62	82	2	31	33	6	2	8	42	53	95	218
Lameness and Sickness	59	21	80	3	14	17	..	..	..	70	20	90	187
Want of Work	55	6	61	4	3	7	..	..	..	54	18	72	140
Large Families	6	4	10	..	3	3	..	..	..	..	3	3	16
Totals	144	93	233	9	51	60	6	2	8	166	94	260	561

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CONDITION OF THE WEAVERS.

In Chalford Vale there were recently nine master clothiers; there are now only three. The decrease of the weaving population, either by death, emigration, or otherwise, is not so rapid as the decrease in trade; there are more men to do work than there is work for them to do.

Many families have migrated and some emigrated.

The weavers complain of women working in the loom, stating they marry into other trades, and put the regular weaver out of employment and bring up their children to the loom. This is confirmed by many persons, and acknowledged by the weavers to be a serious evil.

The houses are poor and squalid; many weavers abstain from religious worship for want of decent clothing.

The Relieving Officer of the Chalford district says the houses of the weavers are, in many instances, most wretched, and that they complain that they can scarcely live upon their earnings;—"in fact," said he, "they scarcely live, it is only a lingering existence."

John Cook, weaver at Chalford, in reference to the present condition of the weavers, is of opinion that if weaving entirely ceased in this district the population at the end of six or eight months would be better off than they are now, because the population would not linger on in this bare existence, but they would emigrate or migrate to seek other employment.

Mr. Nathaniel Jones, of Chalford, manufacturer, believes the privations of the weavers to be so great that they would gladly obtain other labour. Thinks they are the most suffering class in the community; and if, by reason of a brisk trade, their labour should be in demand, they would not accept such low wages. *The unemployed*, he says, *seek work at any price and keep down labour.*

Mr. Millman, a manufacturer at Kingswood, thinks the out-door weavers, when they have chain, work more hours than any other class.

This shows the effect of low wages, requiring a greater portion of labour to earn the same amount. The clerk and foreman at Mr. Hooper's factory at Eastington, informed me that a weaver had recently expired in consequence of over exertion to support a numerous family.

It is not, however, in Bisley alone that distress exists. It is to be found in many other parishes.

Many out-door weavers cannot afford to taste meat; many cannot have tea for breakfast. That meal consists of bread and water with a little salt; it is called "Tea-kettle Tea." A journeyman weaver, named William Evans, states that "his breakfast is warm water with a little salt or some pepper in it, and a crust of bread—but he cannot have enough of that at times." The dinner of a weaver is generally a piece of bread and cheese, or some potatoes for himself and family, with some fat or "flick" poured over them.

Weavers supported by rate-payers.

It has often been a matter of surprise to me how men can exist upon the amount of their earnings, to pay for rent, rates, fuel, and food. They are obliged to apply to the parish, Mr. Hone, the late governor of the Stroud Union, considers 7 out of 10 out-door weavers come occasionally to the Parish. *Vide* page 426. I therefore regret that the masters cannot or do not limit their numbers; and it is more to be regretted that there are some few masters who avail themselves of every charge they can make upon the weaver, to pluck the last farthing from his pocket, and seek a profit from the wages. It is thus that wages are reduced, that the men are reduced to pauperism, and that the small shopkeepers and rate payers have to support an impoverished population in the interim that their masters do not require their labour.

The following evidence relates to the depressed condition of the out-door weavers:—

Expenditure.

The Rev. J. Elliot, minister of Randwick, a parish in which there are many poor, has favoured me with the following communication:—He states that the working classes in his parish are generally depressed from scarcity of employment, low wages, and payment in truck; they are, however, for the most part patient; with some insubordinate feelings fostered by association at the beer-shops, and by the reading of inflammatory publications. He has taken three weavers of this parish, accidentally falling in his way, without selecting them; all are men of good character and industrious habits. He subjoins the statement of the average weekly income and expenditure of each family during the last three months, that is September, October, and November, 1838.

Patrick Beard, out-door weaver, wife and five children, seven in family. Average weekly weekly amount of income, including the earnings of all the family.

	s.	d.	Expenditure per Week.	s.	d.
Net income after deducting rent of room, sleys, quilting, &c.	7	0	Rent	2	0
			Poor Rates	0	3
			Firing and Candle	1	0
				3	3
			Balance left for the weekly food and clothing of the family	3	9
				7	0

Expenditure.

James Fluck, out-door weaver, wife and three children, five in family.

	s.	d.	Expenditure per Week.	s.	d.
Net weekly income, after deductions as above	10	0	Rent	1	4
			Poor Rates	0	1½
			Firing and Candle	2	0
				3	5½
			Balance left for the weekly food and clothing of the family	6	6½
				10	0

William Young, weaver (amount of family not mentioned.)

	s.	d.	Expenditure per Week.	s.	d.
Income per week, after deductions as above	10	0	Rent	2	0
			Poor Rates	0	3
			Firing and Candle	1	0
				3	3
			Food and Clothing	6	9
			The price of the Quartern Loaf, 8½*d.*	10	0

Patrick Beard . . 7*s.*
J. Fluck . . . . 10*s.* } Average . 9*s.*
W. Young . . . 10*s.*

Vide Income and Expenditure Table, Parish of Randwick, average 9*s.* 7¼*d.* P. 407.

The following is a case of an out-door journeyman weaver, with a wife and six children. His employer, a master weaver, James Hitchings, says that journeymen weavers do not earn more, on the average, than 5*s.* or 6*s.* weekly (vide page 387, which shows the amount to be 5*s.* 7*d.* per week).

Hitchings states that the clothes of Francis Berry, his journeyman, are all pawned. He is in debt for rent, and owes 2*l.* to the baker. He was in the workhouse for ten weeks. He now receives 4*s.* a week from the parish. He thoroughly understands his calling; is an honest, hard-working man. He has tasted neither tea nor sugar for some time, and his breakfast is nothing more than some bread, hot-water, and salt.

Income.	s.	d.	Expenditure.	s.	d.
Earnings of Francis Berry	5	6	3 pecks of potatoes, 10*d.* a peck	2	6
,, his wife, chairing	3	0	24 loaves, 2lbs. in a loaf, at 3½*d.*; 3 loaves per head, or 6lbs. of bread	7	0
,, his boy, in factory	2	0			
,, his girl, in factory	1	0			
Allowance from the Parish	4	0	Scraps of meat, flick, &c.	1	6
			Vegetables	0	6
	15	6	Firing 1*s.* 6*d.*, soap and soda 6*d.*	2	0
			Rent	1	6
			Rates	0	1½
				15	1½

Here is a case in point where the parish supplies the deficiency of wages.

Anthony Fewster, maltster and miller at Nailsworth, in reference to the condition of the weavers, observes—

"As the earnings of a weaver's family are much lessened within the last two years, and the prices of provisions much increased, their privations must be many as to the earnings, and consequently the outgoings. It depends much on the number of the family who may be in

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CONDITION OF THE WEAVERS.

work. A weaver himself, by his individual labour, earns not more, I should think, than from 7*s.* to 10*s.* per week."

These remarks confirm my previous statement concerning the amount of earnings.

Joseph Lewis, a farmer and the principal butcher at Minchin Hampton, says that formerly he served the weavers as well as any other classes with meat; has not one a week who can now afford to buy meat from him or from any other butcher. He states that weavers used to buy the offal pieces of meat, but in consequence of the distress among the weavers, he has a great difficulty in getting rid of the common meat, subjecting him and others in the trade to a loss; the rough meat in a beast weighing about 32 score, would be about 6 or 7 score, say one-fourth. He now serves the Union, otherwise he should be obliged to sell it at an enormous loss, and almost give it away.

James Hitchings, master out-door weaver at Stroud Hill, is married, has no family; his wife keeps a school of 12 scholars at 2*d.* a week each; rents a house and a 4-loom shop, seldom has more than 3 looms at work, his house rent is 7*l.* 10*s.* per annum.

Has kept no account of his earnings, but considers that he earns by his own labour little more than 1*s.* a day on the average throughout the year.

On being pressed to state the items of his expenditure per week, including all his earnings and his wife's, besides the advantages of two journeymen weavers, to whom he furnishes neither food, lodging, or provision, he considerably overran the amount of the weekly income as stated by him.

	s.	*d.*
Earnings of James Hitchings	6	6
Wife's School	2	0
Profits upon 2 Journeymen's labour, 1*s.* 9½*d.* each.	3	7
Total weekly income	12	1

It will be seen that his weekly expenditure amounts to 17*s.* 7¼*d.* But he stated that he owed 10*l.* for rent, 7*l.* to the baker, and the sleay maker 1*l.* 10*s.*, and the average time of his getting into debt was 67 weeks, or 5*s.* 6¼*d.* per week for that period, leaving him the sum of 12*s.* 1½*d.* for his weekly cash expenses, which exactly corresponds with his statement that his income is 12*s.* 1*d.* per week.

His weekly expenses are as follow:—

Expenditure.

	s.	*d.*
Rent, his share of, exclusive of the 3 Journeymen's looms	1	6
Rates, ditto	0	1½
Bread, 3½-quarterns at 8*d.*	2	4
Meat, 3 lb. at 6½*d.*	1	7½
Butter, ½lb. at 1*s.* 2*d.*	0	7
Tea, 1½ oz.	0	6
Sugar, 1lb.	0	8
Cheese, 1lb.	0	8
Potatoes, 1 peck	0	10
Vegetables	0	4
Pepper, Salt, and Mustard	0	2
Beer, 1 pint at 2*d.*, 7 days	1	2
Firing, 1¼ cwt. at 1*s.*	1	6
Wood	0	1½
Candles, 1lb.	0	6
Soap and Soda	0	6
Clothing for Self*	1	9¼
Mending	0	6
Clothing for Wife	1	9¼
Cotton, Worsted, &c. &c.	0	1¼
Wear and Tear	0	4
	17	7¼
Amount of Debt Weekly	5	6¼
Balance, or Weekly Income	12	1

Clothing.

* Items for clothing, per annum:—

	£.	*s.*	*d.*
1 Hat	0	5	0
1½ Pair Shoes	0	13	6
1 Pair Trowsers	0	12	0
1 Coat, cloth 21*s.*, 1¾ yards, making 12*s.*	1	13	0
1 Waistcoat	0	9	6
4 Shirts	0	10	0
4 Handkerchiefs	0	2	10
4 Pair Stockings	0	6	6
52)	4	12	4

1 9¼ per week.

A weaver at Chalford, named Risby, states that the expenses of a weaver's family, consisting of himself, wife, and three children such being the amount of his family, are as follow:—

	Per Week. s.	d.
House rent	1	6
Rates	0	2
Firing, coals	0	10¼
———, wood, 2 faggots, at 1½*d.* each	0	3
½lb. Candles	0	6½
½ lb. Soap	0	3½
½ oz. Starch	0	1
12 quarterns Bread, that is 4lb. loaves, at 7 *d.*	7	6
Potatoes 1 peck	0	10
1lb. Cheese	0	8½
1lb. Bacon	0	8½
2lb. Sugar, at 8½*d.* per lb.	1	5
2oz. Tea, at 5*d.* per oz.	0	10
1lb Butter	1	1
	16	9¼

The above supports five persons, being 3*s.* 4½*d.* each, and the prices and goods are truck.

The average rent for a weaver's house and two-loom shop, with a garden, in Wootton, is 5*l. a-year;* and the rent which the manufacturers charge for standing of shop-looms in factories is as follows:—

A weaver pays for the standing of three broad looms in a factory, at 8*s.* out of a piece three weeks in weaving, 20*l.* 16*s.* Dwelling house, 7*l.*

A weaver pays for two narrow looms 3*s.* out of a piece three weeks weaving, 5*l.* 4*s.*

A weaver, Mark Cole, of Wootton, pays, for rent of his house, 5*l.*; for the standing of three broad looms in the factory, 20*l.* 16*s.*; for the standing of two narrow looms 5*l.* 4*s.*

On the day of the coronation, when the weavers and others were enjoying the holiday, I entered the neatest cottage I ever saw. I was attracted to it by the click of the loom, a sound unusual on a general holiday: the owner of this cottage was in his loom, hard at work.

His house was neat to a degree; he had his small looking-glass, or mirror, over a neat mantle-piece, on which were ranged common but well-selected ornaments; the clock-case was polished most carefully; the round three-legged table was as white as soap and care could make it, nor was there the slightest indication of slovenly or neglectful habits. Jonathan Cole was the master and owner of this cottage: he had always been a weaver since he was 14 or 15, and is now 48 years of age. He was thrifty, had bought his land and built upon it his own house.

The history and evidence of this provident man is best given in his own words.

Jonathan Cole, a weaver at Horsley, states,

Evidence of Jonathan Cole, Weaver.

"That when he earned only 4*s.* a week he contrived, by living upon bread and water, to save 3*d.* one week, but could save no more for a long time; the "coppers" were cankered before he could put more to them; he heard of a benefit club, but he made his own calculations, and put away as much as if he had subscribed to it, together with the amount which he considered his club would have cost, and called it his *own* club, and in 20 years he saved *a hundred pounds.*

"In 1824 he bought a piece of ground to build a small cottage, but his neighbours persuaded him to build a larger one, to his cost; he did so by borrowing money, and now he has to pay interest, which hurts him. It was built to hold four looms; he cannot now let it: he did once, but did not get paid. His father was a weaver, and taught him, and he went home to work in one of his father's looms, at the age of 17; is now 48 years of age.

"Witness states that 31 years ago spring shuttles were used: white work was paid 1*d. per hundred,* coloured 1*s.* 9*d.* per ell—1,600 11¾*d.*; he got 6½*d.* out of a shilling, and no deductions: a piece was woven in three weeks, for which he was paid 26*s.*, making 8*s.* 8*d.* a week wages; his lodgings were found him; paid his mother 3*d.* per week for washing, and he paid for his food. When his savings began he put by 3*d.* a week, and 6*d.* extra when he could; was able, before he built his house, to buy 4 looms, second-hand, one at a time, and yet keep his fund untouched; these looms had pretty constant work for 10 years, and earned him 2*s.* 6*d.* a week each, making 10*s.* a week clear; was married, but had no children; his wife was poorly and earned but little, and cost somewhat in physic.

"Witness entered into a furniture club, and got a clock and other furniture: paid 1*s.* per week; lived pretty well; had a joint of meat a week, and some beer in the house; repairs and

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furniture took a good deal of his money, and he laid out 23*l.* 8*s.* to purchase a bit of ground to prevent any one from building near his windows.

"Witness bought this land in 2 purchases, 16 lug at 2*l.* 2*s.* a lug (his house is built on part of this), the second 5¾ lug, at 4*l.* 4*s.* a lug; this land now serves him as a garden, and provides garden stuff: owes 140*l.* on mortgage, and 50*l.* on note of hand; probably the place is not worth more than the mortgage.

"Ten years ago, when the strike took place, he was persuaded to turn out; was compelled not to take out work at the lower price, and got turned off by his master, who never employed him again, and he has not been able to get regular work since; sometimes only work for one loom, sometimes two, generally stripe-work; has not yet sold any of his looms; cannot get a purchaser for them; made some loss by doing work for a manufacturer who failed and has not paid him.

The wages were lowered to 30*s.* soon after the strike, from 35*s.*, and three or four years ago were lowered to 20*s.*; it is now 18*s.* 8*d.* and glue, and the length, instead of being 28 ells, is 33 ells; could earn, if he had constant work, 9*s.* 4*d.* a-week, hard work, and have to pay out of it quilling and candles; should work from five till eight, or as long as he could see, in the summer, and by candles in the winter: has been at play for weeks at a time; he could just make a bare subsistence; could, if he had constant work for two looms, pay his rent or mortgage interest, rates, &c., but, as it is, he is now reduced to a state of great difficulty. If he was called upon to pay all he owes his whole property, at the present prices, would hardly pay his debts, and he should be turned into the streets without the means of providing for himself.

Is now paid in truck at Mr. Webb's, Chalford, and has been for this year past; gets goods enough to maintain himself, and had 4*s.* in money out of two chains: thinks he is served as well at the truck shop as if he bought goods elsewhere.

Witness states that he could get work in a shop-factory if he chose, because he is a steady man, but then his looms and tools would be useless; many of his fellow weavers are on the parish, and there is an allotment of land for every person in distress; knows some weavers have got it, and that it almost maintains them; almost all the neighbours are gone to shop-looms.

"Witness does not know the cause of the distress, except that there are more hands than can do the work, and does not know a remedy.

I now subjoin the evidence of Thomas Cole, brother of the foregoing witness, Jonathan Cole: he has been less fortunate than his brother, but his evidence is straightforward, and without any attempt to give false colouring or to mislead. His observations upon shop-looms are important, as being contradictory to much prejudiced evidence concerning the condition of the shop-loom weavers.

Evidence of Thos. Cole, weaver.

Thomas Cole, brother of Jonathan Cole, journeyman weaver at Shortwood, states,—

"That he was formerly a master weaver, but is now journeyman, and during the two years he obtained other work when weaving was scarce; sometimes he had to play for a fortnight or three weeks, but never applied to the parish.

"Witness found great difficulty in being employed by the farmers, as they do not think a weaver capable of doing *their* work; had some work at potatoe digging, grubbing trees and sawing wood; could earn 1*s.*, 1*s* 2*d.*, and 1*s.* 4*d.* per day; the highest price was for harvesting, and witness has been at this work all the summer, work at weaving being very scarce.

"States that a weaver, by close application for one hour, could do six nails of 1800, but to do this, the chain must be very good; considers it would be more than a man can do for 10 hours consecutively; a man can, by proper application, do four yards a day (10 *hours*). A good workman will always do this; if it was a good piece of work the weavers perhaps would not like to let the master know how quick it can be done, but the weavers cannot help themselves now, as the masters keep looms at home.

"In the factories more work is done, as the men are emulating each other, which was not the case when they worked at home: looms are in much better order in factories than they were at home: people years ago had not the notion of putting them in order like they have now; a man can earn more now at a loom than formerly, from the better tackle.

"At a good loom ¼ of a yard more may be made now from the better tackle than formerly; there is now no stopping in the loom to wind the cloth on the nether beam, as it is done by weights, regulating both the fore and nether beam.

"The weaver did not like his master to know in what time a piece could be woven, because they considered that if the master knew they could earn a given sum in a short time, the price of the next chain would be lowered.

"Witness about 10 years ago kept only two looms; paid 5*l.* 5*s.* *rent*; was obliged to give up, from Mr. Playne putting up shop-looms, and he went into the factory.

"The master weaver used to pay 7*d.* out of a shilling, and he got the work ready for the loom; used to supply the men with money or provisions as they wanted it; witness did not continue in the factory, because of a little strife with a foreman.

"Does not consider the work is done better in the factory than out, when the tackle of the loom is equally good; but the men are *better off* in the factories than when they worked at the master weavers' houses. The greatest injury witness thinks in the factory system is the walking to and fro to work; they earn more in the factory than they did out in short days: witness says they settle their minds better to work than they did at the master

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weavers'; as journeymen under the master weaver the men used to dawdle away their time, get out and have a drop of beer; but now the public houses are quieter than they used to be.

"Witness has heard many of the men in the shop factory say that if the wages were a little higher they would be much more contented to work in the factory than out of it.

"Has had no weaving for four months, and does not think he has earned more than 3*s.* or 4*s.* a week; is now getting employ in every way he can except weaving; last week he only had one day's work, and that he earned 1*s.* 6*d.*; this, of course, was not sufficient to subsist upon, but for two or three previous weeks he was potatoe digging, and what he earned he was paid in potatoes, and having some left in the house he used them when money was short.

"Was paid 4*d.* a bag of potatoes for digging, but in taking them as wages was charged at the rate of 5*d.* a bag."

The following is a letter addressed to me by a weaver, named George Risby, of Nailsworth:—

"Honourable Sir,—I have worked for my employer, a manufacturer, upwards of seven years. I like them very well in respect of civility. For the first six months I worked on white work, but ever since I have worked on coloured, with a few exceptions; for two years I and my children earned from 16*s.* to 20*s.* a-week, but since that time it has been getting worse. Our wages were reduced, and we struck for more and accomplished our designs thus far; but we did not keep our price long on account of the multitude of hands and shortness of trade; consequently what we received 2*l.* for we now receive 1*l.* 8*s.* Our hours for work are thirteen per day, and we work very hard, as I think some do not *let* more than half-an-hour a-day. I earn now from 10*s.* to 10*s.* 6*d.* per week; I think my wife gets 2*s.* a-week, and I believe my children do not get 6*d.* per week. I do not expect to get 10*s.* a-week for the future, as our wages are so very low now. The reason why my children do not earn more is because our abb is spun on *bobbins*, which prevents them from earning at the present time 5*s.* a-week. I have a wife, and eight children, and myself, which makes ten in family. I have 12*s*, 6*d.* brought in to maintain this family, and to pay other expenses, such as—

	Per Week. *s.*	*d.*
House-rent	1	2
Coals, candles, and soap	2	6
Poor-rates	0	3
Making	3	11

besides many other little things, leaving only 8*s.* 7*d.* to provide food and raiment. Now 8*s.* 8*d.* will buy thirteen quarterns of bread, which is five pounds three ounces of bread for each per week, and nothing else.

"I am brought so weak that I am not able to work as I was two years ago. I and my children are very destitute of clothes. The Word of God tells me to provide things honest in the sight of all men, but I cannot do it; it also tells me I shall get my bread by the sweat of my brow, but I have the sweat of the brow and not the bread, and all through oppression. All that we, as Englishmen, want is plenty of labour, and that which sweetens labour. I have four miles a-day to walk to my work.

"I remain, Sir,
"Your obedient Servant,
"George Risby."

"*Wm. Augustus Miles, Esq.*

Evidence of Erasmus Charlton, police-officer, Hampton.

Erasmus Charlton, Police Serjeant, at Hampton, formerly in the London Police, says of his own personal knowledge that—

"The weavers are much distressed; they are wretchedly off in bedding; has seen many cases where the man and his wife and as many as 7 children have slept on straw, laid on the floor with only a torn quilt to cover them; sometimes he has had occasion to search the houses of some weavers on suspicion of stolen yarn or slinge, and has witnessed very distressing cases; children crying for food, and the parents having neither food nor money in the house, or work to obtain any; he has frequently given them money out of his own pocket to provide them with a breakfast.

"These men have a great dread of going to the Poor Houses, and live in constant hope that every day will bring them some work; witness has frequently told them they would be better in the house, and their answer has been '*We would sooner starve.*' Considers this wretched state stints the children in growth, and causes a deal of sickness; does not think that one family out of 10, children and adults, can attend church, in consequence of their ragged condition; has often dropped in at meal times and found them eating potatoes with a bit of flick or suet.

"In reference to wages it has been stated to witness by shop-loom weavers, that in the factory, as the work is confined to one individual, the power of increasing his earnings by means of the wife and children's labour is diminished.

"The habits of a weaver are not settled or industrious like the agricultural labourer; and that if they were in good work, they would want to play one or two days out of the six.

In further corroboration of the distressed condition of the weavers, and poverty

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of the district, I insert the evidence of John Skelton, a Sheriff's Officer, in the Stroud district:—

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"John Skelton, Sheriff's Officer, has held the office two years, and his jurisdiction extends to any part of the county, except the city of Gloucester, but he chiefly acts at Stroud and immediate vicinity; has had full employ for himself and several men during the whole time, till just now, when part of his duties are abolished by the new law.

"Up to November, 1837, had 132 warrants and three distresses for rent; and up to November, 1838, 124 warrants and three distresses for rent, principally among tradesmen and small shopheepers, confined, however, to Stroud, Chalford, and its vicinity, and not throughout the county. J. Skelton knows that there is a great distress among the weavers, but as executions among the weavers do not belong to his office, but with the small Courts of Request officers, he cannot say to what extent they have been levied. Almost all the weavers are in debt to the small shops; the consequence of this is ruin to the proprietors, inasmuch as the weaver is not worth suing.

"A weaver cannot get credit now to any amount, except in very rare cases, and then their labour is mortgaged to the shopkeeper who supplies him with food and necessaries till he has 'felled his chain,' some person generally being guarantee for the amount.

"Witness states that he has had more executions against clothiers than against their workpeople—considers that half the manufacturers are as badly off as their men, with this difference, that they do not appear so from outward appearance, always aiming at show, which, sooner or later, brings them to ruin.—(See page 10.)

"A poor weaver, living within 50 yards of witness, is in a case of great distress; last Sunday fortnight he came to witness' house and stated that he had one of the poorest Sundays which he ever experienced, not having a potatoe or even a bit of bread in his house. This weaver has a wife near her confinement and three children; witness gave him a shilling, and obtained another shilling from a friend for the man, and he received it with great gratitude, the tears running down his cheeks. This weaver has worked lately, but very irregularly, at Mr. John Marling's; originally worked at Mr. Stanton's, but put off in consequence of power looms, and is a very solid, steady man, and, unlike many of the weavers, not given to drinking.

"Witness states that the man has lately had a chain from Mr. Marling, but it is so bad that he will not be able to earn more than a shilling a day on it; considers the causes of the weavers' distress to be various, for instance, low wages, kept still lower by the power looms and shop looms, and by the system of underselling one another."

Evidence of Supervisor of Excise, Stroud.

I received further evidence from the Supervisor of Excise at Stroud, who states,

That his duties frequently put him into conversation with weavers, and other mechanics, and that he is sure there is very great distress in the district; has had opportunities of seeing their cottages, which in general are as cleanly and comfortable in appearance as the man's circumstances will allow. The chief food is potatoes, which many of them grow in small gardens attached to these cottages.

Many of the beer-shops keep chandlers' shops.

He further states, that the weavers were formerly addicted to drinking, but now they have not the means, owing to their scanty earnings.

He also says, the weavers as a body are very orderly and well behaved; they are illiterate, and by no means bright in intellect; very few have any education but what they gather from Sunday-schools. He can speak as to the want of education most positively, inasmuch as not more than three out of seven who come to him of that class of people, to get their bonds executed, together with their bondsmen, are able to write their names; but this remark applies more to the elder weavers than to the younger.

The extreme distress is further corroborated by the Petty Constable of Woodchester, who bore testimony to the wretched condition of the weavers, and considers that great distress prevails among them, especially in the parish of Horsley. It was, he said, painful to witness many of the scenes which have come under his notice.

One poor woman, wife of a weaver, James Lewellyn, had a child at the breast, and declared she had had no food for the whole day, (it was then four or five o'clock in the afternoon,) and that she had three children; there was not a table or a piece of furniture in the room; every thing was sold.

He further states, that he has no doubt many of the weavers and their children, especially the *young* children, die from disease brought on by want of proper nourishment.

He further adds, that another weaver, named Benjamin Burford, of Avening, had five in family, and presented a most miserable appearance; they had sold and pawned every thing; had 20 duplicates then in his possession; had even been obliged to pawn his clothes, and had nothing decent to appear in at a place of worship; and witness says, as far as he knows, the man is sober and industrious, and would willingly work if he had it to do.

Some of the cottages presented a clean and decent appearance; a few of the weavers may be getting *bread* and *cheese*, but the greater part of them are poor and wretchedly off; the children were ragged and tattered, and many of the parents sincerely regretted they could not send their children to school for want of clothing.

My informant was foreman to Messrs. Cooper and Owen, of Wotton-under-Edge, for 17 years, and is well acquainted with the habits of the weavers; he has left that employ nine

years, and keeps a general grocer's shop at Woodchester; he considers the weavers have fallen off in condition for many years, certainly since the last strike in 1828; *at one time* he considered the weaver to be as *well* off as any mechanic, but *now* he is the *worst* off of any.

He further says, that very great distress prevails; that many of them cannot afford *tea*, and content themselves with a sop of bread and some hot water; several declared to him that they did not taste meat for months together, and their wasted appearance gave evidence to the truth; indeed, as he was talking to some of them, a butcher went by offering his meat for sale at *Avening*, and he heard the weavers say, "*You may go on, for we can only look at your meat.*" The men look spent and wan, and the females thin and exhausted. He has every reason to believe that the weavers are most anxious for work, if they could procure it.

Formerly, in better times, it must be confessed that many might have done better than they did; but what they got was all spent; and if a fortnight of slack work came, they were upon the parish. They have now scarcely money to purchase food, and none to spare for drink.

In his opinion the low rate of wages arises from the men underselling one another in work, and the competition of masters to get their goods as cheap as possible in the market.

Uley.

The weavers at Uley are in great distress, but relieved in some measure by allotments and emigration. The amount of wages is low; they are paid in truck.

The resources of Uley arose from the woollen trade; but the trade has failed; 1,000 persons were thrown out of employment on the morning when Shepherd failed, about 18 months ago; some few took the workhouse, some went to other districts, some to Canada, some to Australia.

The distress, even now, is extreme (and the most suffering are the most silent); their clothes are daily wearing out; their children are half naked; they have scarcely any bedding, and actually sleep under tattered rags. Every article that would bring money has been sold, and the population is destitute of money, and almost destitute of work.

Young persons at Uley now seek other employment, instead of lingering about a factory in hopes of work, at which (if employed) they could only earn 4*s.* a week.

Men who own five or six houses, and lived in comparative comfort on their rents, cannot let their houses or obtain any rent; so that they are almost starved to death, and are in worse condition than the pauper.

I find that in some instances within the limits of the borough of Stroud, some manufacturers have let cottages at 10*l.* a year, being 4*l.* to 5*l.* more than their value.

Nailsworth.

Mr. John C. Tabram is an auctioneer and appraiser at Nailsworth; has lived there 24 years, and has had as much experience as any one; and knows a good deal both of manufacturers and men.

Mr. Tabram is secretary to a Loan Society, agent of Savings Bank, treasurer to Society for Prosecution of Felons, Registrar of Births and Deaths, and General House Agent; in the prosecution of his various duties has had frequent opportunities of observing the state of the district, which he describes to be very bad; and has noticed that the general distress has been worse the last 12 months, which he attributes to the want of employ; has frequently had executions against weavers, but they have only been issued to get them out of the premises to obtain possession; the goods seized are seldom worth 40*s.*, and the houses are very destitute; the value of weavers' tenements is very much deteriorated; thinks 75 per cent. at least; in fact, they can scarcely be sold at any price; most of them were mortgaged 20 years ago, and many of them were built by the weavers themselves in better days.

He considers the weavers are decidedly worse off than the agricultural labourer, or other classes in the district; does not consider them more improvident than other classes; would say that they were rather frugal, but their means are very limited; in better times they were not so provident as they should have been; and "felling day" (that is, the day they "felled" their cloth from the loom, and took it to the factory) was generally a "tippling" day.

Mr. Tabram further considers that the weavers are 20 per cent. on the population in Horsley and Nailsworth. About 12 months ago, about three or four weavers, three carpenters, and some plasterers, with other tradespeople, emigrated to Australia.

Enoch Hunt says he has lived for the last 12 years in the neighbourhood, and now keeps the Crown beer-house at Inchbrook; has known the district from his youth, and considers that it never was worse than at the present time; the weavers are worse off than any other class of people; has worked 15 or 16 years in a factory, and can speak to the fact.

He states that the weavers are sober from necessity; considers them to be an inoffensive set of people, and honest; and that notwithstanding the great distress, there are fewer robberies than formerly among any of the poor people, and that it is a very rare thing indeed to hear of a weaver being taken up for theft; the distress in the district is very great, and those who suffer most bear the misery in silence; the worst off are generally the most patient.

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He considers all the clothing trade to be bad, but that it might be made better by the abolishing *mules*, and restricting steam engines; he is sure of it, because the expense is greater than the profits; there is the interest of money, the wear and tear of machinery, and he thinks in the long run it is more expensive than hand labour; if the *mules* were abolished, women would be employed as formerly as *spinners;* and a woman is content with 1*s.* a day for her labour; but a good spinner would earn 10*s.* a week.

He does not think the factory people drink much at present, owing to their distressed condition, but in better times they were not so abstemious; considers there are more drunken men among sawyers as a body than among any other class of men.

The people who grumble most at the beer-shops are the master clothiers, who consider them to be receptacles for slinging.

The Star public-house at Forest Green has also a pawnbroker's shop attached.

Mr. James Hubbard, chemist and druggist at Nailsworth, has resided in the neighbourhood about six years; states, that the district abounds with weavers; remembers many *small* manufacturers who have gone into decay; formerly, he has heard, there were from 40 to 50 in and about the neighbourhood; but the operations of the larger manufacturers, when trade became limited, has swept them away, and hardly a vestige of them remains. The weavers were not so badly off when he first came into the district, but they have been gradually getting worse and worse, owing as well to reduction of wages as scantiness of work.

In 1834 the weavers made a stand, and much of the orders went away in Yorkshire. Affairs since this strike have been much worse.

The present condition of the weavers is extremely distressed; they are as wretched as human beings can well be—many can hardly procure the bare means of support, many of them cannot even get that *regularly*. It is heart-rending to see some of their cottages; the health of the people has suffered so much in consequence, that medical treatment is often useless; has frequently sent many away, saying that food is their best physic.

Mr. Hubbard considers that potatoe diet engenders worms. In Ireland, though they have potatoes, they have butter-milk and exercise, but here they eat the potatoes alone, and worms is a frequent and consequent complaint. A weaver may be singled out from among any number of persons by his pale and haggard look. All the diseases consequent on poverty are found here in full vigour; and the constitution is so prostrated, that, if an endemic appears, the people fall under it owing to their extreme debility.

There is a new school established at Amberley, supported chiefly by the benevolent Mr. Ricardo, where about 500 children attend daily; there are also several Sunday-schools. There is a British school at Nailsworth, which is but indifferently attended; the funds are low, and the Amberley school is generally preferred.

In consequence of the impoverished state of trade the tradesmen suffer very much; during the whole of last winter there have been about three sales a week, and many of the tradesmen are now scarcely able to keep open their shops, and contemplate emigration.

Mr. Hubbard says he has taken formerly as much as 5*l.* on a Saturday evening from working people, but now he does not take 5*s.* So much is trade decreased, that where a person used to buy two or three penny-worth of an article, they now buy only a halfpenny-worth.

Mr. Hone, late governor of the Stroud Union has had frequent opportunities of observing the state of the poor, especially the weavers; thinks that nearly 7 out of every 10 weavers occasionally come to the workhouse, or apply to the relieving officer. Has frequently visited their cottages, which he has found to be destitute and miserable in the extreme. Does not consider this wretchedness the result of improvidence so much as low wages, which are so very low, that to earn a bare subsistence a man must be constantly at work. Within the last year or two not only have their dress and appearance deteriorated, but they also are becoming demoralized, as will appear by reference to our local papers, where children and young persons, many of them the children of weavers, are brought before the magistrates for petty thefts; and is of opinion that the low rate of wages tends, undoubtedly, to demoralize the people.

Mr. Hone states that there is a large Baptist chapel at Shortwood, of which Mr. Barnard, a manufacturer, is a leading member, and the children of persons belonging to this sect are regularly instructed every Sunday. The parents, aware of the interest taken in the welfare of the children, endeavour to meet the wishes of the more wealthy members, and generally take care that these children come decently to the Sabbath school. The benefit of this school is, however, confined to members of, or the congregation attending the chapel; other children may be seen running about half naked.

Mr. Hone has had frequent opportunities of hearing the weavers' opinions concerning their situation, and they state that they are ground down to the earth and oppressed by the cupidity of their masters, at whose entire mercy they feel themselves to be, and they dare not grumble.

There are three workhouses (temporary) under the superintendence of witness, viz.:—

One at Shortwood,	able-bodied.
One at Hampton,	aged.
One at Stroud,	children.

Mr. Hone observes that the major part of the children are *illegitimate*, and scarcely a female weaver in the house but has an illegitimate child, some 2, 3, and 4. About 16

months ago he had 40 women in the workhouse with their children, but only 3 of them were married, and 30 of them were mothers. Considers that the factories facilitate illicit intercourse.

Witness further says there is not a doubt but that Bisley parish is in more deep distress than the other two districts. Attributes this poverty to the failure of so many clothiers, and thinks, for the last two years, the labouring classes have not had on an average 2 days' work a week. Cannot attribute the very great depression of the Bisley paupers to truck, as he has never heard the paupers complain of it. With regard to the truck system at Nailsworth, it is carried on with too much subtlety to be evidenced.

Mr. Hone states the general appearance of the weavers to be weakly and emaciated. They are not men of energy, bodily or mentally; generally speaking he should say, as a body, they are below par in intellect.

They have not the facility of turning to other labour; the farmers consider their work not worth their hire. Has noticed in a great variety of instances their extreme patience under great suffering, and that the moment they come into the workhouse, they will apathetically sit down, and apparently make up their minds to remain paupers for life. Considers this apathy to arise from the complete prostration of spirit, owing to the distresses they have suffered out of doors before they could make up their minds to apply for *in-door relief*. It is almost impossible to imagine how hard they live, and the poor men think they have a sumptuous meal when they can get potatoes and flick for a Sunday's dinner.

Mr. Hone has only known the district 2 or 3 years, and within that time the situation of the weaver has been gradually getting worse, he might say to a frightful degree.

Minchin Hampton.

Joseph Lewis, butcher, at Minchin Hampton, states he has been in business about 15 years; formerly the weavers used to deal with him, but of late years they have not. When trade was good they payed pretty well, but when it became dull they could not pay at all. Has observed a decrease in the circumstances of the people connected with factories, especially the weavers, for 7 years. Now has scarcely a weaver in a week who comes to his shop. Nor do they go to other butchers' shops. He would not give them credit, for he would never get paid. Does not consider that they do not pay from dishonest principles, but from distress in a general way. In some cases a little of both may be the excuse. He generally found the weavers' houses dirty and untidy; they are by no means a cleanly set of men. Attributes this to the nature of their work; it is greasy, and the men slovenly. When in better circumstances, the men lived up to their means, and considers that if they had 3*l.* or 4*l.* a week they would get through it, but there are exceptions. Very few save money. When there was plenty of work they were not noted for sobriety. He further states that weavers used to buy the offal pieces of meat, but in consequence of the distress among the weavers he has now a difficulty in getting rid, very often, of the common meat, subjecting him to a loss. The rough meat in a beast would be 6 or 7 score in a one of 32 or 33 score weight, or about one-fourth. Witness now serves the Union with meat, otherwise would have to sell it at a very great loss. The wages of an agricultural labourer are from 6*s.* to 9*s.* a week. Witness has a man aged 50, and able bodied, to whom he gives 6*s.*, with now and then a bit of offal on a Saturday night. There are many men at Minchin Hampton who would be glad to work regularly at 6*s.* a week, but they cannot get it. This rate of wages has been for about 12 months, and attributes it to the badness of trade, for when the clothing trade is bad, it is felt through all the district. There is not much drunkenness going on at Hampton now, for the people have not the means. Thinks the factory people are more sober from necessity than from choice. Trade has been very dull here for the last 2 or 3 years, arising from dullness in the manufacturing business. He considers the agricultural labourer, according to their earnings, are more frugal and more worthy of credit than factory persons, and if the agricultural labourer has work he is more tidy and decent in his appearance than the weaver, even though the weaver had work. There is no allotment to any extent; a few lots have been let by Mr. Ricardo. Emigration is promoted here, and about 40 or 50 persons left yesterday for Australia, Nov. 27th, 1839. My informant, who is well acquainted with the neighbourhood, is confident there is much of distress, chiefly in the manufacturing districts, not only among weavers, but others connected with the factory. Has noticed the last 2 or 3 years a great increase of this distress. Has heard that trade is now a little revived, but he himself has not felt it.

Horsley.

Mr. Harvey, of Horsley, says the agricultural labourer was badly off about 6 months ago; he now gets 8*s* to 9*s*. a week in the summer, some men as high as 10*s*. with their beer. In harvest time 9*s*. a week and 3*s*. beer is given. The average for labour is about 8*s*. and beer.

The weavers are very greatly distressed. Many applicants say it is impossible to support themselves by weaving. Considers that nothing would relieve this neighbourhood so much as emigration. Population has increased, while trade has been failing. Many shopkeepers have lost their property, and are little better than paupers. Formerly cottage property, of which the weavers rented greater part, was very valuable. If a weaver can barely support his family, he has not enough to pay rent. Cottage property is not worth holding.

Mr. Harvey sees no likelihood of a change for the better. Affairs have been getting worse ever since the strike of the weavers. Does not attribute the decline to the strike, further than that it embarrassed the manufacturers, and trade has gone away.

Many weavers within the last seven years have turned to agricultural labour; they make good labourers, but not superior to those who are brought up to it.

The wages of a mechanic vary from 15*s*. to 18*s*. a-week; they are in good work, not much at private building, as at new churches, chapels, poor-houses, &c.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CONDITION OF THE WEAVERS.

Meat is out of the question with the weavers, who live upon bread and potatoes. The weaver does not go the cheapest way to work,—he buys his loaf at 9*d.*; but the agricultural labourer buys tail-wheat of his master; the head-wheat would fetch from 8*s.* 6*d.* to 9*s.* a bushel; he, the agricultural labourer buys, the tail at 6*s.*, and thus obtains his quartern loaf one half cheaper than the weaver.

The poor buy the smallest quantities at the retail price, which is the dearest way they can possibly go to market.

The excise officer, Mr. Evans of Stroud, has frequently heard children ask for a "*half-penny worth of tea.*"

Mr. Harvey thinks the agricultural labourer poorer, but the more economical man in the district.

He further considers that the pauper was never so well attended to with regard to comfort and food, during the old Poor Law system, but now, under the new Poor Law, they were never so well off. Some of the children have been ill in the workhouse, because the diet is far more generous than the food they could obtain in their famished out-door condition.

Cam.

Mr. Holloway, a large and respectable general dealer at Cam, observes, in the district of Cam, there are some masters who make the men take cloth, and the poor fellows are obliged to sell it at a loss of 4*s.* and 5*s.* a yard.

Reubin Hill built 60 or 70 houses for weavers,—is a shrewd intelligent farmer and brick-maker, and can vouch for the deterioration of cottage property.

Mr. Holloway considers the weaver to be the worst paid artisan, and to be in the greatest distress; but that they are extremely peaceable and well conducted.

A weaver, he says, works fifteen hours a day,—say from five to eight, with a short let.

A piece can be wove in fourteen days.

The condition of the weaver is deplorable, for the work is so uncertain, that no tradesman will give them credit. Mr. Holloway states, that for seven years past, he has refused to keep any books with weavers; that he would give them a loaf, but no credit. Credit is absurd when there are no means to pay. A good agricultural labourer will earn about 10*s.*; the average wages about 7*s.* a week and cider. The hill farmers pay about the same.

The agricultural labourers are better domestic managers than the weavers; their houses and their children are neater; their expenditure is better managed; but they are far behind the weavers in knowledge and intelligence.

There is not sufficient employment for the weaving population,—all other classes are fully employed, there is not a carpenter or a mason out of work.

A weaver is of no use to work in the garden or otherwise.

Stonehouse.

The overseer of Stonehouse states, that he has known the state of the poor of Stonehouse for two years; considers the condition of the weavers better since the last quarter, than for two years previously; there was great distress before, arising from want of work; does not think so much from lowness of wages, as the general depression of trade; has had no opportunity of comparing this district with another. A weaver cannot earn more than 2*s.* a day on an average; cannot speak of the difference between a master-weaver and a journeyman; what he speaks of relates to those who work at home; has got his information from the weavers' own observations, by visiting their houses.

With respect to the appearance of their cottages, he has visited some, where the earnings have been small, but the neatness great; others, where the earnings have been great, and the comfort little.

This observation, moreover, applies in witness' opinion, more to the houses of spinners, who are a more improvident set of people.

Where there is a cleanly house, the wife is generally the same.

There is no allotment system in Stonehouse.

He considers the disposition and habits of the weavers and labouring persons to be more steady and regular from Cainscross, westward, than at Chalford and Bisley,—states, Mr. Stanton to be very strict in his mill with his men,—requiring punctuality and regularity of habit; the consequence is, that his men are orderly and well conducted.

Schools and Worship neglected.

With regard to the general character of the weavers, they are a quiet suffering class, limited as to intelligence, especially in the rural districts, where their whole time is taken up in labour, &c., where they have no means of acquiring mental improvement. With regard to religious duties, and attendance at places of worship, they are by no means remiss; but a great number of them are unable to attend divine service for want of decent clothing. Mr. Jones, surgeon, of Stroud, considers them to be more moral than some classes, and much more attentive to religious duties. He has had much opportunity of witnessing their habits in their own houses, and considers them to be a very inoffensive, pains-taking, and industrious class. The distress in many families is so great, that the children have no decent apparel to attend the Sunday schools, and may be seen on the commons as ragged as colts. It is evident that these children can hardly be expected to attend any weekly school, and in fact, they are left in a most deplorable state of neglect, and growing up in the darkest state of ignorance. This low condition must, of necessity, tend to an exceedingly low moral state; and here again, I trace the cause to the surplus of labour, which, unless removed, is an incubus upon the weavers, and a mischief to the rising generation.

Much of the moral condition of a workman, much of his self-respect, and much of his consequent comforts, as well as his station among his fellow-workmen, depends upon the influence of a kind and attentive master, who dismisses the drunkard, and carefully encourages the sober and the steady workman; but when this influence has not been exerted, where the master is indifferent to the morals of his workpeople, where his men are left to the entire mercy or cupidity of head workmen, and where the good and the bad are both treated with harshness, indifference or severity, all become in the same proportion, careless, reckless, and demoralised.

Moral influence of a Master conducive to the happiness of the Working Men.

It is to the utter absence of moral discipline on the part of manufacturers over their workpeople using their labour, merely as animal labour or machinery, and holding no restraint except that of arbitrary dismissal, not in reference, however, to bad moral conduct, but to the state of demand for their labour, or to caprice,—it is to this want of a friendly and fostering interest on the part of the masters to their servants, that I attribute much of the alleged profligacy and vice, when many congregate in factories, as well as the distressed condition of the working people.

At Stourport, near Kidderminster, there is a carpet factory, and I inspected the weavers' houses; their wages were the same as in Kidderminster; but their domiciles were much better furnished, as in almost every house I saw the long-cased clock, the chimney ornaments, a looking-glass, the geraniums behind a clean muslin blind, and a neat clean floor; not so, however, in the generality of the weavers' houses at Kidderminster. These men had all been weavers, however, at Kidderminster; but the proprietor, or manufacturer, was personally kind to his men, and by his actions evinced his sincerity in their welfare. He had altered their habits—and the men were happy in their employment. Many of them had paid off public-house scores, and drunkenness was punished by dismissal.

I observed a similar condition of weavers under the moral influences of their masters at Bridgenorth, and it may be stated as a fact, that under such control (if controul be the word to emply in reference to the happiness of the man), or under such influence, a labouring man feels his own self-independence, his own moral worth, in a much greater degree than a man receiving higher wages, who is under no controul, who has no master to whom he can look with gratitude for the interest taken in his welfare. He leaves his work, tired in heart and body, and betakes himself neglected and unheeded, as to his moral conduct, to the beer-shop. Lower wages in the one case procure much more happiness than higher wages in the other. Many workingpeople have acknowledged this to me, more especially at Witney. In further corroboration of this fact, so well worthy the consideration of those who employ labourers, I am informed that Messrs. Foxes, list manufacturers at Wellington, use great moral discipline over their men. A drunkard is deprived of work for a month; a man is dismissed for bastardy or swearing; and although their wages are low, there is less actual poverty than in other establishments, where wages may be higher.

I now proceed to submit to you the condition of the weavers in some of the parishes personally visited, and in so doing I beg to call your attention to the parish of Coaley, where the poor are neglected and in a state of extreme ignorance, contrasting their low condition with the working-classes in the parish of Stonehouse, where music is cultivated, and where the higher classes and employers of labour feel an interest in the welfare of their work-people.

Cam Parish.

District Observations. Cam

There are about 80 weavers in this parish, nearly all of whom are employed, yet notwithstanding there was an appearance of poverty and destitution in their houses; in almost every one of which there was sickness of some kind among the children or the parents; several I counted with meazles, others with hooping-cough, and some wasting away from consumption.

Although the weavers' houses are generally a scene of confusion and dirt, they appear to be quite unaware of the fact, thus verifying an old proverb, "Habit is second nature."

I do not think it is the natural inclination of the weavers to live in a state so comfortless and cheerless; but in many cases it is the unavoidable consequence of large families and small cottages; thus you find them washing, drying, cooking, weaving, quilling, and all the other necessary culinary and working duties per-

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

District Observations. Cam.

formed in one small confined apartment, which is as prejudicial to health, from its atmospherical impurities, as it is destitute of comfort, cleanliness, and order.

The poor people, generally speaking, live upon vegetables, chiefly cabbage and potatoes; and it is probable that an exclusive vegetable aliment has the tendency to produce those disorders on the bowels which are so prevalent among the poor weavers, not only in this but in other parishes.

The late Rev. W. C. Holder, vicar of this parish, died just as he was maturing some wholesome and excellent plans for the amelioration of the poor, and the prevention of pauperism. This gentleman, who was a good and kind man, an exemplary elergyman as well as a judicious benefactor to the poor, had established a fund for supplying the poor with bread, bacon, cheese, herrings, rice, oatmeal, flour, &c. &c., which were retailed out to them at less than cost price; and to each poor person was given a printed form of cookery, in which the saccharine qualities and the necessary quantities of each article were prescribed; making in some cases a diet which he often placed on his own table.

He also established a club to provide against sickness in their families, and lying-in of their wives, and inability to work from accidents; printed rules of which were set up in every poor man's house, and the plan was likely to be successful.

In his rigid inquiries into the pauperism of the parish, he found many idle and worthless pretenders; some who used crutches, and practised other deceptions, but when he caused relief to be withheld, the crutches were abandoned; so that he made the lame to walk, and I believe in one case the blind to see!

Thus the poor, formerly snug in the receipt of parish relief would seek no employment; and any attempt at alteration or improvement was met with no ordinary opposition and abuse.

Coaley.

Coaley Parish.

A striking illustration of the force of example is exemplified in this parish, the principal features of which are extreme ignorance, uncivilised manners, and the most chilling and abject poverty; perhaps no parish has been so unfortunate as Coaley as regards its clergymen, or more neglected in every sense by those who ought at once to be the advisers and the pattern of the people. Of the three last clergymen one committed suicide, and the other was a confirmed drunkard.

In such a state of things it is no matter of surprise that the poor should be lax in their morals, degraded as to intellect, or rude and barbarous in their manners.

Ignorance.

At a coroner's inquest held some time ago in the parish, there was only one man out of the twelve jurymen who could write his name. Several of these men were hand-loom weavers. Nor does this state of ignorance confine itself to the lower classes, but it is, I am told, observable in the farmers or others: in fact, take the parish throughout, a worse in morals or intellect cannot be found.

As a striking illustration of the rooted habits of the Coaley people, I quote, from "Rudder's History of Gloucestershire," the following character of the place in 1779:—"Worst roads in the world, and the poor labouring people are so abandoned to nastiness that they throw everything within a yard or two of their doors, where the filth makes a putrid stench, to the injury of their own health and the annoyance of travellers, if any come among them. The better houses are gone to ruin, and there is not a gentleman resident in the parish."

Of weavers there are about fifty or sixty remaining; formerly there were double the number. These weavers injure the trade by taking out work at any price; they may be seen travelling twelve or fifteen miles to obtain even a stripe chain from the Chalford manufacturers, taking back the price of their labour in truck, thus committing a threefold evil, by depriving the resident weaver of work, and lowering wages, already low at Chalford, and injuring the shopkeeper by receiving truck goods in payment.

Captain Thompson, till lately a resident in Coaley, has been the friend of the poor; he has been the village doctor, schoolmaster, and lawyer.

It is stated that the new appointment by the bishop, viz. the Rev. Mr. Bellingham, is likely to prove a benefit to the parish, being a gentleman as warm and zealous in his parochial duties as his predecessors were cold and careless. He observes, that in a great degree the poverty of the working classes of this parish

Drunkenness.

arises from habits of personal intemperance. It is, he says, a positive fact, that it matters not, in most cases, what may be the extent of wages earned, for the majority of the people will, when opportunity allows, spend the greatest portion of

their money in the licensed houses for drunkards and dissipated wretches. He states that, in his own knowledge, the father of a family in his parish, and his children, earned four guineas per week, and still the whole family have been in the most abject condition possible, entirely owing to his habits of drunkenness.

Stonehouse Parish.

This parish presents a striking contrast to that of Coaley, both in the domestic comfort of the working classes generally, and in their moral and intellectual condition; though only separated from Coaley by the intervening parish of Stanley, the people are a century before them in everything which tends to elevate the moral and intellectual condition. I was informed, from good authority, that a case of drunkenness rarely ever occurs in the village, owing to the neighbouring gentry and the respectable inhabitants, who, by their kind exertions, have done much in checking vice and promoting good and honourable conduct among the working classes.

What is so lamentably deficient in the parish of Coaley is here to be found in full energy, and the inhabitants throughout the parish appear comfortable, happy, and contented.

The weavers here with but one or two exceptions are superior to the generality of weavers in other districts; they are mostly master weavers, not on a large scale, but with perhaps two looms; I did not observe more than two in any of the houses; their children were decently clad, and the appearance of the families altogether presented an air of domestic comfort, which may be looked for in vain among the generality of the weavers.

Yet upon inquiry these men earn little or no more than other weavers who have tolerably constant work, but they have always been frugal, sober, and industrious, preferring after the toil of the day the more rational pleasure of social music, to the revelry and drunkenness of the ale house.

Music cultivated.

In several houses I found musical instruments, basses, violins, clarionets, and flutes, and I was informed that some of the weavers play very well, and take their parts in the Philharmonic concerts at Stroud, with good musicians from Cheltenham; those whose pretensions to the science are of a more humble stamp may be seen performing at church or chapel on Sundays, and though they are not so familiar with Handel or Mozart as the others, no doubt partake of equal pleasure, and are capable of inspiring an almost equal delight.

Small Libraries.

Not only were the houses of the weavers clean, neat, and well furnished, but in many instances a respectable little library was to be seen. In former days, when trade was good and wages high, it would have been difficult to select a cottage in which was not its little library of books hung up on shelves about three or four in number, attached by cords, and suspended from the wall; in all the other parishes I scarcely found a relic of a book shelf. At Stonehouse, I observed the books neatly bound, and put up in the way I have described. All the books were of a decidedly religious character, such is generally the case.

Thus, in reading and music they find enjoyment at once rational and useful, the result of which is well furnished and comfortable homes, a change of clothes for Sundays, and the satisfaction of a good character.

The means of education here is strictly religious, in fact it is difficult to find a free school, whether Sunday or daily, that is not exclusively of that character.

In conclusion, I beg to observe, that Stonehouse is altogether an exception to the general rule, being situate in the heart of a manufacturing district, where every mill is at full work, wages good, employment constant, and the masters are benevolent and kind.

If, in other districts, similar advantages existed, if some amusement was cultivated among the men after the hours of labour, if benevolence and kindness, instead of austerity and indifference, were exhibited by masters to their men, or attention shown to their condition and welfare, the moral state and the happiness of the people would be materially improved.

Evidence of the Police Officer.

John Osborne, policeman at Stonehouse, was formerly in the Cheltenham force. There is another policeman in the upper district, and they mutually help each other. The district extends about four miles, and is supported by the voluntary subscriptions of the inhabitants; witness's salary is £1 1*s.* per week, guaranteed. Has had no case of *slinging* since his time, which is about twelve months, and very few cases of felony, the chief cases are misdemeanors.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

District Observations. Stonehouse.

There are several beer shops in the neighbourhood, but all well conducted; has only summoned two; there are about ten altogether. The beer houses are not receptacles of prostitutes, but are well and orderly conducted.

The poor in Stonehouse are not so badly off as in many places he has seen, say *Bisley;* thinks they are tolerably comfortable, has often heard music in their houses among themselves, and now and then they form themselves into a band, and meet at the public house; these people are generally weavers and factory people.

At Stonehouse, they attend church and chapel very regularly, and most of them are decently and respectably clad.

The class of persons who commit depredations are too often the more respectable people, such as farmer's sons, on going to their homes drunk: sometimes it is done for mere mischief, and sometimes from "spite;" very seldom has it occurred that the poor have stolen from actual want.

Witness has only known two cases, one stealing turnips, and the other bread, from real distress.

The weavers' houses are decently furnished; thinks they are not in distress at Stonehouse. The weavers are well off for musical instruments and books; most of them have clocks and corner cupboards in their houses; has heard them talk about trade, and say that they could do well enough if they had regular work. The weavers can get credit at the shops.

Witness's district only extends to Stonehouse; does not want any additional force, because in time of bustle can call a constable or his brother officer; does not find the constables so apt as the police; they are not up to the business.

The other officer has had two or three cases of felony, but believes he has had no slinging cases.

Uley.

Uley Parish.

Failure of Mr. Sheppard.

This parish has of late suffered a severe loss, in the failure of one of the oldest and largest manufacturing firms in the county, viz. that of Messrs. Sheppard and Son.

This firm used to employ from 700 to 800 hands; these were suddenly and unexpectedly thrown out of employ, and distress is but the natural consequence.

Perhaps no place has undergone such changes for the worse as Uley. It was formerly, even three years ago, an active bustling village; the majority had work and tolerable wages, and with the allotment system, which is carried on here to a considerable extent under the care of Colonel Kingscote and Captain Slade, the working classes were in a tolerably comfortable condition; added to this, the benevolent daughters of Mr. Sheppard, a large manufacturer in the parish, spent their whole time in the education of the children of the working classes and the poor generally, at the same time watching over their domestic comforts, supplying by their own means and industry many an article of food or clothing, and rendering themselves in every respect the friends of the needy, the rewarders of the industrious, and they were in their own persons the schoolmistresses of the village.

Benevolence of Miss Sheppard.

Out of a fund raised by Miss Sheppard (arising from the sale of a likeness taken by herself of the Rev. Rowland Hill) an infant school was built near the manufactory which was filled with the poorer children neatly clad, and in whom she took great interest. A lending library was also established by them, and was productive of very good results. In fact, nothing was left undone that could tend to ameliorate their condition, improve their minds, and make them useful and virtuous members of society.

In consequence of the breaking up of the establishment, mercantile and domestic, of Mr. Sheppard, the family have left the neighbourhood, and what with the absence of trade and the deprivation of those advantages which Uley used to possess, it is not surprising that much poverty and distress abound. It was observed to me by a late overseer of Uley, that in his opinion the parish would, in the course of a few years, become an independent agricultural district, and that it would be better for the interest of the parish if weaving labour in it entirely ceased. Wickwar, a village four miles from Wootton, was formerly inhabited by weavers; there is a charity for the benefit of decayed persons engaged in the clothing trade, but there is not a weaver in the parish, and it is now entirely agricultural.

Uley.—in its present state it may truly be called a "deserted village;" houses

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

District Observations. Uley.

are tumbling down for want of repairs which the proprietors will not afford, seeing no chance of tenants; others have been taken down and sold for what the materials would fetch, and I am told a very decent cottage may be purchased for about £20.

Present Distress.

As an instance of the great depreciation of property, Mr. Sheppard's factory, which has been estimated to have cost him, first and last, nearly £50,000, was sold by auction, eighteen months ago, for £2,300, including three steam-engines, one of which has lately been purchased for 500*l.*

There are three other mills in the village; one, viz. Mr. Jeens, which is closed, and the others Messrs. Dauncey's and Mr. Smith's, which are still at work.

Emigration and Migration.

It is considered that there were about 200 hand-loom weavers in Uley formerly, 60 or 70 were employed by Messrs. Sheppard: emigration has, however, lessened their number; migration has disposed of others; several are gone to the iron works at Merthyr—and the remainder may be found among agricultural labourers, or in some other employ; very few are supported by the parish.

In the month of October eleven wives with their families emigrated to America, their passage being paid by the husbands who had gone before them, and are doing well.

Emigration has been greatly promoted at Uley; in fact, so heavy were the *poor rates* that it was absolutely necessary to adopt some means, and more than 100 have left for America and Australia.

There are now left about fifty weavers, most of whom I saw at their own homes, and in many instances I happened to find them at their dinner: this meal consisted of potatoes exclusively—I saw no meat, except in two or three cases, and they told me they did not know the taste of it: a piece of "flick" (*i. e.* fat from the interior of a pig) melted and thrown over some cabbage or potatoes is their common substitute for meat, and it was eagerly eaten and enjoyed.

Depressed pecuniary condition.

The condition of the weavers here is, in my opinion, undoubtedly one of great privation and distress, and their squalid and half famished looks corroborate that opinion; but it is a remarkable fact that, though the parents look as if they had not half enough to support nature, the children, almost without exception, look healthy, robust, and plump. I am confident that many of the weavers here do not eat more than once a day, especially those who have large families: their houses presented a most miserable appearance, the only furniture in many being an old stool, a broken table, and few cracked or broken cups and pans. In one or two cases I found them sitting on the stair-steps, having no chair or stool; in others, a log of wood is a substitute; they have pawned or sold everything; and those who have work drag out a miserable existence upon 5*s.* or 6*s.* a week, *and this in truck*, without the possibility of ever redeeming or regaining their furniture; and, although in a condition almost without hope, they appeared to be patient in extremity.

A total want of cleanliness marked all the houses of the weavers which I visited; they were even intolerably dirty. This I am of opinion may be attributed to the listlessness or broken spirit in the wife, who is always the main sufferer, especially where the husband is addicted to drink.

Induces listlessness of character.

In several houses I found the wives in a state of utter idleness, as if they were brooding over their distress; thus they are rendered supine and careless by the very inducements which ought to create the opposite spirit of perseverance, and a determination to be active: in some of these cases the husbands were from home seeking employment, while the wives, being left to provide how they could for their families, appeared so paralyzed, that for want of energy they sit and brood, and almost starve.

Rudder, in his History of Gloucestershire, 1779, in reference to the working classes of Uley (whom he states to be exclusively employed in the cloth trade), observes, that "idleness and debauchery are so deeply rooted in them, by means of those seminaries of vice called alehouses, that the poor are very burdensome —these houses are scattered all over the country, and are daily increasing, which we owe rather to the magistrates' inattention or indulgence, or perhaps to a mistaken notion of serving the community by increasing the public revenue for licences; but they may be assured that nothing can compensate for depravity of morals and the loss of industry."

Dursley Parish.

Out of 150 weavers who formerly resided in this parish, principally in the town,

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

District Observations. Dursley.

Trade decreased.

there are now only about 20; of these 12 work in the shop factory of Messrs. Howard Brothers; the others are out-door weavers.

The clothing trade has greatly declined in Dursley; there are now only two manufacturers, and about some ten or twelve years ago there were six or seven.

The weavers of one of the manufactories complain of the low wages they are paid, and the little they can earn. Messrs. Howards' trade being unsteady and fluctuating they have to wait for chain, making their nett average earnings very low. One of the firm, the principal partner, will only employ good, steady hands, and he looks into the moral conduct of the men, and requires them to attend religious worship, while he also takes an interest in the Sabbath education of the children.

Tickets are kept for the purpose of knowing whether the children attend Sunday-school regularly, and dismissal from employment is the consequence of too frequent absence.

There are many poor in Dursley, and their houses are wretched and destitute.

The few weavers' houses I saw were not, however, of the worst description: yet they were far from being comfortable; their families appeared badly off, but not destitute of furniture, as in the cases at Uley, and some of the other parishes.

Of the 150 weavers who formerly lived in Dursley, most of whom could formerly find employment (for Dursley was once a very brisk manufacturing town), some have gone to Australia and America; others are agricultural labourers; three or four are now hawkers of cloth; and the remainder are either dead, or perhaps paupers in their respective parishes.

The trade did not decline in Dursley for want of capital, inasmuch as the manufacturers were all opulent men, and are now living, retired from trade, in good estate. The cause may be stated to be the great risk in business over and above the remuneration for the capital employed. Two or three mills are now vacant and almost in ruins; the proprietors of which prefer sinking the property rather than endure the risk and fatigue of trade.

Power Looms.

POWER-LOOMS.

There are many opinions, even among the manufacturers, concerning the ultimate expediency of a general adoption of power-looms, because, in the fine and more tender fabrics, there is a delicacy required in the blow which steam does not possess. The chain for a power-loom must be prepared and spun very carefully, because otherwise the constant breaking of the threads would greatly impede the work, and render it more expensive. Mr. S. Marling observes, that "bad chains cost us more for weaving than good ones."

Effect on Wages.

The number of power-looms in the district, though not exceeding a hundred, has had the effect of fixing, and in some cases lowering, the wages of hand-loom weaving. Mr. Peter Playne, a manufacturer, says his weavers know his opinion, that it will not be to the interest of the manufacturer to use power-looms if the men will work, as he says, at reasonable wages: he considers that the weaver is racing against steam, and that the slightest rise for wages would cause their general adoption of power throughout the country. He further says, that his opinion respecting the power-loom has always been, that, though cloth can be made by it, it will not be worth the extra machinery, mechanics, &c., attendant upon power. He thinks that power will not greatly reduce the wages of weaving below the present price; and as to its general effect upon the labour of the district, if a weaver should be put out, a mechanic, such as a millwright, carpenter, or blacksmith, will be put in.

The opinion of the weavers concerning power is, that, although it is not of any glaring advantage to the manufacturer, yet it is a decided injury to their class, as the manufacturers use it as a means of keeping wages low, by threatening its introduction.

Anthony Fewster, of Nailsworth, observes, power-looms must in all probability supersede the hand-loom. Thus, the introduction of the carding-machines, some forty years ago, set aside the whole body of scribblers, and at a subsequent period the shearing-frames superseded the hand-shearing, and thus another whole class was set aside; and although there was doubtless much individual suffering in

consequence, yet the change has been beneficial on the whole. The power-loom will in time unquestionably supersede the hand-loom. And he continues to remark, if the general trade of the country should revive, he trusts that the hand-loom weavers will find some other employment; they are not, however, (for the most part) sufficiently muscular for working on railroads.

(By the observations of the Rev. H. Jeffreys, of Bisley, it appears that those weavers who have left Bisley, and are at work upon the railroads, are doing very well.)

Relative to the shearmen and scribblers, who were put out of work by the introduction of machinery, Anthony Fewster observes, that as classes, they never found any other channels of labour; and their condition consequently continued to the end of their days below that of other classes of working men.

Mr. Charles Stanton states, that he put up four power-looms in July, 1836, by way of experiment; they answered fully, were made at Rochdale, and cost when brought home 25*l.* each for the broad, and 21*l.* for the narrow; he employs at the two narrow looms one man, and at the two broad looms a man and a woman; there is no subsequent improvement in the loom; the man who looks after the looms can earn from 20*s.* to 21*s.* per week, and the women employed in them 8*s.* or 9*s.*; found them to succeed, and in consequence put up a further quantity. Is now putting up eight broad looms, making in all sixteen broad; and he has eighteen narrow looms on the premises, making in all thirty-four power-looms. Considers that there has been no diminution in labour, except that females are employed instead of males—this applies to cassimeres.

Mr. Charles Stanton further states, that he now has twenty-six power-looms at work at present, and that he introduced them about three years ago. As yet their introduction has not been the means of putting any weavers out of employ: it has displaced eight or ten male weavers, but as many women have been substituted. Considers that the cloth made by power is better made than the average: there is the *certainty*, *regularity*, and *quick return* in favour of power-looms.

Mr. Stanton states, that he was induced originally to introduce power-looms here from their being so prevalent in the North, and knowing full well that we could not *compete*, under the disadvantages of hand-loom weaving, with cheap *power*; thinks that they pay quite as much for power-loom weaving now as they could get it done for by the out-weavers; but that, if they put up more looms, should then *be saving*, as women would be put to work; 1*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.* is the absolute sum paid to the weaver and quiller at the present time for power weaving. Considers the present low rate of profits to be a premium upon the introduction of machinery.

Prices.

In the broad work one man has charge of four looms, and a woman to each of the other three, so that there will be four men and twelve women to the sixteen looms. Women were never put to the broad looms, except they had been previously employed by master weavers on the same sort of work.

To every six cassimere looms he places one man and four women; has eighteen looms; about half the females were taken from the quilling. It requires a certain stature to enable them to reach over the loom to tie on, and thinks that under sixteen years of age they could not work at them: women and girls can do it better than men on account of the suppleness of the finger.

In broad cloth there is more strength required to move the beam, and therefore a greater age is required.

The quantity of cloth made by power is equal to the best hand-weaving; never had a yard spoiled since the introduction of power.

Quantity and quality.

Mr. Stanton further observes, that the power-loom makes forty-two shoots a minute; a hand-loom weaver *can* make forty, if he works briskly; but, of course, he cannot continue it.

Mr. C. Stanton states, that all chain is made pretty good now, but it sometimes happens that bad chain is made from the bad scribbling of the wool, bad dyeing, &c. &c.; if he finds he has a bad chain he puts it a nail wider on the loom, and lessens the strain; does not think the power-looms will ever be introduced to any great extent.

There is an excess of population, and in proportion to a tendency of introduction of power, there will be a forced reduction of labour; is satisfied there are manufacturers at present having broad cloth woven as cheap by out-weavers as he (Mr. Stanton) is paying for it by power, and *finding* the machinery. The cost per piece is 1*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.* Under any improved system of working, Mr. Stanton does not think that a piece could be woven for less than 16*s.* or 18*s.*

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Power Looms.

With the cost of power, wear and tear, harness, interest of money, upon a hypothetical calculation of fifty looms, would be 3*s.* per piece, glue not included. This is the utmost that the power-loom can do against the weaver.

The following is a portion of the evidence of Mr. C. Stanton, a gentleman to whom I feel much indebted for his valuable and important information, and for the great urbanity with which at all times he met my inquiries, and allowed me to profit by his experience.

Do you attribute the distresses to which the hand-loom weavers are or have been subjected, to causes unconnected with the conduct of the workmen, such as a diminution of the demand for their labour or substitution of power for hand-looms?—I attribute the distress to the diminution in the demand for labour: the weavers have not as a body done themselves any injury, and with the exception of the ebullition of feeling during the strikes, they are a patient and well-conducted set of people.

Do you consider that the introduction of power-looms has tended to add to the distress of the hand-loom weavers?—Yes; inasmuch as it has induced other manufacturers to reduce the price of weaving, but not as regards the quantity woven by power, or the number of men who have been displaced, their number being so very insignificant.

Is not the number of power-looms at present introduced extremely insignificant?—Extremely so, in reference to the total quantity of looms employed—not one per cent.

Is it not a fact that however small the proportion of power-looms to hand-looms, yet their introduction has been the means of reducing wages generally over the whole district?—Yes; for manufacturers who wish to lower wages have made an unfair handle of the few power-looms which they have been employing at a trifling advantage to themselves.

I now insert the following letter from Mr. S. Marling of the Ham Mills. He there states that a piece of thirty-six ells averages about twelve days by power; the average time that I have taken for hand-loom weaving to the same quantity is fifteen days, although a weaver by hand, at a chain of quality equal to that put in the power-loom, might produce it in the same period. It is questionable whether the saving of the two days' labour is an ultimate saving in the cost of the production, because an extra expense is incurred, first, in the selection of the better wool, and, secondly, in the preparing the chain.

The following is the letter above alluded to:—

Ham Mills, Feb. 20, 1839.

Dear Sir,—I have caused a particular inquiry to be instituted as to the quantity of work performed by our power-looms, and we find that each loom has woven about three ells in ten hours, including the delay occasioned by setting to work, and accidents, so that on an average a thirty-six ell chain is woven in about twelve days. Our power-looms are attended by women, whose weekly earnings are about 7*s.* We pay them a *fixed price per piece*, and fixed wages per day, so that, if the chains are bad, the weaver earns less, but not so much less as though paid entirely by the piece (and bad chains *cost us more* for weaving than good ones), which we consider more *equitable*, than the usual method of paying by the piece alone; but this plan can only be introduced with power-looms.

We adopt a system of minute division of labour in performing the work usually done by the hand-loom weaver; in fact, it is divided into five branches, three to prepare the work for the loom, and one to finish it after it is taken off, so that the weaver does nothing but attend to the loom from morning to night; and we find that the preparatory and finishing processes, and the expense of keeping the loom going, is about equal to the amount of the weaver's earnings. The cost of a power-loom is about £25.

I believe the above particulars are what you wished me to supply.

I have the honour to be, dear Sir,
Yours truly,
SAMUEL S. MARLING.

To W. A. Miles, Esq.
&c. &c. &c.

SHOP-LOOMS.

Shop Looms.

Master Weavers injured.

Shop-looms is a subject of great annoyance among the weavers, because when the weavers struck no shop-looms were in existence, the work was all put out, and the weavers imagined the master could not proceed unless upon mutual terms. The weavers were mistaken, for the manufacturers erected shop-looms, employed the journeymen of the master weavers in them, and left the master weavers without work. The consequence has been, that houses constructed for looms, or rented by master weavers, have greatly fallen in value, see p. 414.

The consequence is, that the journeymen have more constant work, as well as better chain (looms, harness, and slay found them.) The master weavers are now obliged to seek for casual chain, and they even take the work at the factory net price paid to the journeyman, where everything is found, and they find everything for that amount.

Journeymen benefited.

The journeymen who "manned" these factories were a set of half-taught workmen under the master weavers. The manufacturers say, "they were the most uncouth and awkward set of fellows" they ever saw.

These factory weavers now earn on the average 11*s.* 9¾*d.* weekly, *vide* p. 438; an active workman can earn 17*s.* or 1*l.* a week when chain may be very good.

The following are the remarks tendered to me by a person well acquainted with the district and the habits of the weavers:—

"Although there appears throughout this (the weaving) department of the factories great regularity as regards work, every hand being in full employ, chain after chain following in quick succession, yet few factory weavers will acknowledge, and these but faintly, that the shop system is a benefit to them; but, with a strange inconsistency, state that they would rather take the chance of uncertain work at the master weaver's as they used to do.

"These weavers at the same time confess that they earn more money in their present situation as factory weavers; that they get more food and constant work; yet they are not so contented as when they were under the acknowledged *arbitrary* master weavers, with uncertain employ, and consequent low wages.

Objections of the Factory Weavers.

"The objection to shop factories as stated by them are,—

"1. The unjust assumption of the weavers trade by the manufacturer.

"2. The prison-like situation of the weaver.

"3. The non-employment of their wives and children, who formerly could act as quillers, and occasionally, as regards the wife, relieve the man from the loom while he worked in his garden, or earned a trifle another way—(to which I may add, or went to the beer-shop and "*lost*" a trifle another way.

"4. The deprivation of their little messes, such as a cup of tea, and hot vegetables at dinner time, which the master weaver used to supply them with at a moderate charge, which in the shop factory is impracticable, owing to the distance many of them live from the shop.

"5. The distance that many of them have to walk to their work in all weathers, without a change of clothes.

"6. The confinement to a certain number of hours per day, at the option of the manufacturer, whereby the weaver is prevented from earning what is usually called 'over-time money.'

"7. The constant tendency to reduce wages. A manufacturer knows that it is difficult for a weaver to get work if he is once discharged, for a stand against wages; and thus the manufacturer s constantly trying to find out a clue to lower the price, taking, perhaps, as an unfair standard, a man who can probably weave a chain in ten or eleven days.*

"These are the objections to shop factories, made by the weavers; but when it is considered that a weaver, whether in prosperity or adversity, is the same restless being in reference to his master with whom he considers he has no interest in common, allowance must be made for his prejudices. A weaver is no economiser of time; and when it is at his own disposal, too frequently neglects his work for even the most trivial causes, and too often attributes the scantiness of his earnings to the low wages of the manufacturer, when it might be more fairly chargeable to his own want of energy and industry.

"In the shop factory of the Messrs. Stanton punctuality as to time, and regularity as to habits are strictly enforced; and, I am informed, that this system of discipline improves the character of the men, inasmuch as when they are constantly employed, they are generally steady and inclined to work; whereas a relaxation of employment (or what is commonly called play, i. e., waiting for work), and at the same time a want of order and regularity, produce a looseness and unsteadiness of habit which too frequently begins with tippling, and ends with the loss of situation."

In confirmation of the above remarks I must observe, that the factory weavers, though earning the most money, are the most dissatisfied class, endeavouring by every means to underrate their earnings and condition, while the poorer out-door weaver, who does not earn half the amount of these men, and from whom these factory weavers have engrossed so much of the work, is patient in his sufferings and privations. The factory weaver is the most turbulent, though the best off.

This opinion is confirmed by the testimony of a straightforward, unprejudiced weaver, who speaks openly and candidly upon the subject:—

Opinion of a Weaver in support of the ameliorated condition of the Journeymen Weaver.

"William Tanner, has been a shop weaver for nearly twenty years; thirteen years at Messrs. Austins, at Wootton, and seven years at Messrs. C. Stephens and Co., at Stanley Mills, and he states that he is perfectly convinced that the shop factory is beneficial to the weaver, and that he would rather work for a master clothier than for a master weaver, let the price be what it would. Considers that he can get a chain oftener of a master clothier, because

* It was from the fear that I should fall into this error that the weavers endeavoured to mislead me as to time and earnings.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Shop Looms.

if a master weaver has a chain he would serve himself first, and then his journeymen; says he will always speak up for the shop system, and would be sorry to see it done away with. He can earn on coloured work (his chief employ) 14*s.* a week, if he had it constant; but thinks he does not average more than about 12*s.* the year through, taking work and play.* He further states, that the master weaver was more tyrannical and arbitrary than any manufacturer who keeps a shop factory; and that he, as a shop weaver, is very comfortable, and would not change, even at an advance of price, because the certainty of the shop work would more than counterbalance any extra price which might be given by the master weaver.

I here subjoin returns from some of the principal manufacturers, showing the amount of earnings of their weavers in the factories.

With regard to the factory weavers they are in a tolerable good condition, though they rank among the lowest paid of all mechanics. They are far above the distressed condition of the out-door weaver, and yet consider themselves, even the journeymen in the factories, to be ill used and badly off.

The prejudice against the shop-loom system is extreme, and it is fostered by the out-door master weaver, who was ruined when the manufacturer took the trade into his own hands. One of the remedies most strenuously urged by the weavers, in reference to the ameliorating their condition, is the abolition of all shop factories.

Wages and Earnings.

The following statement of wages earned in different factories, is supplied by the manufacturers. In some factories the men so frequently change employers, that the earnings of one individual cannot be traced for so long a period as I required. I beg to state that the following lists of earnings may be considered as the average of the county.

Statement concerning Factory Weavers' Earnings, from the Returns supplied by Manufacturers.

Tables of Wages and Earnings.

Name of Mill.	No. of Men.	No. of Weeks.	Amount Paid.	Deductions.	Net Sum.	Weekly Earnings.
			£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Eastington . . .	12	52	479 0 6	39 18 10	440 1 8	0 14 1
Lodgemore . . .	11	50	372 18 0	31 1 6	341 16 6	0 12 5
Stanley	14	52	476 12 7	39 14 4	436 18 3	0 12 0
Iron Mills	20	52	663 8 8	No deductions.	663 8 8	0 12 9
Ditto	22	26	326 0 5		326 0 5	0 11 5
Dunkirk ditto . . .	16	52	488 18 5		488 18 5	0 11 9
Ditto	16	52	483 10 0		483 10 0	0 11 7½
Ditto	16	52	429 10 6		429 10 6	0 10 3¾
Ditto	16	26	210 17 11		210 17 11	0 10 1½
	143	414				9)5 6 5
				Average Weekly Earnings		0 11 9¾ †

In reference to the above table they are the *averages of earnings* of the factory weavers; but it is proper to observe, that the earnings range from 9*s.* 11*d.* to 15*s.*; and in a few and extreme cases of extraordinary skilled, or quick and industrious workmen, the nett earnings amount to 16*s.* 6*d.* per week for the twelve months.

Taking an extreme case, a weaver at the above wages of 16*s.* 6*d.*, with an industrious wife and a child at work in the factory, might earn between them a moderate weekly income.

	£.	s.	d.
Man	0	16	6
Wife at weaving or burling . . .	0	7	0
Child at carding	0	2	6
	£1	6	0

But taking the average of the earnings, and supposing the wife and child to be at work, which is generally the case (most of the weavers being married, as appears in the statistical statement) the earnings of the family per week would be—

	£.	s.	d.
Man	0	11	9¾
Wife	0	7	0
Child	0	2	6
	£1	1	3¾

* 11*s.* 9*d.* is my computed average of factory earnings.—*Vide* p. 384 and p. 387.

† This amount of weekly earnings is obtained by reference to the wages books of the manufacturers. I also found the average to be within 3 farthings of this amount by a different process—namely, 1st, by the ave age amount of wages paid per piece; and, 2nd, the time employed to weave a piece, by calculating the number of shoots thrown a minute.—*Vide* p. 382–384 and p. 387.

The entire earnings of a family of the out-door weaver, consisting of five persons is only 10*s.*; and yet the factory weavers are the most discontented.

Statistics relative to Shop Factories.

At Eastington Mills.—*Mr. Charles Hooper.*

Of 50 shop-loom weavers—

37 can read and write.
13 can read and not write.
37 have been master weavers.
13 only had been always journeymen.
4 are single.
2 are widowers.
44 are married.

31 wives are employed in the making of cloth.
13 are weavers.
132 children, or three to each family.
25 earn wages.
13 attend pay schools.
5 attend free schools.
60 Sunday schools.

Not one weaver, master or journeyman, acknowledges that his condition is bettered by the factory system.

At Dunkirk Mills, and Iron Mills.—*Mr. Peter Playne, and Mr. W. Playne.*

Of 50 weavers—

3 can neither read nor write.
21 can read and not write.
26 can read and write.
19 had been master weavers.
28 had been journeymen.
3 are apprentices.
4 only are single.
1 is a widower.
45 are married.

38 wives are employed in the manufacture of cloth.
27 of the wives are weavers.
146 children, or 3·2 children to each family,
36 of the children earn wages.
12 attend public schools.
(None attend a free school.)
71 attend Sunday schools.

Six weavers, four of them journeymen and two of them master weavers, consider their condition improved by the factory system.

At Stanley Mills.—*Mr. Charles Stevens.*

Of 35 weavers—

1 can neither read nor write.
18 can read and not write.
16 can read and write.
20 had been master weavers.
15 had been journeymen.
2 only are single.
33 are married.

22 wives are employed in the manufacturing of cloth.
12 of the wives are weavers.
89 children, or 2·7 children in a family.
36 of the children earn wages.
8 attend pay schools.
4 attend free schools.
26 attend Sunday schools.

One weaver, a master weaver, considers his condition bettered in a factory.

At the mills of Messrs. Stanton and Sons, at Lodgemore and Stafford's Mill.

There are 60 weavers.

11 can neither read nor write.
20 can read and not write.
29 can read and write.
17 have been master out-door weavers.
42 have been journeymen.
1 is an apprentice.
4 are single.
2 are widowers.
54 are married.
39 wives are employed in the manufacture of cloth.

13 of the wives are weavers.
168 children.
38 of the children earn wages.
27 attend pay schools.
17 attend free schools.
38 attend Sunday schools.
4 of the weavers consider their condition benefited by the shop system, and they are all journeymen.

For the wages paid in shop factories, see table thereof, under the head of Wages and Earnings.

The average amount is 11*s.* 9*d.*

The following is a Statistical Summary *of the four preceding documents.*

Of 195 shop weavers :—

108 can read and write.
72 can read and not write.
15 can neither read nor write.
93 had been master weavers.
98 had been journeymen.
14 are single.
176 are married.
5 are widowers.
130 wives are employed in the manufacture of cloth.

65 are the wives of weavers.
535 children, or 2·7 to a family.
135 children earn wages.
60 children attend pay schools.
26 children attend free schools.
195 children attend sunday schools.
11 weavers only owned that their condition was improved by the shop system, and of these 3 are master weavers and 7 are journeymen.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

SHOP LOOMS.

TABLE concerning the CONDITION and EARNINGS of the SHOP

No.	If Journeyman or Master Weaver, previous to being in the Factory.	Time lost between Chain.	Time of Weaving last Chain.	No. of Hundred.	Price Paid.	Deductions.	Net Sum received by the Weaver.	How long a Factory Weaver.	Does the Weaver consider his Condition to be Improved or not, in a Factory.
			Days		£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	Years	
1	Journeyman	2 days	14	18	1 17 0	5 6	1 11 6	7	Not
2	,,	,,	12	11	1 4 0	3 6	1 0 6	6	,,
3	,,	,,	17	18	1 17 0	5 7	1 11 5	10	Improved
4	,,	,,	12	17	1 17 0	5 6	1 11 6	8	,,
5	,,	,,	13	18	1 17 0	5 6	1 11 6	8	Not
6	,,	,,	15	18	1 17 0	5 6	1 11 6	10	Improved
7	Master	,,	15	18	1 17 0	5 6	1 11 6	10	Not
8	Journeyman	,,	15	17	1 17 0	5 6	1 11 6	9	Improved
9	,,	,,	12	18	1 17 0	5 6	1 11 6	9	Not
10	Master	,,	12	18	1 17 0	5 6	1 11 6	7	,,
11	,,	,,	13	18	1 17 0	5 6	1 11 6	10	,,
12	Journeyman	,,	13	17	1 8 9	0 0	1 8 9	9	,,
13	Master	,,	18	17	1 8 9	0 5½	1 8 3½	9	,,
14	Journeyman	,,	18	17	1 8 9	0 0	1 8 9	10	,,
15	Master	,,	14	17	1 8 9	0 9	1 8 0	7	,,
16	Journeyman	,,	12	17	1 8 9	0 11	1 7 10	7	,,
17	Master	,,	15	17	1 8 9	0 9	1 8 0	9	,,
18	Journeyman	,,	13	17	1 8 9	0 9	1 8 0	6½	,,
19	,,	,,	18	18	1 10 7	1 1	1 9 6	8	,,
20	,,	,,	18	17	1 8 9	0 9	1 8 0	9	,,
21	,,	,,	18	18	1 10 7	1 0	1 9 7	7	,,
22	,,	,,	12	17	1 11 6	4 6	1 6 0	9½	,,
23	,,	,,	17	18	1 18 0	5 6	1 12 6	10	,,
24	,,	,,	13	18	1 14 9	5 1	1 9 8	9	,,
25	,,	,,	14	18	1 14 9	5 1	1 9 8	8	,,
26	Master	,,	14	17	1 10 8	4 8	1 6 0	2	,,
27	Journeyman	,,	13	15	1 8 6	3 10½	1 4 7	9	,,
28	,,	,,	18	18	1 17 0	5 4	1 11 8	7	,,
29	,,	,,	18	18	1 17 0	5 4	1 11 8	3	,,
30	,,	,,	18	18	1 17 0	5 4	1 11 8	10	,,
31	,,	,,	13	18	1 17 0	5 4	1 11 8	8	,,
32	,,	,,	13	18	1 14 0	5 1	1 8 11	5	,,
33	Apprentice	,,	13	15	1 8 6	3 10½	1 4 7½	6	,,
34	Journeyman	,,	12	18	1 16 11	5 2	1 11 9	10	,,
35	,,	,,	12	18	1 14 9	5 1	1 9 8	10	,,
36	,,	,,	12	18	1 19 0	5 7	1 13 5	12	,,
37	,,	,,	12	18	1 14 9	5 1	1 9 8	8	,,
38	,,	,,	12	18	1 17 0	5 4	1 11 8	9	,,
39	Master	,,	12	17	1 12 8	4 10	1 7 10	10	,,
40	Journeyman	,,	13	18	1 17 0	5 4	1 11 8	2¾	,,
41	,,	,,	18	18	1 10 7	0 7	1 10 0	9	Improved
42	,,	,,	12	17	1 12 8	4 10	1 7 10	5	Not
43	Master	,,	12	...	1 12 8	4 10	1 7 10	9	,,
44	,,	,,	12	18	1 14 9	5 6	1 9 3	8½	,,
45	Journeyman	,,	12	18	1 14 9	5 6	1 9 3	5½	,,
46	,,	,,	18	18	1 14 9	5 6	1 9 3	9	,,
47	,,	,,	11	18	1 14 9	5 1	1 9 8	10	,,
48	,,	,,	11	18	1 14 9	5 1	1 9 8	4	,,
49	,,	,,	14	18	1 14 9	5 1	1 9 8	9	,,
50	Master	,,	13	18	1 16 11	5 4	1 11 7	5	,,
51	,,	,,	12	17	1 12 8	4 10	1 7 10	8	,,
52	Journeyman	,,	18	18	1 19 0	5 7	1 13 5	4	,,
53	Master	,,	12	18	1 14 9	5 1	1 9 8	9	,,
54	,,	,,	12	17	1 12 8	4 8	1 8 0	9	,,
55	Journeyman	,,	18	18	1 17 0	5 4	1 11 8	7	,,
56	,,	,,	12	15	1 8 6	4 1	1 4 5	7	,,
57	Master	,,	18	18	1 17 0	5 4	1 11 8	9	,,
58	,,	,,	18	18	1 17 0	5 4	1 11 8	8½	,,
59	Journeyman	,,	11	18	1 14 9	5 1	1 9 8	6	,,
60	Master	,,	17	18	1 17 0	5 4	1 11 8	7	,,

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

SHOP LOOMS.

WEAVERS and their FAMILIES, in the Factories of Mr. CHARLES STANTON.

Married.	Single.	Employ of Wife.	Earnings of Wife.	No. of Children.	Employ of Children.	Earnings of Children.	Amount of Weekly Earnings of Wife and Children.	No. of Children at School in			If Weaver can Read and Write.	Amount of Weavers' Weekly Earnings in Factory.	Total Amount of Weekly Income.
								Pay School.	Free School.	Sunday School.			
			s. *d.*			*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*					*s.* *d.*	£. *s.* *d.*
M	..	Weaver	6 0	3	..	..	6 0	2	..	..	R. & W.	13 6	0 19 6
,,	..	Picker	4 0	2	..	..	4 0	..	2	..	..	10 3	0 14 3
,,	..	,,	6 0	4	..	..	6 0	..	3	..	..	11 1½	0 17 1½
,,	..	Weaver	.. ..	5	1 Factory	4 6	4 6	..	2	..	R. & W.	16 0	1 0 6
,,	..	Spinner	2 0	5	2 do.	4 3	6 3	..	1	..	..	14 6	1 0 9
,,	..	..	.. ..	2	..	..	..	..	..	2	R.	12 7½	0 12 7½
,,	..	..	.. ..	4	1 do.	1 6	1 6	3	..	..	R. & W.	12 7½	0 14 1½
,,	..	..	.. ..	5	1 do.	3 0	3 0	1	..	..	,,	12 7½	0 15 7
,,	..	..	.. ..	3	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	16 0	0 16 0
,,	..	..	.. ..	4	..	..	..	..	2	..	R. & W.	16 0	0 16 0
,,	..	Weaver	1 0	4	..	..	..	..	..	1	R.	14 6	0 14 6
,,	..	Labourer	1 6	1	1 do.	1 6	3 0	..	..	3	,,	13 3	0 16 0
,,	..	Spinner	.. ..	4	1 do.	2 6	2 6	..	..	..	R. & W.	9 4½	0 11 10
,,	..	Quiller	4 0	2	1 do.	5 0	9 0	..	..	..	..	9 7½	0 18 7½
,,	..	Weaver	.. ..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	R. & W.	12 0	0 12 0
,,	..	,,	.. ..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	R	14 0	0 14 0
,,	..	,,	.. ..	6	2 do.	6 0	6 0	..	..	..	R. & W.	11 1½	0 17 0
,,	..	Quiller	.. ..	6	2 Tred	8 0	8 0	..	..	4	..	13 0	1 1 0
,,	..	Warper	4 6	2	2 Clippers	3 0	7 6	..	..	2	R.	9 9	0 17 3
,,	..	Quiller	3 0	1	..	..	3 0	1	..	..	..	9 6	0 12 6
,,	..	Burler	5 0	1	..	..	5 0	..	..	..	R. & W.	9 10½	0 14 10½
,,	..	Spinner	.. ..	7	2 Factory	3 0	3 0	..	..	3	,,	13 0	0 16 0
,,	..	Picker	.. ..	3	..	..	..	3	..	..	R.	11 6	0 11 6
,,	..	Spinner	5 0	2	..	..	5 0	2	..	..	R. & W.	13 7	0 18 7
,,	..	,,	5 6	3	..	..	5 6	1	..	..	R.	12 7	0 18 1
,,	..	Labourer	.. ..	6	3 do.	6 0	6 0	3	..	3	R. & W.	11 1½	0 17 1½
,,	..	Quiller	2 6	..	..	..	2 6	..	..	..	R.	11 4½	0 13 10½
,,	..	Burler	4 6	1	..	..	4 6	..	1	..	R. & W.	10 6	0 15 0
,,	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	R.	10 6	0 10 6
..	S.	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
M.	..	Picker	3 6	3	1 do.	3 0	6 6	1	..	..	,,	10 6	0 17 0
,,	..	..	.. ..	5	1 do.	2 0	2 0	..	1	..	..	14 7½	0 16 7½
W.	..	..	.. ..	1	1 do.	1 0	1 0	..	..	1	R. & W.	13 4½	0 14 4½
..	S.	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	11 4½	0 11 4½
M.	..	Factory	2 6	2	..	..	2 6	..	..	..	..	16 0	0 18 6
,,	..	..	.. ..	3	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	14 9	0 14 9
,,	..	Weaver	.. ..	5	..	..	..	2	..	3	..	16 7½	0 16 7½
,,	..	..	.. ..	3	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	14 9	0 14 9
,,	..	Weaver	4 0	1	..	..	4 0	1	..	..	R.	16 0	1 0 0
,,	..	..	.. ..	6	3 do.	7 0	..	2	..	1	,,	14 0	0 14 0
,,	..	Quiller	4 0	2	..	..	4 0	..	..	..	,,	14 7½	0 18 7
,,	..	Picker	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	10 0	0 10 0
,,	..	..	.. ..	2	..	..	..	1	1	..	R. & W.	14 0	0 14 0
,,	..	..	.. ..	1	1 do.	1 0	1 0	..	..	..	,,	14 0	0 15 0
,,	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	14 9½	0 14 9½
,,	..	Weaver	.. ..	4	2 do.	2 6	2 6	..	..	..	..	14 9½	0 17 3½
,,	..	Factory	8 0	..	..	..	8 0	..	..	..	R.	9 9	0 17 9
,,	..	Reeler	3 0	4	1 do.	1 0	4 0	..	1	..	,,	16 1½	1 0 1½
,,	..	Weaver	5 0	1	..	..	5 0	..	..	..	,,	16 1½	1 1 1½
,,	..	Warper	3 6	3	..	..	3 6	..	..	..	R. & W.	12 7½	0 16 1½
,,	..	..	.. ..	6	1 do.	7 0	7 0	..	..	6	R.	15 0	1 2 0
,,	..	Spinner	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14 0	0 14 0
,,	..	Weaver	8 0	2	..	..	8 0	..	..	..	R. & W.	11 1½	0 19 1½
,,	..	..	.. ..	7	3 do.	3 0	3 0	..	..	3	..	14 9	0 17 9
,,	..	Burler	.. ..	7	3 do.	2 6	2 6	..	1	..	R. & W.	14 0	0 16 6
..	S.	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	10 6	0 10 6
W.	..	Weaver	6 0	4	1 do.	2 0	8 0	..	..	3	R.	12 0½	1 0 0½
M.	..	Spinner	4 6	..	..	..	4 6	..	..	..	,,	10 6	0 15 0
..	S.	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	R. & W.	10 6	0 10 6
M.	..	Weaver	.. ..	3	..	..	..	..	2	..	,,	16 1½	0 16 1½
M.	..	Factory	.. ..	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	,,	11 1½	0 11 1½

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Shop Looms.

Table concerning the Condition and Earnings of the Shop Weavers

No.	If Journeyman or Master Weaver, previous to being a Factory Weaver.	Time lost between Chain.	Time of Weaving last Chain.	No. of Hundred.	Price Paid.	Deductions	Net Sum received by the Weaver.	How long a Factory Weaver.	Does the Weaver consider his Condition to be Improved, or Not, in a Factory.
			Days.		£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.		
1	Master	Same day	18	18	1 17 0	4 9	1 12 3	11	Not
2	Journeyman	,,	24	19	2 0 0	8 0	1 12 0	12	,,
3	Master	,,	15	19	1 17 4	4 6	1 12 10	9	,,
4	,,	,,	15	19	2 0 0	7 0	1 13 0	9	,,
5	,,	,,	14	19	2 0 0	6 10	1 13 2	7	,,
6	,,	,,	18	19	1 19 0	7 6	1 11 6	6	,,
7	Journeyman	,,	21	18	1 17 0	4 6	1 12 6	7	,,
8	,,	,,	17	19	1 19 0	7 4	1 11 8	7	,,
9	Master	2 days	23	19	1 19 0	7 10	1 11 2	9	,,
10	,,	Same day	16	19	2 0 0	7 3	1 12 9	9	,,
11	,,	,,	22	18	2 0 0	8 2	1 11 10	6	,,
12	Journeyman	,,	18	18	1 18 0	6 6	1 11 6	1	,,
13	,,	,,	22	18	1 18 0	6 6	1 11 6	3	,,
14	Master	,,	20	18	1 18 0	6 6	1 11 6	12	,,
15	,,	,,	14	18	1 18 0	6 6	1 11 6	4	,,
16	Journeyman	,,	21	19	2 0 0	6 0	1 14 0	12	,,
17	Master	,,	21	19	2 0 0	6 0	1 14 0	10	,,
18	,,	,,	18	18	1 17 0	5 6	1 11 6	1	,,
19	,,	1 day	17	19	1 9 0	4 6	1 4 6	18	Improved
20	Journeyman	Same day	24	18	1 17 0	5 6	1 11 6	1½	Not
21	,,	,,	23	18	1 17 0	5 6	1 11 6	4½	,,
22	,,	,,	18	19	1 17 6	4 7	1 12 11	2	,,
23	Master	,,	17	19	2 1 0	7 5	1 13 7	10	,,
24	,,	,,	16	19	1 19 0	7 2	1 11 10	10	,,
25	,,	2 days	18	19	1 17 0	7 7	1 9 5	7	,,
26	Journeyman	Same day	12	18	1 6 6	5 4	1 1 2	10½	,,
27	,,	,,	24	19	2 0 0	8 11	1 11 1	9	,,
28	Master	,,	18	19	2 0 0	7 7	1 12 5	11	,,
29	,,	,,	22	19	2 0 0	8 5	1 11 7	9	,,
30	,,	,,	27	19	2 0 0	8 7	1 11 5	5	,,
31	,,	,,	22	19	2 0 0	8 5	1 11 7	7	,,
32	Journeyman	,,	32	17	1 11 0	3 3	1 8 9	1½	,,
33	,,	,,	21	19	1 19 0	7 10	1 11 2	8	,,
34	,,	,,	26	18	1 17 0	5 6	1 11 6	12	,,
35	,,	,,	24	19	1 19 0	8 7	1 10 5	10	,,

and of their FAMILIES, in Stanley Mills, Mr. CHARLES STEVENS.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

SHOP LOOMS.

Married.	Single.	Employ of Wife.	Earnings of Wife.	No. of Children.	Employ of Children.	Earnings of Children.	Amount of Weekly Earnings of Wife and Children.	No. of Children at School in: Pay School.	Free School.	Sunday School.	If Weaver can Read and Write.	Amount of Weavers' Weekly Earnings in Factory.	Total Amount of Weekly Income.
			s. *d.*			*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*					*s.* *d.*	£. *s.* *d.*
M.	..	Weaver	9 0	5	3 Quillers	2 6	11 6	1	..	3	R.	10 9	1 2 3
,,	..	,,	9 6	5	5 do.	4 0	13 6	1	..	4	,,	8 0	1 1 6
,,	..	Factory	7 6	5	2 Burlers	4 0	11 6	..	1	..	,,	13 $1\frac{1}{2}$	1 3 $7\frac{1}{2}$
,,	..	..	..	5	2 Quillers	6 0	6 0	..	2	..	,,	13 $1\frac{1}{2}$	0 19 $1\frac{1}{2}$
,,	..	..	..	3	1 do.	1 9	1 9	..	..	..	,,	14 $1\frac{1}{2}$	0 15 $10\frac{1}{2}$
,,	..	Weaver	..	6	1 do.	1 0	1 0	..	..	..	,,	10 6	0 11 6
,,	..	Picker	4 0	5	3 do.	3 0	7 0	2	..	4	,,	9 3	0 16 3
,,	..	Weaver	2 6	4	1 Labour.	1 6	4 0	..	1	3	,,	11 $1\frac{1}{2}$	0 15 $1\frac{1}{2}$
,,	..	..	..	2	2 do.	8 6	8 6	..	..	1	R. & W.	8 $1\frac{1}{2}$	0 16 $7\frac{1}{2}$
,,	..	Warper	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	R.	12 3	0 12 3
,,	..	Weaver	8 0	1	..	..	8 0	..	..	..	R. & W.	8 $7\frac{1}{2}$	0 16 $7\frac{1}{2}$
..	S.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	10 6	0 10 6
M.	..	Weaver	3 0	2	..	..	3 0	..	..	..	,,	8 6	0 11 6
,,	..	Sewer	1 0	3	1 Quiller	1 0	2 0	..	..	1	,,	9 $4\frac{1}{2}$	0 11 $4\frac{1}{2}$
,,	..	Reeler	5 0	4	2 Factory	4 6	9 6	..	..	3	R.	13 6	1 3 0
,,	..	Picker	2 6	4	2 do.	4 3	6 9	2	..	1	R. & W.	9 $7\frac{1}{2}$	0 16 $4\frac{1}{2}$
,,	..	Weaver	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	9 $7\frac{1}{2}$	0 9 $7\frac{1}{2}$
,,	..	Picker	4 0	1	..	..	4 0	..	..	..	,,	10 6	0 14 6
,,	..	Weaver	8 0	4	2 Quillers	2 6	10 6	1	..	..	,,	8 $7\frac{1}{2}$	0 19 $1\frac{1}{2}$
,,	..	,,	5 0	3	..	..	5 0	..	..	..	,,	7 $10\frac{1}{2}$	0 12 $10\frac{1}{2}$
,,	..	,,	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	8 3	0 8 3
,,	..	Picker	3 0	..	..	..	3 0	..	..	..	..	10 10	0 13 10
,,	..	,,	3 0	5	3 Factory	7 6	10 6	1	..	..	R.	11 $10\frac{1}{2}$	1 2 $4\frac{1}{2}$
,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	11 $10\frac{1}{2}$	0 11 $10\frac{1}{2}$
,,	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	R. & W.	9 9	0 9 9
,,	..	..	..	1	1 Quiller	1 0	1 0	..	..	1	R.	10 6	0 11 6
,,	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	7 9	0 7 9
,,	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	R. & W.	11 9	0 11 9
,,	..	..	..	5	2 Quillers	4 6	4 6	..	..	..	,,	8 $7\frac{1}{2}$	0 13 $1\frac{1}{2}$
,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	7 0	0 7 0
,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	R.	8 $7\frac{1}{2}$	0 8 $7\frac{1}{2}$
..	S.	..	..	4	1 Quiller	2 0	2 0	..	..	4	,,	5 $4\frac{1}{2}$	0 7 $4\frac{1}{2}$
M.	..	Weaver	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	R. & W.	8 10	0 8 10
,,	..	Factory	12 0	1	1 Factory	1 0	13 0	..	..	..	R.	7 $1\frac{1}{2}$	1 0 $1\frac{1}{2}$
,,	..	Weaver	5 0	2	1 do.	1 9	6 9	..	..	1	,,	7 $7\frac{1}{2}$	0 14 $4\frac{1}{2}$

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Shop Looms.

Table concerning the Condition and the Earnings of the Shop-Weavers and

No.	If Journeyman or Master Weaver previous to a Shop-Weaver.	Time lost between Chain and Chain.	How long on last Chain.	Hundred in Chain.	Price Paid.	Deductions.	Net Sum received by Weaver.	How long a Factory Weaver.	Does the Weaver consider his Condition to be Improved or not in the Factory.
			Days.		£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	Years	
1	Journeyman	None	16	18	1 8 0	0 9	1 7 3	9	Not
2	,,	1 day	17	18	1 8 0	0 9	1 7 3	4½	,,
3	,,	None	18	18	1 8 0	0 7	1 7 5	9	,,
4	,,	,,	18	15	1 12 0	3 0	1 9 0	8	Improved
5	Master	1 day	18	15	1 12 0	3 0	1 9 0	11	,,
6	,,	None	18	15	1 8 0	2 10	1 5 2	11	Not
7	Journeyman	,,	14	18	1 5 0	3 9	1 1 3	1	,,
8	Master	2 days	14	18	1 5 0	3 0	1 2 0	4	,,
9	Journeyman	None	16	16	1 5 0	3 9	1 1 3	1	,,
10	Master	,,	14	18	1 8 0	0 9	1 7 3	9	,,
11	Journeyman	,,	17	18	1 8 0	0 9	1 7 3	9	Improved
12	,,	3 days	18	18	1 8 0	0 9	1 7 3	11	Not
13	,,	1 day	17	14	1 6 0	2 7	1 3 5	10	Improved
14	,,	5 days	17	17	1 8 0	0 9	1 7 3	10	,,
15	Master	None	12	17	1 8 0	0 9	1 7 3	8	Not
16	,,	,,	14	18	1 5 0	3 9	1 1 3	11	,,
17	Apprentice	7 days	18	16	1 2 0	3 9	0 18 3	2½	Can't say
18	Master	2 days	16	16	1 5 0	3 9	1 1 3	2	Not
19	Journeyman	None	15	16	1 5 0	3 9	1 1 3	9	,,
20	Master	2 days	14	18	1 8 0	0 9	1 7 3	9	Improved
21	,,	None	15	16	1 5 0	3 9	1 1 3	0½	Not
22	Journeyman	7 days	15	18	1 8 0	0 9	1 7 3	5	,,
23	,,	None	14	15	0 14 0	0 9	0 13 3	0½	,,
24	Apprentice	22 days	18	16	1 5 0	3 6	1 1 6	5	,,
25	,,	None	15	18	1 8 0	0 9	1 7 3	5	Can't say
26	Journeyman	,,	15	18	1 8 0	0 9	1 7 3	8	Not
27	Master	,,	20	18	1 8 0	0 9	1 7 3	9	,,
28	,,	1 day	17	18	1 8 0	0 9	1 7 3	6	,,
29	,,	None	17	18	1 2 0	0 8	1 1 4	11	,,
30	Journeyman	,,	18	18	1 8 0	0 8	1 7 4	7	,,
31	,,	,,	15	18	1 8 0	0 8	1 7 4	11	,,
32	,,	,,	18	18	1 8 0	0 6	1 7 6	9	,,
33	,,	,,	18	18	1 8 0	0 8	1 7 4	11	,,
34	,,	,,	18	17	1 8 0	0 8	1 7 4	5	,,
35	Master	,,	16	18	1 8 0	0 8	1 7 4	10	,,
36	Journeyman	,,	18	18	1 8 0	0 9	1 7 3	9	,,
37	,,	,,	18	17	1 8 0	0 8	1 7 4	10	,,
38	,,	,,	18	18	1 8 0	0 8	1 7 4	10	,,
39	Master	,,	17	18	1 8 0	0 8	1 7 4	7	,,
40	Journeyman	,,	18	18	1 8 0	0 8	1 7 4	7	,,
41	,,	,,	18	18	1 8 0	0 8	1 7 4	11	,,
42	,,	,,	15	18	1 8 0	0 8	1 7 4	11	,,
43	Master	,,	10	18	0 15 6	0 8	0 14 10	1	,,
44	,,	,,	16	18	1 8 0	0 8	1 7 4	3	,,
45	Journeyman	,,	11	18	0 17 2	0 8	0 16 6	1	,,
46	Master	,,	19	16	1 2 0	0 8	1 1 4	0½	,,
47	,,	,,	17	18	1 8 0	0 8	1 7 4	10	,,
48	Journeyman	,,	16	18	1 8 0	0 10	1 7 2	10	,,
49	,,	,,	21	14	1 4 0	0 6	1 3 6	3	,,
50	Master	1 day	20	14	1 0 0	0 6	0 19 6	7	,,

their FAMILIES in the Factory at Dunkirk and Iron-Mills.—(Messrs. PLAYNES and Co.)

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

SHOP LOOMS.

Married.	Single.	Employ of Wife.	Earnings of Wife.	No. of Children.	Employ of Children.	Earnings of Children.	No. of Children at School.		If Weaver can Read and Write.	Amount of Earnings of Wife and Children.	Amount of Weavers' Weekly Earnings.	Total Amount of Weekly Income.
							Pay School.	Sunday School.				
			s. d.			*s. d.*				*s. d.*	*s. d.*	£. *s. d.*
M.	..	Weaver	5 0	1	..	..	1	..	R. & W.	5 0	10 3	0 15 3
,,	..	,,	5 0	6	1 Factory	1	..	3	,,	6 9	9 7½	0 16 4½
,,	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	,,	..	9 3	0 9 3
..	W.	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	9 7½	0 9 7½
M.	..	Weaver	3 6	7	3 Factory	4 6	..	5	R.	8 0	9 7½	0 17 7½
,,	..	,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	R. & W.	..	8 4½	0 8 4½
,,	..	Burler	3 6	1	..	1 0	..	..	,,	4 6	9 1½	0 13 7½
,,	..	Weaver	..	5	1 Factory	1 6	..	3	,,	1 6	9 6	0 11 0
,,	..	,,	..	4	1 do.	1 0	..	2	R.	1 0	8 0	0 9 0
,,	..	,,	3 6	7	3 do.	2 6	1	5	R. & W.	6 0	11 7½	0 17 7½
,,	..	,,	5 0	4	1 do.	1 0	..	2	R.	6 0	9 7½	0 15 7½
,,	..	Sewer	4 0	4	2 do.	8 0	..	2	,,	12 0	9 3	1 1 3
,,	..	Weaver	6 0	1	..	..	1	..	R. & W.	6 0	8 3	0 14 3
,,	..	,,	4 0	6	1 Factory	1 6	..	3	R.	5 6	9 7½	0 15 1½
,,	..	..	..	5	2 do.	4 0	..	3	R. & W.	4 0	13 7½	0 17 7½
,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	R.	..	9 1½	0 9 1½
..	S.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6 0¼	0 6 0¼
M.	..	Weaver	..	5	2 Factory	3 6	..	5	R. & W.	3 6	8 0	0 11 6
,,	..	Spinner	4 0	4	1 do.	1 2	..	3	R.	5 2	8 3	0 13 5
,,	..	Weaver	4 0	2	2 do.	2 0	..	2	R. & W.	6 0	11 7½	0 17 7½
,,	..	,,	4 0	8	3 do.	5 0	1	5	R.	9 0	8 3	0 17 3
,,	..	,,	..	6	2 do.	2 3	..	2	,,	2 3	11 0	0 13 3
..	S.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5 10	0 5 10
..	,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	R. & W.	..	7 1½	0 7 1½
..	,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	R.	..	11 0	0 11 0
M.	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	2	R. & W.	..	11 0	0 11 0
,,	..	Weaver	3 6	5	..	..	..	3	,,	3 6	8 1½	0 11 7½
,,	..	,,	2 6	1	Factory	5 0	..	1	R.	7 6	9 7½	0 17 1½
,,	..	Spinner	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	..	7 6	0 7 6
,,	..	Sewer	2 0	8	2 Factory	2 0	..	6	R. & W.	4 0	9 3	0 13 3
,,	..	Warper	..	2	..	..	1	..	,,	..	11 0	0 11 0
,,	..	Weaver	5 0	3	Factory	3 0	..	2	R.	8 0	9 1½	0 17 1½
,,	..	,,	5 0	3	..	..	2	..	R. & W.	5 0	9 1½	0 14 1½
,,	..	Picker	1 6	1	..	..	..	..	,,	1 6	9 1½	0 10 7½
,,	..	Spinner	..	6	2 Factory	3 6	..	4	,,	3 6	10 3	0 13 9
,,	..	Weaver	6 0	1	..	..	..	..	,,	6 0	9 1½	0 15 1½
,,	..	,,	1 6	3	..	..	..	..	,,	1 6	9 1½	0 10 7½
,,	..	,,	..	3	..	..	..	1	,,	..	9 1½	0 9 1½
,,	..	Sewer	3 0	5	1 Factory	1 0	1	2	R.	4 0	9 7½	0 13 7½
,,	..	Weaver	2 6	3	1 do.	1 3	1	2	,,	3 9	9 1½	0 12 10½
,,	..	,	5 0	2	..	..	..	..	R. & W.	5 0	9 1½	0 14 1½
,,	..	Sewer	..	3	..	..	1	..	R.	..	11 0	0 11 0
,,	..	Spinner	..	3	1 Factory	2 0	..	1	,,	2 0	8 10½	0 10 10½
,,	..	Weaver	5 0	1	do.	3 0	..	..	R. & W.	8 0	10 3	0 18 3
..	S.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	R.	..	9 0	0 9 0
M.	..	Weaver	..	2	..	..	..	..	,,	..	6 9	0 6 9
,,	..	,,	3 0	4	2 Factory	3 8	..	2	,,	6 8	9 7½	0 16 3½
,,	..	,,	3 0	2	..	..	2	..	R. & W.	3 0	10 2½	0 13 2½
..	S.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	..	6 7½	0 6 7½
M.	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	,,	..	5 7½	0 5 7½

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Shop Looms.

Table concerning the Condition and Earnings of the Shop Weavers and

No.	If Journeyman or Master Weaver, previous to being a Factory Weaver.	Time lost between Chain and Chain.	Time of Weaving the last Chain.	No. of Hundreds.	Price Paid.	Deductions.	Net Sum received by the Weaver.	How long a Factory Weaver.	Does the Weaver consider his Condition to be Improved, or Not, in the Factory.
			Days.		£. s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	Years	
1	Journeyman	1 day	18	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	6	Not
2	Master	Same day	20	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	6	,,
3	,,	,,	18	17	1 13 0	2 0	1 11 0	4	,,
4	,,	,,	18	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	5	,,
5	Journeyman	5 days	20	15	1 19 0	4 0	1 15 0	10	,,
6	Master	14 ,,	20	15	1 12 6	4 0	1 8 6	6	,,
7	,,	7 ,,	21	15	1 19 0	4 0	1 15 0	11	,,
8	Journeyman	Same day	17	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	7	,,
9	,,	,,	18	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	7	,,
10	Master	,,	20	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	7	,,
11	,,	,,	22	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	0¾	,,
12	,,	,,	18	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	1¾	,,
13	,,	,,	16	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	5	,,
14	,,	,,	17	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	6	,,
15	,,	,,	17	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	4	,,
16	Journeyman	,,	17	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	9	,,
17	Master	,,	18	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	5	,,
18	,,	,,	18	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	7	,,
19	Journeyman	,,	18	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	6	,,
20	Master	,,	21	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	2½	,,
21	Journeyman	,,	16	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	2	,,
22	Master	,,	18	18	1 16 0	5 0	1 11 0	9	,,
23	,,	,,	17	18	1 13 0	5 0	1 8 0	4	,,
24	,,	1 day	17	18	1 16 0	5 0	1 11 0	10	,,
25	,,	Same day	18	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	9	,,
26	,,	,,	18	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	2	,,
27	,,	8 days	38	17	1 18 0	5 0	1 13 0	8	,,
28	,,	Same day	23	17	1 18 2	5 0	1 13 2	4	,,
29	Journeyman	,,	18	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	8	,,
30	Master	,,	23	18	1 16 0	5 0	1 11 0	10	,,
31	,,	,,	17	18	1 13 2	5 0	1 8 2	10	,,
32	,,	,,	18	18	1 13 0	5 0	1 8 0	10	,,
33	,,	1 day	17	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	7	,,
34	,,	Same day	23	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	7	,,
35	Journeyman	1 day	18	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	3½	,,
36	Master	2 days	18	18	1 15 2	4 0	1 11 2	7	,,
37	Journeyman	Same day	18	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	8	,,
38	Master	2 days	18	18	1 13 2	5 0	1 8 2	7	,,
39	,,	Same day	21	13	1 11 1	4 0	1 7 1	9	,,
40	,,	,,	17	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	3	,,
41	,,	,,	17	18	2 2 11	6 0	1 16 11	7	,,
42	Journeyman	,,	20	18	1 18 2	6 0	1 12 2	8	,,
43	Master	9 days	16	13	1 11 1	4 0	1 7 1	5	,,
44	Journeyman	Same day	17	17	2 0 8	5 9	1 14 11	6	,,
45	Master	1½ day	21	18	2 2 1	6 0	1 16 1	1½	,,
46	,,	Same day	18	15	1 16 11	3 6	1 13 5	5	,,
47	Journeyman	,,	18	13	1 12 6	2 9	1 10 0	8	,,
48	Master	,,	20	16	1 16 1½	3 0	1 13 1½	10	,,
49	,,	2 days	18	15	1 16 1½	4 0	1 12 1½	5	,,
50	,,	Same day	18	15	1 16 1½	4 0	1 12 1½	9	,,

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Shop Looms.

of their Families, in the Factory at Eastington Mills, Mr. Charles Hooper.

Married.	Single.	Employ of Wife.	Earnings of Wife.	No. of Children.	Employ of Children.	Earnings of Children.	Amount of Weekly Earnings of Wife and Children.	No. of Children at School in			If Weaver can Read and Write.	Amount of Weavers' Weekly Earnings in Factory.	Total Amount of Weekly Income.
								Pay School.	Free School.	Sunday School.			
			s. *d.*			*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*					*s.* *d.*	£. *s.* *d.*
M.	..	Factory	5 6	3	..	..	5 6	3	..	..	R. & W.	12 3	0 17 9
,,	..	Quiller	4 0	9	Labour.	5 0	9 0	3	..	..	,,	11 0	1 0 0
,,	..	Weaver	3 0	3	..	..	3 0	..	..	1	,,	10 3	0 13 3
,,	..	..	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	12 3	0 12 3
,,	..	Warper	5 0	4	1 Factory	1 6	6 6	1	..	2	,,	10 6	0 17 0
,,	..	Spinner	2 0	1	,,	5 0	7 0	..	..	1	,,	8 6	0 15 6
,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	10 0	0 10 0
..	W	Weaver	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	,,	13 0	0 13 0
..	S.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	12 3	0 12 3
M.	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	11 0	0 11 0
,,	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	10 0	0 10 0
,,	..	Weaver	3 0	3	..	..	3 0	..	3	..	R.	12 3	0 15 3
,,	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	R. & W.	14 2½	0 14 2½
,,	..	..	..	6	1 Quiller	1 6	1 6	..	..	3	,,	13 0	0 14 6
,,	..	Spooler	1 6	..	..	..	1 6	..	..	..	,,	13 0	0 14 6
..	S.	..	..	3	1 Quiller	2 0	2 0	..	..	3	R.	13 0	0 15 0
M.	..	Weaver	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	1	R. & W.	12 3	0 12 3
,,	..	,,	5 0	11	5 Factory	15 0	20 0	..	..	4	,,	12 3	1 12 3
..	S.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	12 3	0 12 3
M.	..	Labour.	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	10 6	0 10 6
,,	..	Quiller	1 6	1	..	..	1 6	..	..	..	R.	14 2½	0 15 8½
,,	..	,,	1 6	3	Ditto	3 0	4 6	..	..	3	R. & W.	10 3	0 14 9
,,	..	Weaver	4 0	1	..	..	4 0	..	..	..	,,	10 0	0 14 0
,,	..	..	..	1	..	2 0	2 0	..	..	..	R.	10 10½	0 12 10½
,,	..	Weaver	5 0	3	..	..	5 0	..	..	..	R. & W.	12 3	0 17 3
,,	..	,,	2 0	..	..	..	2 0	..	..	..	,,	12 3	0 14 3
,,	..	Quiller	1 6	2	..	..	1 6	2	..	..	,,	6 1½	0 7 7½
,,	W	..	..	4	..	5 0	5 0	..	..	3	,,	8 7½	0 13 7½
M.	..	Quiller	1 0	3	..	..	1 0	1	1	..	,,	12 3	0 13 3
,,	..	Weaver	4 0	5	2 Factory	1 6	5 6	..	..	4	R.	8 1¼	0 13 7¼
,,	..	Burler	4 6	6	2 ,,	5 0	9 6	..	..	4	R. & W.	10 0	0 19 6
,,	..	..	..	4	2 ,,	4 0	4 0	..	..	2	R.	9 6	0 13 6
,,	..	..	..	3	1 ,,	2 0	2 0	..	..	3	,,	13 0	0 15 0
,,	..	Weaver	8 0	2	..	..	8 0	1	1	..	R. & W.	9 6	0 17 6
,,	..	,,	2 0	1	..	..	2 0	..	..	..	,,	12 3	0 14 3
..	W	..	..	2	1 Factory	1 6	1 6	..	..	..	,,	10 4½	0 11 10½
M.	..	Weaver	3 0	3	..	..	3 0	1	..	..	,,	12 3	0 15 3
,,	..	Quiller	2 0	4	1 Factory	1 0	3 0	..	..	4	,,	9 6	0 12 6
,,	..	Spinner	4 6	1	..	..	4 6	..	..	1	,,	7 9	0 12 3
,,	..	Quiller	1 0	4	..	8 0	9 0	..	..	4	R.	13 0	1 2 0
,,	..	Weaver	5 0	5	2 Factory	4 6	9 6	..	..	3	R. & W.	13 0	1 2 6
,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	R.	9 7½	0 9 7½
..	S.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	10 4½	0 10 4½
M.	..	Quiller	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	,,	12 3	0 16 0
,,	..	..	..	7	2 Factory	3 9	3 9	..	..	4	,,	12 6	0 12 6
,,	..	Milliner	2 0	..	..	..	2 0	..	..	..	R. & W.	10 9	0 15 9
,,	..	Weaver	2 0	7	2 Factory	3 0	5 0	..	..	3	,,	10 0	0 12 0
,,	..	Quiller	2 0	..	..	..	2 0	..	..	..	,,	9 10½	0 13 4½
,,	..	,,	1 6	2	..	2 0	3 6	..	..	2	,,	10 7½	0 15 7½
,,	..	..	..	4	..	5 0	5 0	..	..	4	R.	10 7½	0 13 1½
,,	..	..	2 6	2	..	..	2 6	..	..	1	,,		

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

COMBINATIONS AND STRIKES.

COMBINATIONS AND STRIKES

The subject of strikes, and their ultimate injurious effects upon the working classes, is too intimately known by you to need any comment from me. Yet, however, in no cases are those injurious effects more clearly to be seen, or more distinctly to be traced to the source, than in the strikes which occurred in Kidderminster among the carpet weavers, and among the cloth weavers in Gloucestershire.

njurious to the Workmen,

These strikes generated a feeling of hatred between master and man, which time cannot obliterate. They have severed all mutual interest, and thrown all the better feelings which ought to exist harmoniously between the labourer and his employer, into an endless discord.

and to trade.

At Kidderminster, as well as in Gloucestershire, the weavers have severely suffered: the mischief has extended further, cottage property in both districts has decreased; small shopkeepers have been ruined. The Glasgow manufacturer increased his trade during the Kidderminster strike, the Yorkshire looms were busy during the strikes in Gloucestershire, and the trade of both districts has been in some degree diminished.

The strikes in Gloucestershire have mostly originated with the masters, either by attempting to lower wages, or by some of the masters injudiciously, but indirectly, interfering with the lower paying manufacturers, by using the weavers as a means to force up wages, informing them that unless the wages were equalized, they should reduce to the lower scale.

Mr. William Playne, sen., a retired manufacturer in this county, observed to me, that in every strike, either general or upon any individual, some of the masters were secretly connected with the proceedings of the men, and even contributed secretly to their funds.

It is much to be regretted that either for the sake of popularity, or for the paltry feeling of gratifying personal pique against the manufacturers, persons of influence and property secretly fomented the angry and rancorous spirit of the weavers; and it is probably owing more to the peaceable and better disposition of the men, than to the conduct of their presumed friends, that severe riots and disturbances had not broken out, under the fostering care of their meddling interferers.

But what has been the consequence of these strikes? In some cases the men may have succeeded, but the triumph of the day has been purchased by years of distress. The consequences are, that the manufacturer has no confidence in his weaver; he uses him because he needs him, but he distrusts him. The most serious consequence, however, to the interest of the weaver, was the more general establishment of the shop-loom system. The shuttles in the strike in 1828 were collected and hidden, and the manufacturer resolved in future to have the shuttle on his own premises, he would not allow his trade to be at the mercy of the out-door weavers, and he built his factory, in which he insisted that his chain should be woven. The effect of this system was soon found to be injurious to the master weaver, who rented large premises, on which were buildings to hold the looms of his journeymen; but when the shop-looms were erected he found difficulty at times to obtain work even for himself, much less for his journeymen; and thus the property held by the master weavers fell in rent, and impoverished the landlords.

Anthony Fewster, of Nailsworth, says, "it is much more easy to see the evils of combination than to devise a remedy." He continues to remark, "that the deterioration of mill property within the last ten years, must be at least between one-third and one-half; and of cottage property still more. One cause of the latter is, doubtless, the establishment of shop-looms."

The minister of Randwick considers the shop-looms have had a tendency to reduce the value of cottage property, particularly weavers' shops, many of which in his parish are from that cause rendered entirely valueless.

It is not probable that any lengthened strike will again occur in this county among the weavers; and if it should occur, it will only tend to the utter annihilation of their craft or calling. There will be no strike, because there is a superabundant number on the ground, and the necessities of the day will prevent the men adopting any plans for the future: and if a strike could occur, the manufacturers would have their remedy, in the adoption of power-looms.

The immediate cause of the low rate of wages is the surplus labour, a fact which is

proved by the present low rate of earnings; yet, notwithstanding this deteriorated state, the weavers are patient in their sufferings, and with a firmness hardly to have been expected, and highly creditable to them, they have hitherto abstained from cabals and associations.

The following evidence of Mr. William Playne, senior, will show the distrust that is existing between all parties, master to master, men to men, as well as between master and servant. It will there be seen that no compact has held good among the manufacturers, and that men are constantly underselling each other in order to obtain food at any price. In reference to the distrust of the men Mr. Playne observes,—"The feelings of the poor are very peculiar; they cannot imagine that any interference on the part of their superiors can arise from any motives but selfishness, or from some scheme to take advantage of them. They say, 'Mr. —— would not take all this trouble about us if it was not for his own good;' and they are, therefore, jealous of any interference.

Evidence of Mr. W. Playne, sen.

"Mr. William Playne is of opinion that boards of wages would be ineffectual, as the more distressed persons would be induced to take work at any price; and no law could be invented to prevent it. (Mr. Derrett, of Wootton, says, that the present prices depended on the humanity of the masters, as weavers were constantly applying to him for work at ANY price.)

"Now even in truck the law is constantly evaded; the best plan is to leave labour to itself: Mr. Playne says he does not go so far as Mr. Hume, who said, 'Let truck take its course, and leave labour to make its own bargain;' because, being considered disreputable, it prevents the principal manufacturers using the truck system.

"Every interference with wages, every strike has been injurious to the men. If there had been an established rate of wages there would have been no strike; but the more distressed weavers would give money to have chain. It has been done, he believes, in the stripe trade; but as each manufacturer's work is so different to another, it is impossible to fix wages by the hundred, or thread, in for instance, the number, say 1800 of a master, if made from good and well prepared wool, is not half so bad as wool badly prepared, or of inferior quality. Although it is the interest of the manufacturer to have it prepared well, it is not always his interest to have the best wool; and a bad wool spun out as fine as better wool, makes incalculable difference to the workman; and thus a master paying 1*s.* 4*d.* for good chain, would be paying double in proportion for wool made from an inferior quality, or on a master paying considerably less, the weaver may earn as much as those working at higher prices.

Wages no test of Earnings.
Vide page 382.

"In 1825 some of the manufacturers agreed to a proffered scale of wages proposed by the weavers, but necessity compelled them to it; it did not last a month, no not a fortnight, before it was broken through by the men, who took work out at the old price, and even lower than before.

"The first strike against Mr. Wm. Playne and his brother was thirty years ago, upon cassimere work; they were then manufacturing a peculiar fabric; they did not spin so small as the others; the general price through the district was 11*d.* per yard; their price was 10*d.*; this continued for about twelve months, when the men struck. The men were set on by some of the manufacturers whom Messrs. Playne had to meet in the market, and whom they undersold.

"The leader of the strike (John Blick) worked at another mill (continued Mr. Playne); he came to our factory, and I saw him. I asked him if he knew our work; he said he did, that it was very good. I asked him if he could not earn as much money at the price we were giving as at the top price of his employer; to which he assented, but remarked, that if we continued at our price his master would reduce his men to the same level. We then took the work back from the weavers, saying, 'If you can afford to live without weaving, we can afford to wait.' By the eighth day all the chain was taken away at our price, and so it continued for ten or fifteen years. I have no doubt there has not been a strike but what some masters were at the bottom of it. If a manufacturer lived beyond his means, and found himself going to ruin, he became envious of his neighbour, who might be doing better than himself.

Combinations among men or masters useless.

"Considers that no committee of masters and men, for arbitration, could be of any avail. It would create more jealousy than at present. Each manufacturer is jealous of exposing his trade; and if a case of arbitration came on, an explanation must ensue as to the manner in which he makes his cloth, both as to the wool and the fineness of spinning. A plan of this kind would fetter trade, and any interference with it Mr. Playne considers to be injurious. The master must be the best judge of what he can afford to give.

"Some manufacturers like to have a factory distinct and away from other factories, so that, by having the sole control of the work-people, he might prevent competition. I have seen (said Mr. Playne) the working of this in Malmesbury thirty years ago, and it never succeeded. Supposing that the manufacturer really gave a fair price, the men would fancy they were oppressed, and on fault being found with a man, he would think that, if he could go elsewhere, his master would not find fault with him. If a manufacturer be an oppressive man, he could certainly abuse labour; but whether he be oppressive or not, the workmen would always fancy so; and, therefore, competition is better for the workmen and the manufacturer.

"If I was starting again in business (continued Mr. W. Playne) I would never attend any

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

COMBINATIONS AND STRIKES.

meeting of manufacturers for the purposes of making any rules relative to trade, wages, or prices in the market. We met at Rodborough, forty years ago, to regulate our selling prices of cloth made from English wools, and in less than a month it was broken through by one of the largest manufacturers in the county. I was informed, that no sooner had we signed our agreement on the advance price, than he commissioned his traveller to sell at the old prices. I had occasion to call upon him within six months afterwards, and on his asking me how we got on with the advanced prices, I replied we had no market, and were holding goods; "But," said I, "some manufacturer, I am informed, sent his traveller out the next day after signing at the old prices." "Sooner," said he, "than do that, I would cut my hand off," laying his stick over his wrist; and I found he was the very man that had done it! So much for any attempt to regulate prices, or to hold faith upon such points. All our meetings have failed in effect, except when we petitioned in 1822 to have the duty of sixpence per pound on wool reduced; it is now one penny per pound. This reduction gave us an advantage in the foreign market—(we then paid 12,000*l.* a-year duty at sixpence per pound.) When this full duty was in operation we contemplated (as we purchased our wools in Germany) washing them and cleaning them on the continent; we had looked out a small mill in Hanover, and we proved that we should have saved 3000*l.* a-year only on the grease and filth, which was weighed in on passing the Custom-house scale.

No reliance on Manufacturers in reference to Combinations.

"I am decidedly of opinion," continued Mr. Playne, "that no standard of wages can be fixed in this trade to be beneficial to the master or servant, neither locally nor generally. The same remark holds good to every sort of labour. Even in those trades, where by reason of the fewness of the number the men can combine to keep up wages, they are the most improvident, and the first applicants for parish relief; they cannot live upon the frugal fare of a steady man.

"We had a wool-sorter, whose earnings had been for some years from 2*l.* to 3*l.* a-week, and he was obliged to apply to his parish, after an illness of about six weeks; he was removed to Sussex; he belonged to no club. Relative to clubs, I think the old system was better before the Act specifying certain rules; for instance, the old clubs took a man of forty at the same terms as one of twenty-five; the mischief of this, however, was that when the club contained old members, young ones would not enter: this is the principal objection. The feelings of the poor are very peculiar; they cannot imagine that any interference on the part of their superiors can arise from any motives but selfishness, to take an advantage of them; they say,—'Mr. —— would not take all this pains, unless it was for his interest;' and they will not allow any interference; consequently the friendly institutions under the new Act do not succeed: all the clubs are now annual.

"I tried, with Mr. Ricardo, to establish a provident club at Minchin Hampton, and to embrace four or five parishes in it; but we never had more than twenty-nine members.

"By attempting too much in legislating for the poor we do nothing.

"The poor will not be interfered with; they dislike to give their money where their superiors have any control over it; they are very suspicious. This is not theory, for I know it practically.

"The agricultural labourer's wages average 8*s.* a-week: the shopkeeper would trust him sooner than a weaver, and runs a better chance of being paid: the labourer is better off because he is more provident."

"Mr. Lewis, of the Oil Mills, near Stroud, admits the distress of the weavers; thinks they are not above half employed—as to the cause, about the year 1824, trade was in a seeming prosperous state, created in his opinion by the *extended credit* given to manufacturers on foreign wool, occasioned by the abundance of money in the market. In the commencement of 1825, in consequence of the seeming activity of trade, everything rose in price, there was a general opinion that the corn laws would be repealed; the sprackness of trade induced the weavers to ask higher wages; the largest manufacturers had at the same time made cloth more difficult for the weavers, by increasing the hundreds of the chain, and spinning the yarn smaller. On the difference which arose about wages, a meeting was held (manufacturers and weavers) amongst the rest. Mr. J. P. Hicks told some weavers that unless some of the low hundred manufacturers advanced their wages, he should reduce the price of his high hundred; the low hundred makers could not advance, and the weavers struck generally, and this strike stopped entirely the spring trade of the year 1825; the weavers obtained their price for a short time (after having been out for a month) and this determined Messrs. Stanton to put up looms in his factory. Stock for the spring trade was delayed till autumn, forced to be sold at low prices, being out of season, and many of those to whom these forced sales were made, failed in the general panic of that autumn, and many of the manufacturers thus lost a great portion of their capital; their remaining stock was lowered, and their capital was thus entirely absorbed: the wool sellers would no longer give the extended credit, and therefore these manufacturers were compelled to retire, and work became consequently short in the spring of 1826. An alteration in the dress of cloth just at this period reduced the value of the stock on hand nearly half; another cause of loss to the manufacturers, the shop looms came in, and the out-weavers in competition for work lowered their prices, and this was the beginning of the distress."

Mr. Peter Playne says, "We had two strikes, one was a difference which only lasted a few hours, the other was a strike which lasted six weeks. The cause of this strike was for a general advance on all the work; we had not made any previous reductions, but we were under heavy contracts at the time, and the men took advantage of us. It cost us between

£2,000 and £3,000. At last, we were obliged to yield; but many of the out-door weavers came slyly, and begged to have our work out at under prices." He further remarked, that they finished the contract at considerable loss, and being fearful of similar treatment, they have carefully avoided taking any more very extensive orders—states, that whenever the weavers may have carried their point, they have always been the first to reduce wages.

"He also adds, that the differences between these weavers and themselves, which have terminated in strikes, have only occurred twice; one was a difference lasting only a few hours, the other was a strike in one mill in particular for six weeks; the cause of this strike was for a general advance on all their work; they had not made any previous reduction, but were under heavy contracts at the time, and the men took advantage of us. It cost us between £2000 and £3000. At last we were obliged to agree to their terms, but many out-weavers came underhanded and offered to take out at less wages.

"On its being known in the district that our people had struck, the other manufacturers in general rose their wages, but cannot say whether these manufacturers were paying the same rate as they were.

Mr. P. Playne observed that the contract was finished at a considerable loss, and being fearful of similar treatment, they have carefully avoided taking large orders; considers that the strikes have never proved to any ultimate advantage to the labouring men, and even after they have carried their point, they have been the first to reduce wages.

There have been two general strikes of all the weavers in the county.

The first commenced 28th of April, 1825, and terminated on the 8th of June, same year.

The second commenced in the latter end of May 1828, and continued till the middle of July following.

There have been also various minor strikes against individual masters at different times.

In reference to the strike in 1825, it was for an advance of wages; although when the differences were settled, and a scale of wages were agreed to, three manufacturers had to reduce their wages to meet the adjusted rate.

Trade previous to the strike was very good; some of the manufacturers, however, were paying 12*s*. or 13*s*. a piece under others, and the weavers struck not so much on account of the general lowness of wages, as to maintain more equalised rates throughout the district—but no contract will ever hold good among workmen, whose numbers exceed the demand for their labour. As a proof of this, Mr. Lewis of the Oil Mills, and many other manufacturers, stated to me that within a month after this strike terminated, weavers offered to take out his chain for 13*s*. less than the stipulated price, and to obtain which price they had ruined themselves and paralyzed the trade.

Previous to the year 1825, say 1823, there had been various differences existing between masters and men, inasmuch as wages were attempted to be lowered, and the weavers made those men who took out under-priced work return it to the factory.

In consequence of these proceedings, *eleven* men were sent to prison, *seven* were tried and sentenced to two months' imprisonment, and a penalty of £10: these fines were paid by a general subscription among the weavers, and also, it is said, by assistance received from tradesmen and others interested in the subject of the weavers.

In 1824 the manufacturers commenced increasing the hundreds in the chain from 17 to 19 and 20 hundred, and the abb was increased 900 shoots in a yard, making a total number of 2500, instead of 1600, whereby additional labour was caused to the weaver, and no additional wages were given, with the exception of two manufacturers. viz., Mr. Davies, of Stonehouse and Mr. Sheppard, of Uley; these two gentlemen gave, without any solicitation on the part of the men, 1*d*. extra per ell.

In consequence of this alteration in the make of the fabric, whereby the labour of the weaver was increased, the weavers required a rise of wages, to obtain which they addressed a petition to the manufacturers in October, 1824, submitting to them a list of prices, and requiring it to be the standard price. This list did exceed the wages given by many other manufacturers, inasmuch as it has been previously stated, three manufacturers were paying higher, and had to reduce to meet it; it was, however, a rise of about 1*d*. an ell upon the general bulk of the manufacturers.

To render this strike more effectual, the weavers gave up their shuttles to various collectors, who deposited them at some named spot, from whence they were removed by other unknown hands and secreted. On the adjustment of these

differences, their shuttles as mysteriously came to light as they were mysteriously hidden, an epoch in the weavers' annals which was called a "*resurrection of the shuttles*."

In about six days after the commencement of the strike, the chairman of the clothiers, Mr. Sheppard, one of the largest manufacturers, *agreed* to meet the wishes of the weavers, and advanced his wages within a fraction of the required sum. The following is the list of prices asked, and the prices agreed to by Mr. Sheppard:—

List of Prices, submitted by the Weavers to the Manufacturers, and the Prices agreed to by them in the year 1825.

Coloured Chains.

Hundred at per ell.	Sum asked.	Sum agreed to.
	s. d.	*s. d.*
1600	1 9	1 9
1700	1 10	1 9
1800	1 11	1 9
1900	2 0	1 10
2000	2 1	1 11

White Chains.

Hundred at per ell.	Sum asked.	Sum agreed to.
	s. d.	*s. d.*
1600	1 6	1 4
1700	1 7	1 5
1800	1 8	1 6
1900	1 9	1 7
2000	1 10	1 8

In reference to the above list of prices, and as printed copies of them were given to me in evidence, I consider it my duty to insert them. Many manufacturers say the price was not adhered to, and that the weavers took chain after a very short interval upon the previous terms of the employer.

Mr. Samuel Marling, of Ham Mills, writes to me thus on the subject; and other manufacturers confirm his statements.

"Dear Sir,

"With regard to the prices of weaving, I would observe that, for a few weeks after a strike, the prices stated in the weaver's printed list may have been paid in some cases, yet they were never generally paid, and by none for any long period. These prices were above the value of the work to be performed, allowing the value to be determined by the amount of work required by the manufacturers to be done, and the number of weavers to do it, and consequently prices began to decline almost immediately, and the average prices paid in the county you will find to be near what I have stated at the respective periods.

"I remain, dear Sir,

"Yours truly,

(Signed) "SAMUEL MARLING."

The prices of Mr. Marling were 14½ per cent less on 1800 work than the prices said to have been signed. If the weavers' statement of wages had been adhered to, the total decrease would have been 35 per cent on 1800; and by Mr. Marling's statement it is 27½ per cent.

The example of Mr. Sheppard is said to have been followed by the other respectable manufacturers, and these gentlemen, after agreeing to the price, were as strenuous as the weavers themselves, that the other manufacturers should be brought up to the same mark; the men gradually returned to their work, as the different manufacturers signed the list, and all the shuttles were again at work on the 8th of June.

This strike originated with the weavers, who were then about 5000 in number, the price of a *white chain*, 1600, say 36 ells, was 1*s.* 4*d.* an ell, which took three weeks in weaving, amounting to 2*l.* 8*s.*, from which deduct for

Glue, Harness, Candles, Quilling, Twine, and Rent . . . 15*s.* 9*d.*

leaving an average weekly income of 10*s.* 9*d.* At this time the spinners and slubbers were earning 20*s.* to 30*s.* a-week.

It is difficult to state the number of men thrown out of employ, such as spinners and others; but upon a rough calculation, say about 2500, all of whose earnings may be said to be superior to that of the weaver.

It is almost impossible to state the estimated value of buildings and machinery rendered inactive by this strike, but in one factory alone, viz., Mr. Sheppard's, the estimated amount may be 100,000*l.*

During the unsettled prices of wages, to reduce which there have been constant struggles, various strikes have occurred in different manufactories against attempts at reductions, most of which were unsuccessful, and always proved injurious to the men.*

Timothy Exell, relative to combination strikes, says "that they are injurious in three ways:—

"1st.—They cause a loss of much valuable time.
"2nd.—They take away much of the hard-earned money of the poor.
"3rd.—They keep up a continual war between master and man."

injurious to the Working Classes.

And he further says, "If the money spent in strikes and useless contests between master and man could now be collected, it would be enough to emigrate super-population, and tend to the raising of wages to a proper standard."

At Mr. Sheppard's strike was subscribed - - -	£250
At Mr. Playne's - - - - - - - - - - - -	500
At Chalford Vale - - - - - - - - - - -	1500
Total - - - -	2200

This money was subscribed from weavers and others, independent of the small sums that the weavers themselves had saved.

At the strike which occurred at Mr. Sheppard's about 120 weavers, and 60 others connected with the trade, were out of work six weeks and three days; and, calculating their earnings to be at the lowest 10*s.* a-week, we may calculate upon an actual loss of 585*l.* 10*s.*: this sum, added to the amount of subscriptions, viz. 250*l.*, makes a total of 835*l.* 10*s.* which was actually lost by the labourers, independent of the severe losses of the masters.

This occurred five years ago, when Mr. Sheppard endeavoured to reduce the wages of his weavers from 3*l.* for 40 ells, to 2*l.* 10*s.*

At Mr. Playne's strike there were upwards of 400 weavers, and 200 others connected with the trade, who threw themselves out of employ in trying to raise the wages of Mr. Playne to the wages of other manufacturers; this occurred in February 1834—this strike lasted seven weeks, and, upon the previous calculation of 10*s.* per week to each person, the amount lost is 2100*l.*, to which add the amount subscribed, viz. 500*l.*, makes a total of 2600*l.* lost by the labourers.

Subscriptions.

The following is a list of the moneys received and disbursed during the above-named strike:—

RECEIVED.

	£.	*s.*	*d.*
From Horsley and Nailsworth	60	19	3
— King Stanley . . .	53	5	2¾
— Stroud and Pighouse Mill	38	3	11
— Kingswood and Kingswood New Mill . .	33	2	6
— Vatch Mill	24	0	10
— Brimscombe	23	7	2
— Rodborough and Littleworth	23	5	6
— Pitt's Mill and Forest Green	21	14	9
— Wootton-under-Edge .	20	16	0
— Uley	20	18	5¾
— Stafford's Mill . . .	19	16	4¼
— Stonehouse and Leonard Stanley	18	4	3
Carried forward . .	£357	14	2¾

PAID.

	£.	*s.*	*d.*
To 287 out-weavers and their families, belonging to the several parishes of Horsley, Avening, Minchinhampton, Bisley, Randwick, Coaley, Cam, Uley, Dursley, and Nymphsfield	298	16	6
— 156 shop-weavers and their families, belonging to Iron Mills and Dunkirk Mills	152	1	6
— Paper, books, and printing	9	1	6
— Advertisements . . .	2	17	0
— The Committee, for their			
Carried forward . .	£462	16	6

* A dispute recently occurred between a manufacturer near Dursley and his weavers—the consequence was, that the manufacturer dispensed with the services of the men, and has employed *women*.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

COMBINATIONS AND STRIKES.

RECEIVED.	£.	s.	d.
Brought forward . .	357	14	2¾
— Ebley Mill and Friends	17	12	6
— Eastington	14	9	6
— Coaley	14	4	0
— Cam	12	10	0
— Lodgemore Mill . .	9	8	11
— Chalford	8	15	2
— Woodchester . . .	5	13	0
— Minchinhampton and Box	9	17	8
— Pitchcombe and Small's Mill	6	16	3
— Fromebridge Mill . .	6	6	10
— Bagpath	5	5	6
— Alderley New Mill . .	4	19	0
— Charfield and Cromhall	4	7	0
— Fromehall Mill . . .	5	2	10
— Dursley	2	12	9
— Painswick	2	5	0
— Nymphsfield . . .	1	16	0
— Locomb Well Mill . .	1	5	0
— North Nibley . . .	0	16	3
— White's Hill and Ruscombe	0	15	9
— Holcombe Mill . . .	1	1	3
— Donations	6	10	0
Total .	£500	4	4¾

PAID.	£.	s.	d.
Brought forward . .	462	16	6
loss of time and expenses during the strike . .	28	15	6
Balance in hand	8	12	4¾
Total .	£500	4	4¾

In 1829 a serious struggle took place in Chalford Vale, not only to raise wages, but to abolish the truck system.

The trade in this district has been considerably impaired by constant struggles which have existed between master and man, to the injury of both parties. At the time of several of the strikes the weavers knew that trade was brisk, and, owing to the impediments thrown in the way of executing contracts owing to these strikes, many of the orders went into Yorkshire.

Although it may be said that in 1825 the weavers struck for an advance of wages, it was in fact only for an equalization throughout the county; nor did they endeavour to fix the standard at the maximum price, because three of the highest manufacturers had to reduce their wages to the standard named by the weavers.

In this case the weavers gained the day, although trade partially suffered with those masters who held out longest; in all other instances the struggles have been to oppose the reduction of the manufacturers, and not to force an increase of wages. These contests have been generally to the detriment of the working men; and although, owing to the conditions of the contract, limiting as to time, &c., the manufacturers may have granted to continue wages at the price for which the weavers stood, it was only till the order was completed, and then reductions were forced upon the men, who had no alternative.

I insert the following observations of Mr. Samuel Sevill, who is a resident in the district, and well acquainted with the habits of the people and history of the trade. I beg to call your attention to the latter part of his letter, where he judiciously recommends the completion of the railroad in order to put the Gloucestershire on a level with the Yorkshire manufacturer in point of facilities of transit and communication.

Letter from Samuel Sevill, Esq., concerning Combinations among Masters and Men.

"SIR,—I am not aware that there are anything like regular combinations among the *masters* of any trade in England.

"Combinations among the operatives still exist in some trades, and to a greater extent than is generally imagined. Among mechanics, and particularly in London, in large engineers' shops, the men on the premises will not allow a fresh man to work unless he has served an apprenticeship or worked a certain time at the trade; nor will they allow any man to work under a fixed price, I think a minimum price of 28*s.* per week. I know a young man who left this neighbourhood about 12 months since for London. He had worked all his life with his father, who is a good working mechanic in either wood or iron. On his arrival in town

he soon got into work (through the introduction of his uncle who is also a mechanic) at 28*s.* a-week. The foreman soon found out that he had more conceit than knowledge, and turned him off, because he dared not offer him what he really was worth. But had he been worth 2*l.* per week, the shopmen would not have allowed him to work, unless he had brought his indentures of apprenticeship, or satisfactory letters from parties, where, and with whom, he had worked before. I believe that a fresh man is put to the test in this way. He is obliged to enter a club, which is for the double object of providing against sickness, and raising a fund that the mechanics may fall back upon in case they make a *strike* against their masters. At the time of entering his pretensions are gone into, I think by a committee of the club, and if they are satisfactory he may go to work, but if not, although the master might take him on, yet the annoyance from the other men would be such, in the shop and out of the shop, that no one could withstand; and he would be obliged to leave, and go to work at some small establishment for lower wages, where these pains and penalties are not in force.

"I have lately been told that combinations still exist among some of the leading operatives Manchester; but there are no combinations, either among masters or men, in the cloth-trade, I think I may say, either in the north or west of England. The hand-loom weavers have in the last 20 years made two great efforts to fix the price of labour. Their last attempt, in 1828, was a desperate one, and subscriptions had been collected for some time before in all the clothing counties of England. Their plans were well laid, and at first they were pretty successful. The principle of action was, to strike against one master at a time, and, the order being given out, neither man, woman, nor child entered the premises: but I ought to state that all the principal operatives joined in this combination, although the weavers were the principal movers in it. This sort of warfare was carried on for some time, till the masters, seeing that the fate of one would be the fate of all, at last resolved to close their mills. The panic of 1825 began to be felt about the same time, and both together soon brought the thing to a crisis. The weavers became desperate, and at Chalford, in Gloucestershire, the military were obliged to be called out, and were under arms night and day for about a fortnight. The moment fortune began to frown on the weavers, it became a sort of "sauve qui peut" affair; their treasurers pocketed the money in hand, and they began to take out work at almost whatever prices the masters would give. From that period their condition has been getting worse and worse. The supply of labour has been constantly greater than the demand. Some of the shopkeepers were severe sufferers by this strike; they gave the weavers credit on the faith that success would attend their efforts, and if so, that the truck system would be abolished.

"But the foundation cause of the loss of trade in Gloucestershire lies in the coal-pits of Yorkshire, where coal is only one-half the price, besides the great advantage of being able to say for certain when an order could be executed. Now this was not the case with the water-mills of this county. In the summer months the supply was uncertain, not enough to employ the people in the mills above five or six hours in the day; and, as working by weight and the piece was not so common then as it is now, the master not only suffered by the loss of *time*, but paid for *labour* that was never performed,

"This state of things gradually led to the erection of steam-engines to equalize the power of the water-mills, to keep them going as regularly in summer as winter. But, by the time these changes had taken place, the capital of the leading clothiers was nearly exhausted.

"The cause of this exhaustion might be traced in a variety of ways; but the principal undoubtedly was the large establishments and expensive habits of living in which they indulged. While the men of Leeds and Huddersfield were constantly in their mills, and taking their meals at the same hours as their workpeople, the clothiers of Gloucestershire, some of them, were indulging in the habits and mixing with the 'gentle blood' of the land. These sort of things, of course, are not attempted by the present race of manufacturers, but still there is not capital enough in the trade to employ all the mills or the population.

"It has often been matter of astonishment to me that the workpeople have submitted so quietly to their fate. One cause is, that their spirit was completely broken by their failure in 1828; another is, that they are scattered over a greater surface of country, in valleys and villages. By not coming in contact as often as they do in manufacturing towns, their manners are more simple and less turbulent. They have not the same facility of irritating each other, or laying plans for the redress of real or imaginary grievances.

"For this reason I conceive that the Government would do well to encourage, by every possible means, the manufactures that are carried on in neighbourhoods that are similarly situated to those of Gloucestershire, where they are not too scattered to make distance or time an objection, nor so concentrated as to render them liable to both the moral and physical objections which large manufacturing towns are subject to.

"Nothing would contribute so much to this desirable object in Gloucestershire as the completion of the railroad from Swindon to Cheltenham, which, passing through Stroud, would put the clothiers on a level with their rivals in the north; and it does strike me as a most extraordinary thing, that the most tedious and difficult part of this line is not touched—I mean through the Vale of Chalford. Time is property, and, unless this line is continued through Stroud, it will be almost as bad as hedging the cloth-trade out of the market. The excuse for not beginning this tedious and difficult part of the road is, that the directors are not sure of getting the money to complete it. Then, I say that, if they cannot mortgage, they ought to apply to Government for assistance. It is in a great measure to the immense facility of rapid communication that England owes her present station in the world; but I will confine myself more strictly to the subject of inquiry.

"There is suffering enough in this country, among the weavers and others, to engender the most serious discontent, and I find that something like a rupture is only delayed by the hope that the present Hand-loom Commission will turn out to their advantage. They fancy that

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Combinations and Strikes.

their young Queen has sent you among them to inquire into their sufferings, in order that they may be redressed,—that she will revive the law which made it illegal for one man to have more than three looms on his premises, which of course would do away with the power-loom factories. This I know from personal communication; and, if they are disappointed, which must inevitably be the case, it will only want the presence of an Oastler or a Stevens to make them defy both persons and property.

"I am, Sir, yours,

"*Burleigh, February* 4, 1839. "Samuel Sevill.

"*To William Augustus Miles, Esq.*"

The following is a history of the trade and the strikes, supplied to me in a letter from Timothy Exell, chairman of the Delegates of Weavers, addressed to Her Majesty's Commissioner, on the subject of strikes and wages.

"I, Timothy Exell, of the parish of North Nibley, in the county of Gloucester, have taken upon me to give you a history, to the best of my knowledge, of the weavers in this county.

"Queen Elizabeth signed and sealed the trade of weaving by law to the weavers themselves, which laws protected the weaver and manufacturer; for trade never prospered better than when it was carried on systematically: which laws were as follow:—

"First, That no manufacturer should keep more than one loom in his possession under the fine of *fifty-two pounds* a year, nor let a house and loom together to make profit thereby, under the same penalty.

"Secondly, That no weaver should keep more than two looms to make profit thereby: this prevented the system of monopoly amongst the weavers.

"Thirdly, Thatno weaver should follow the trade of weaving without having served a lawful apprenticeship of *seven years,* or serve in His Majesty's army: this prevented the system of early marriage, which has been practised to an awful extent among the weavers.

"In the reign of King George II., in the year 1728, the weavers' wages were fixed by the magistrates at the quarter sessions at Gloucester; and this rate of wages was according to the hundreds in the chain, that is to say, for a chain 600, 4*d.* per yard, and so on in proportion as the hundreds rise up to 24, that is to say, for 2400, 2*s.* per *yard.*

"On the 15th day of October 1756 the weavers and clothiers made another agreement in reference to the fixing of their wages; after this the trade of weaving went on well: the clothiers were contented with their trade of clothing, and many of them became rich and opulent men; they were not only worth their thousands and their tens of thousands, but their scores of thousands of pounds, and their weavers lived in credit by their trade and industry; their little cottages appeared happy and contented, and many hundreds of them prepared against the day of sickness and old age. It was seldom that a weaver appeared at the parish for relief. No combinations of masters to oppress and reduce, no combinations of weavers to stand up against unwarranted deductions; no alarm in the country amongst the tradesmen, saying that the weavers had *struck for wages;* no stagnation of trade, by the weavers' stopping working; peace and content sat upon the weaver's brow, and his name stood enrolled amongst the legal subjects of His Majesty; and many of them stood in the field of battle arrayed in armour, and many of them fell in the field of action in the defence of their beloved country,

This state of things continued till the year 1802, when the clothiers prevailed upon a member of the House of Commons to bring in a bill to suspend the weavers' protecting laws, which after a long struggle they prevailed upon the Government not only to suspend, but repeal the laws that protected the weavers as a body; and after this the spoilers broke in upon the weavers' rights and privileges; shop-looms were introduced to our country, and the manufacturers became master-weavers themselves.

"The system of apprenticeship was done away with, and things became dreadfully confused; the clothiers looked upon the weavers as an army defeated, and taken prisoners, and as prisoners they have treated us and our children; they have driven us from our houses and gardens to work as prisoners in their factories; in these seminaries of vice our sons and daughters have been ruined, and many a father has had to weep over a ruined daughter.

"In the year 1821, the masters made an attempt to reduce our wages; but the weavers made a steady stand against the deduction, and eleven of the weavers were sent to Gloucester prison, and seven of them were fined 10*l.* a-piece; this cost the weavers of the county several hundreds of pounds. This punishment was inflicted for combining together to prevent the clothiers from putting out the work at the prices the masters attempted to put it out at; and the weavers were successful in their attempts.

"In the year 1824, in October, the weavers called a county meeting at Stroud, for the purpose of petitioning the manufacturers for an advance in their wages, on account of the great change which had taken place in the weaving of woollen cloth. The masters had increased the hundreds in the chain from 16 to 19, which was an increase of 570 threads in the chain, and increased the number of threads from 1600 to 2560, the abb way to make a yard of cloth in the raw state, and this to be done for the same money; in answer to which petition some of the manufacturers gave a small advance; but a majority of the masters treated the petition with disregard; this was done without *my* knowledge. In the months of February and March 1825 the weavers sent out a deputation to wait upon the manufacturers to know if they intended to comply with their request; this was done without obtaining the object, for in April, the following month, some of the masters took off what they had so lately put on, in answer to our petition: this it was that filled the weavers with rage; discontent began to show itself in every bosom; the union spread in every direction, and increased from 4000 to 5000 in a few days.

"On the 28th of April, the weavers stopped working; and in about 48 hours nearly all the shuttles were laid in the silent grave; and a quieter stand for wages I never beheld before or since.

"On the 4th of May, Mr. Edward Sheppard, chairman of the clothiers' committee, made his proposals to his weavers, and signed to a printed document what wages he would give his weavers, and in a few days the business was settled to the great joy and satisfaction of the weavers in the Dursley district; but one of the clothiers had to reduce to come down to the standard of wages, which was fixed, and the men resumed their work in peace.

"On the 2nd of June there was a day appointed to return the masters thanks for their kindness in giving them their wages, but many of the manufacturers of the Stroud division were stubborn, and would not comply to give the wages Mr. Sheppard had signed to give on the 4th of May, which prices nearly all were giving in the Dursley division. This laid the foundation for the disturbance which took place in Stroud on the 4th of June, which was the cause of bringing the military into the country, and it was like to be attended with very serious consequences, but on the 7th the wages were settled at Stroud between the weavers and clothiers, and Mr. Sheppard's prices were fixed to be the county prices to be paid the weavers in the county of Gloucester; and I consider it just that masters, selling in the same market, should pay the same prices for weaving the same kind of work, but a uniformity of prices would not be kept up without a combination among the weavers, and combinations take a deal of precious time and money, and keep up a continual war between master and man. But peace was restored until November, but in November a truck clothier in Wootton-under-Edge made a reduction on his weavers; this was the cause of the number of weavers assembled together, and some work, belonging to this manufacturer, was destroyed, and a number of men, women, and children, who were defenceless, were assembled near his mill. He, with his men, fired on them, and wounded 16 men, women, and children, but no life was lost. After this, things went on tolerably well till the year 1828, when the ready money manufacturers in the Dursley division found that they were undersold by several commission clothiers in the London market, which led them to inquire into the cause, and they found the cause to be three-fold.

"1st. They were paying 10 per cent less for weaving, and paying this in truck, and keeping shop-looms, which shop-loom system has been a great evil in this country to the weaver and landlord, who have expended many scores of thousands of pounds in erecting houses and shops for the weavers' convenience.

"In the month of June the ready-money manufacturer commenced a strike on the weavers, to reduce their wages down to the trucksters' standard, which was 10 per cent., which amounted to nearly a reduction of 30,000*l.* a-year on the quantity of cloth made in this county, and after a long, but quiet struggle, to the great injury of the trade in this county, the masters gained the day; and, to be further revenged on the poor weavers, many of them built large factories, filled them with looms, and made the weavers work as journeymen under them; and many of the weavers were compelled to take their looms to the factory, and pay a shameful rent for the standing of their own looms in the factory; so they had rent at home, and rent to pay to the master; and many an industrious man has been brought to the parish by this conduct, for it is considered that the weavers have sustained a loss of more than 10,000*l.* a-year by this practice, which money is drawn out of circulation.

"The foregoing reductions took place when trade was remarkably good; the weavers, seeing nothing but destruction before them, joined themselves together in a *secret society*, to save themselves from utter ruin, but they soon found that this society was illegal and contrary to the laws of this country, and they quietly disbanded themselves, and in a few days the manufacturers reduced their wages 10 per cent *again*, which was nearly 30,000*l.* a-year more. This took place in the year 1829, and, adding to all this, many of the manufacturers had lengthened out their *warping-bars* far beyond the standard of justice, and they, the weavers, had many thousands of yards of cloth to weave in a year *for nothing*; but, notwithstanding all this, when incendiarism raged in the country round them, the manufacturers fled to the weavers to protect their property, which they came forward to do, knowing that the destruction of property by violence is the high road to ruin.

"This, honoured Sir, is the manner in which things have been going on for the last 13 years. There is no rule nor order among the masters themselves, but they appear to be vying with each other who shall bring wages to the lowest point, and I believe it is high time for the legislature to interfere; for, if they had interfered in 1825, by setting a boundary round about the weaver, not to have injured the master in his trade, this country would have been more than a million of money better off than she is at the present time. Reckoning *wages lost* and *time misimproved*, and notwithstanding the present price of provisions and the lowness of wages, and the different manner of abatements practised by the master on the weaver, the manufacturer seems bent on bringing wages to a lower starvation point, and, if they make any resistance against these deductions, the power-loom is to be set up in their place, and they driven to the wide world to seek a redress of their grievances; for in about the beginning of 1838 some of the principal manufacturers made the greatest reduction on their weavers that has ever been known since the memory of man, and, if the Government does not interfere, I can see nothing but destruction at our heels; but I sincerely hope, as a well-wisher to my country, that they will in their wisdom devise some plan to stop such a system of oppression, to the great injury of the industrious but half-starved weavers of this county.

"With these remarks, I have the honour, Sir, to remain

"Your humble and obedient servant,

"Timothy Exell."

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Truck.

TRUCK.

Truck is carried on by a few manufacturers in the district. It is injurious to the weaver, as it prevents prudential habits; and, in some cases, he may be liable to imposition. It is a tax upon his labour and an arbitrary usurpation of the master.

Truck, however, is only a gangrene, arising from an unhealthy state of trade and a surplus population. No law can prevent it; and public opinion is the best means to check it.

I have tickets of truck, headed "To facilitate Trade." It is a ticket with a check-mark, on which is printed "Receive this I. O. U. for ———" (the amount). In short, it is a paper currency for bacon and candles.

All the leading manufacturers are opposed to truck; and yet some say they are compelled to lower wages to meet the truckster in the market.

In Chalford there is little money passing between masters and men. Shoemakers, landlords, beer-shop-keepers, and others, all declare they take bacon, cheese, and candles in payment.

Mr. Peter Playne, of Nailsworth, a large and highly respectable manufacturer, had been accused of truck; but he solemnly denied it, upon his oath, before me, when under examination.

Convictions.

The following is a return of the number of convictions, under the Truck Act, at Horsley petty sessions, from 27th March 1832 to June in the same year, being a period when the Anti-Truck Association, at Chalford and Stroud, were zealous in their efforts to suppress truck. But, within that brief period, it will be seen that there were twelve convictions, and that some of the manufacturers were repeatedly fined. This, however, proved useless, and truck is now carried on, silently, to the depression of the people within its vortex.

William Smart, convicted on the 27th March, 1832, before the magistrates at Horsley, for an offence under the 1 and 2 Will. IV., cap. 37, sect. 2.
William Smart, convicted same day, before the same magistrates, for an offence under 3rd sect. of the said Act.
John Winn, convicted same day, before the same magistrates, for an offence under the 2nd sect. of the said Act.
John Winn, convicted same day, before the same magistrates, for an offence under the 3rd sect. of the said Act.
Daniel Cox, convicted the same day, before the same magistrates, for an offence under the 3rd sect. of the said Act.
William Smart, convicted on the 19th April, 1832, before the magistrates at Horsley, for an offence under the 3rd sect. of the said Act.
Nathaniel Jones and Joseph Jones, convicted same day, at the same place, before the same magistrates, for an offence under the 3rd sect. of the said Act.
Daniel Cox, convicted on the 3rd May, 1832, at Horsley.
Thomas Gordon, convicted on the 15th May, 1832, at Horsley.
Joseph Lusty, convicted same day, at Horsley.
Thomas Gordon, convicted on 11th June, 1832, at Horsley.

I submit the following letters and evidence upon the subject of truck:—

Mr. Ross on Truck.

Sir, *Woodchester, June 14th*, 1838.

In reply to your communication, received on the 12th of this month, I beg leave to forward for your inspection the following observations on the truck system; at the same time assuring you that no description of mine can sufficiently set forth the evils arising, directly and indirectly, from the abominable system of truck. I have now resided in this neighbourhood twelve years, occupying an extensive shop and warehouse, as a general dealer. At this shop the returns have been annually 5000*l.*, and continued so while trade was carried on unimpeded by the truck system, and when capital could be used advantageously for the promotion and increase of trade. But things are altered by the introduction of this system, so that neither capital nor respectability (as to trade) have now anything to do with the business of the neighbourhood. This system has struck, as it were, the deathblow to fair trade, as well as to the fair trader, so much so, that, were an individual to attempt to commence or carry on a business with a capital of sufficient extent to enable him to make all his purchases for cash, and thus avail himself of the usually allowed discount; and were he, for the purpose of ensuring and increasing his business, to sacrifice not only the discount named, but also 10 per cent. upon the regular retail price (fair and ordinary), he could not effect sales; but, as he made the offer of his goods, he would be met with this reply: "It is very cheap, but I cannot buy, for I must deal at master's shop;' or else, 'we have no money for our work, we are paid in truck.' These are true statements that have come under my own observation in a way of business. But, to be particular in some of my remarks, I would observe—

"First: that the truck system tends to render the weaver the manufacturer's slave. They

are obliged to work, to live, and act in a way of total degradation. They must consent to his prices for their work. They must lay out their earnings where he pleases, which is always at his shop, or at a shop which he countenances (when he refuses to own it as his), but from which he is sure to reap no small profit. They dare not complain of short weight, though they have much cause so to do. They dare not complain of inferiority in the articles supplied. They dare not utter a word, however exorbitant the price charged; if they did, the master would make but little reply; but, in a few days, or at the next settling, some trifling fault is found, or 'not being in want of so many hands,' they are turned off, but not a word is said about the shop. The workman is left to draw his own inference. The workmen know this and therefore are compelled to remain quiet and submit in silence.

Letter of Mr. Ross.

"Second: the system tends to produce poverty in the family of the weaver. Thus, he does not receive the full amount of his earnings by from 15 to 20 per cent., the deficiency being left behind him at the truck shop over and above the ordinary profit of the fair dealer. As a proof of this, I have had calico brought to my shop, which had been taken at the truck shop for wages at 8*d.* per yard, when I was selling the same cloth at 6*d.* per yard, securing to myself, at the same time, a remunerating profit. Again, the truck master is enabled by his not having to provide cash payments for his workmen,—by his exorbitant profit on his shop goods to undersell very considerably the cash paying manufacturer, so that the latter, to be enabled to compete with the truckster, is compelled, contrary to all the feelings of humanity, to reduce the weavers' wages, and thus grind them down, and that when he himself admits the wages are already too low. And this example, in a few weeks, is followed by the truckster, though he takes the pride to himself (however falsely), that it did not originate with him, while, at the same time, he is the sole cause of it. But I may go further, and observe:—

"Thirdly: that the system of truck tends to their degradation in society. It makes them dishonest even against their will; I have had customers who, when they worked for those masters who paid them in money, were punctual, honest men, settling their accounts with me with evident pleasure and satisfaction; but, a scarcity of work ensuing, they have been induced to apply for work to the truck master—they have succeeded; but for that labour they have received nothing but goods; they are called upon to pay the few shillings, or, may be, the few pounds they left unpaid for goods had while out of employ, but they are rendered totally incapable to meet the demand; they have no money, neither can they get any; and, moreover, were the tradesman to proceed to extremities and employ an attorney, still the man could not pay but must go to prison. This may be proved by the experience of very many shopkeepers, if they would and if they did speak out. Many pounds are lost to the tradesman in this way, and many an honest man thus ranked with rogues. In the above remarks I have attempted to show the tendency of the system on the weaver; but you must bear in mind I have been speaking of him in his state of active labour; but what shall I say of him if overtaken by sickness; there is no truckshop for him to go to then, his master is too good a judge; if no employ is to be had at the trucksters' manufactory, there are no goods to be had at his shop, and, moreover, being a trucksters' weaver and known as such, he is refused temporary assistance at the grocers or drapers, not for want of sympathy but purely arising from the knowledge—that when he should obtain work he would not obtain any money for the same, and thus be unable, however willing and however honest, to make the necessary return. Now, look at the tradesman robbed of his custom; I instance myself who have lost at least one-third of my business; I assert it as a positive fact; cheated by my customers, who, compelled by shortness of work to change masters (where as no money may transpire, or the money paid is expected to be left behind at the shop), are obliged to cheat me, and, moreover, with every prospect of losing the custom that yet remains unless the system is stayed; I say in these points it is a system that is injurious to the fair and independent tradesman. Look, again, at the upright, conscientious manufacturer, the man acting from a principle of integrity on the one hand, and a desire for the welfare of the working classes on the other; he really is an object of pity,—he labours under disadvantages that are ruinous to his trade, and which, if not removed, will certainly prove so. He provides cash payments for his workman once a fortnight; the truckster, on the contrary, has no such payments to prepare for, his payments are not required under three or four or six months, and hence he is enabled to turn and wind his money all this while, which necessarily obtains for him considerable advantages over and above the other; look, again, at the profits arising from the sale per week of from 200*l.* to 300*l.* worth of goods at an exorbitant profit, and all may be considered as for *ready* money, and what is the result of this? why this alone enables the truckster to go into the markets and sell the cloths at the *cost* of *manufacturing*, and yet at the same time realize a living profit. Can the upright manufacturer stand against this? I think not. There is but one way in which he can at all relieve himself, and that is either by reducing the weavers' wages down to the lowest sum possible, or by adopting himself the system he so much abominates, and which from principle he has ever avoided. Such is its effect upon the manufacturer. You ask if the truck system is carried on in this neighbourhood? I answer it is. A third of my business I have already lost, and, if it continues, more will be lost, especially as it seems to be increasing; and, moreover, as the opinion among the manufacturers is, that if not effectually stopped it must be universally adopted; the consequence, which will inevitably follow, will be this:—the entire extirpation of the independent tradesman from the manufacturing districts, and the establishing of an extensive and pernicious monopoly among the clothiers; they being at one and the same time—clothiers, grocers, drapers, druggists, &c. &c. &c.; a complete set of jacks-of-all-trades, yet masters (and deserving) of none. You would smile were you

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Truck.

to see or hear an inventory of the various articles sold by the truckster descending even to mouse-traps, in fact, anything and everything that is wanted, but all at their price; yes, and their weight and measure too, which is very seldom, if ever, what is required by law. A woman was in my shop this week to whom I spoke about the truckshop, when she informed me that goods bought at the truck shop are never weight, and that on Saturday last she met a shopmate who had just 'been to shop,' and he showed her a pound of sugar that was not its proper weight by one ounce, which enhances the price one halfpenny per pound, which is 4*s.* 8*d.* per cwt., which gives alone a clear profit on a hogshead of sugar, weighing 16 cwt., of 3*l.* 14*s.* 8*d.* This is one article alone; what would be the amount at the end of the year it is impossible to say, but it must be enormous; I am not able to state, as you request, any calculations as to the annual expenses of a weaver's family, nor the exact difference between the prices paid at the trucksters' shop and that of the tradesman. But, supposing the weaver and his family (*when at work*) could earn together 12*s.* per week, I should say without fear of contradiction that he would not, all things considered, realize more than 9*s.* in actual amount. Many instances might be given, but one shall suffice, and the truth of this I can substantiate. My servant's father works for a manufacturer, who is a truckster; he never receives one farthing in money as wages,—he is obliged, *want it or not*, to take just what his master's shop produces, and that to the full amount of his wages. Now it so happens, his master is not the only landlord in the neighbourhood; hence the man has to provide his rent. His master is not (as yet) a tailor, a shoemaker, or apothecary, and hence some money is needed for such purposes; now, to supply these wants, after having given his master whatever he chooses to charge for his bacon, cheese, &c. &c., he is obliged to send to Birmingham to a relative there to dispose of for him at the best price he can. I leave you, Sir, to make your observations as to the loss sustained by the poor man, arising from—1. his master's exorbitant charge; 2. loss in weight; 3. expense of carriage; and 4. loss on sale. Some few years back a bill was passed by Parliament for the suppression of truck, but that bill is admitted on all hands to have proved a complete failure, and for the following reasons:—

"1. For want of a heavier fine on the truckster manufacturer.

"2. For want of a fine or imprisonment to be imposed for taking truck.*

"3. For want of a public prosecutor.

"4. For want of the manufacturer being periodically put upon his oath as to his adopting the system. You will excuse any imperfections in the above statements as I have been often interrupted.

"I am, Sir, yours very respectfully,

"Edward Coombe Ross.

"Grocer, Draper, and Druggist.

"*To W. A. Miles, Esq. Asisstant Commissioner*
"*to Hand-Loom Weavers' Inquiry.*"

Mr. Ross, Solicitor, at Chalford,

Has been indefatigable in his praiseworthy endeavours to check the truck system, but in vain. It is too subtle for any Act of Parliament to prevent, or a lawyer to lay hold of.

Thomas March, a weaver working for Mr. Jones, at Chalford, said,

He had goods from the truck shop while working the piece; on completing it, if there was any balance, it was paid in money; but knew that, if he did not take the greatest half in goods, he should have no more work.

Mr. William Long, a late overseer, says,

It is difficult to get at the price of truck goods, as the weavers are too intimidated to give any information; they lament, and deeply feel, the effects of the system, but they are afraid to speak out upon the subject. He considers the system to be ruinous to the general dealer; knows seven or eight small retail shopkeepers, customers, in fact, of his, who have been obliged to give up business solely in consequence of this nefarious system. Truck is more prevalent now than before the Truck Bill passed. He has observed a general falling-off in the condition of the weavers, as well as in their domestic comforts and general appearance. As a body they are becoming callous to all feelings of obedience to the laws, as well as to the precepts of religion; he continued, that formerly, when they had money, they could come in contact with other classes of society, equal, if not superior, to themselves; but now they were confined to their own society; they spoke to no one but their masters and themselves; they have no intercourse, and are an isolated set, and more than this he attributed solely to the system of truck. He moreover considers the truck system to be not only the cause of low wages, but to have a constant tendency to their depression. The truck master runs into the market and undersells the money-paying manufacturer by 15 or 20 per cent., according to the profit on the truck. Money wages must be lowered to compete with this truckster; in the meantime the truck master reduces his wages to the rate of the money-paying master (always having the advantage of the truck), and as the money-paying master is still undersold, he is again compelled to reduce, and the same operation is again performed by the wary truckster, until through the avarice and wickedness of these men, labour will be, and must be, reduced to the lowest point of starvation.

* "A fine imposed (or imprisonment) upon the man or woman receiving truck, or dealing at a shop with which the manufacturer is supposed to be connected, directly or indirectly, would do more good towards the suppression of the system than any thing else."—E. C. R.

The following letter on the distress of the district and the mischief of truck was addressed to me by the above informant William Long, late overseer of the parish.

Chalford Hill, June 16th, 1838.

"Sir,—In compliance with your wishes I beg to lay before you the cause of the distress now existing among the operatives of this place. In nine cases out of ten their actual condition is wretched in the extreme; the cause thereof is occasioned by various circumstances:—1st. From not having a well regulated supply of work; 2ndly. The extreme low wages that is given for the work; and 3rdly. The most grievous, the most degrading, and the most ruinous is the manner in which they are paid their wages, namely, by the truck system.

"The manner in which the truck system is carried on in this neighbourhood, you have, no doubt, been informed by the operatives themselves; it is conducted in some cases in open violation of the law, and in others by evasion, which is equally as efficient. The first and second of these causes I am not sufficiently conversant in, so as to give you any information, or for their remedy, but as it respects the last only.

"I have been a resident in this neighbourhood nearly thirty years, and have had an opportunity of witnessing the condition of the weaver when paid in money and when paid in truck, and I can venture to state the following particulars as facts. It is about seven or eight years since the truck system became general, and in speaking of the weaver before that time, you will consider I refer to his condition *when paid in money*, which I will divide into three particulars:—namely,

"1st. His liberty and comparative independence.
"2ndly. His condition in society; and,
"3rdly. His condition in his own family.

"1st. His liberty and comparative independence; he considered himself the proprietor of a trade, and, consequently, prided himself in supporting the credit and interest of that trade in providing himself with all necessary implements for the prosecution of it, and by a behaviour that was characterized by all due respect towards his employers.

"2ndly. His condition in society; by having the fruits of his labour paid him in money, it necessarily enabled him to come in contact with the various grades in society; some of which was equal, in others superior to himself,—such as bakers, butchers, shopkeepers, tailors, and every other class of tradesmen to supply his wants, which, I have no doubt, must be one means of improving his moral condition, and of the aid of sympathising and assisting him in adverse circumstances or otherwise.

"3rdly. His condition in his own family was something like that which is generally considered that of an Englishman; his thrifty wife was at liberty to go to the best market to lay in provisions for the support of the family; the father prided himself to see his children decently clothed, and fit to appear in public places of worship, and on all other public occasions; and some of the most frugal and industrious have even acquired a sufficiency either to purchase or build for themselves houses for their own residence. But, alas! alas! how is the scene reversed under the truck system; instead of considering himself the proprietor of a trade, he now considers his employment to be the most degrading slavery; and, instead of priding himself in supporting that trade, he is careless and indifferent, speaks of his employers in the most invidious terms, and, callous to all feeling of obligation either to obey the laws of his country or the precepts of religion, he considers himself an injured man, an outcast of society, and appears to be careless what becomes of him; but such conduct and feelings I consider is produced by the unkind and unfeeling conduct manifested by the masters to their workpeople under the truck system, for, instead of being permitted to exercise what ingenuity he or his family may possess in finding the best market, and laying out his money where and with whom he pleases, he is obliged to take such goods his master has got and at his master's prices, and is, consequently, debarred from all facilities of intercourse with any other part of the community *except his own master*, who, *professedly kind*, allows him to have provisions (*so far in advance*) as to suit his consumption for the time he is doing the work he has taken out—*but not one penny beyond that;* for, when he has carried in his work, and there is no more ready for him, he is obliged to go without provisions till the work is ready; he is therefore made a pauper; he can go to no baker, shopkeeper, or any other tradesman for credit, for they cannot assist him, he not having the means in his power of repaying them, and his only remedy is, an application for parochial relief; hence, arises pauperism, which, contrary to expectations and wishes, he sinks under the weight of his difficulties which he has no power to control, thereby rendering him callous to every feeling of a father or husband, or a member of social society.

"I cannot conclude these few observations without expressing to you my sincere thanks, *for your very impartial conduct* in inquiring into the cause of the distress now falling so heavily on this place, and hoping (that if, after you have closed your Commission in this place, you shall find the foregoing remarks borne out by other testimony produced before you, pending this inquiry), you will be pleased to lay before the government in your Report such a detail of the sufferings the poor operatives are now enduring, as shall ultimately lead the government to redress their many and sore grievances. In the name of my suffering fellow parishioners, "I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient and obliged servant,
"William Long.
"Overseer of the parish of Bisley.

"P.S. I beg leave to add, we have in this place but one money paying master.
"*To W. A. Miles, Esq. &c. &c. &c.*"

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

TRUCK.

The Rev. J. Rees, a dissenting minister, observes,

A progress towards deterioration during a residence of nearly five years, which he attributes, in some measure, to the truck system; has frequently heard mothers and wives of weavers deplore the misery they endure by never being allowed to have any money in their pockets wherewith they could pay for the education of their children.

The Rev. — Dean, another dissenting minister,

Has repeatedly heard families of weavers complain of the truck system; he considers it to be highly injurious, and the cause of great distress. He considers that the men are held in terror, and afraid to speak.

Mr. Selwin, a baker, who has been in business in Chalford for twenty years, stated that

He has individually been injured as much as any one by the truck system. Before this system commenced, credit was very common, and he believed that a considerable quantity of cloth got into the China market before the work-people were paid their wages for working it up. He considers that the truck system takes away the trade of the general dealer altogether. There are four shopkeepers who have been compelled to give up in consequence. He further states, that weavers frequently come and say that that they can neither deal with nor pay *him* arrears; that he has heard them complain of the short weight and bad quality of the bread had at the truck shops.

Mr. Hopson, of Stroud, here stated, in corroboration of this circumstance, that

He has seen bread brought from Chalford Vale to be exhibited to the Magistrates of Stroud, and it was pronounced by them to be unfit for a dog to eat.

H. Lediard, a mason, at Chalford, states that

Every article, or nearly so, which the truckster supplies, is inferior from 10 to 15 per cent. In illustration of this he observed, that a man owed him some money for three years, and at last he was obliged to offer payment in goods, not having any money from his employer. These goods were supplied him from the truck shop, and were offered at the same price to witness as they were charged by the truckster. The articles consisted of tea and cheese; the tea was charged by the truckster 1*s.* 6*d.* the quarter pound, which witness could get of any fair dealer for 1*s.* 3*d.* The cheese was charged 9*d.* per pound, and witness declared he has cheese of the same quality in his own house, for which he only paid 7*d.* per pound. This witness also observed, that he considered all the blame must not be laid to the manufacturer, for that he is driven by the great competition in trade to resort to every means in his power to get his goods into the market at the lowest possible rate.

[This proves the mischief created by invidious competition among the manufacturers.]

Mr. Hopson and Mr. Lediard both agreed that

The truck system operates strongly on the owners of house property, inasmuch as the owner is obliged to take cloth and various other articles, even bread, bacon, tea, and sugar, for rent. Mr. Hopson says he himself has been frequently obliged to take to the amount of 50, 60, or 100 pounds worth of cloth at a time for rent and debts.

Mr. Lediard, the mason,

Owns about 30 houses, which he lets to weavers in the neighbourhood of Chalford; the rent used to be eight or nine guineas, but it has been lowering for the last four years, and the average rent is about four. The weavers can hardly earn money enough to support themselves, much less pay rent. The houses contain about three rooms and a kitchen, and one of the rooms in each house is built in the dimensions to contain two looms, namely, 16 feet by 14. There is a garden, greater or less, attached to each house. About 16 months ago he found that 400*l.* was due to him for rent, principally by weavers, and the rents are getting worse and worse. He now receives them weekly, because, if he was to allow a quarter's credit, he should get neither rent nor goods. For many years he had received rent in truck. When they were yearly tenants they paid in cloth; *now* they pay in bread or grocery, as they have no money. Sometimes, however, he takes 2*d.* or a few halfpence with the goods to make up a particular sum of rent, but this money is more frequently part of the wages of some boy or girl employed at other work. He is obliged to take groceries about two-pence or three-halfpence in the shilling dearer than he could purchase them at a general shop. He has a large family, which consumes these goods, but if he had to sell them, he would lose as much as three-pence in a shilling. He considers the truck system to be injurious to the weavers, on account of the high price they are obliged to pay. There is, moreover, no money in the district, and all classes of people suffer in proportion.

The relieving officer at Bisley, R. B. Constable,—

Has frequent opportunities of seeing the weavers' houses, which bespeak much wretchedness; has heard them complain of the lowness of wages, and that their earnings are eat out in truck before the piece can be completed. That they are much in debt to their masters; that they are then compelled to take out chains to work out an old debt, subsisting upon truck, and diminishing the debt by instalments of 2*s.* in a piece.

All the weavers whom he visits receive their wages in truck, and nineteen out of twenty complain of this system. He thinks that it induces pauperism; that it is impossible for a man who is paid in truck to lay by money for a rainy day, when he has no money given to him; they cannot lay by, for they can scarcely live—it is only a lingering existence.

Mr. Innell, shopkeeper and brewer at Chalford,—

Has been in trade for twenty years, and finds the truck system considerably injurious to him. In 1825 most of his customers were weavers, but he now has only two or three. He owns houses in the parish; one of his tenants is a weaver, and, on receiving the quarter's rent, it was paid 14*s.* in money and 7*s.* in truck. He is also a brewer, supplies the beer-shops; his trade has decreased one-half within these five years; it is common to exchange goods for beer (this was immediately assented to by all the weavers present), but he insists upon cash from the beer-shops in payment for his beer. A weaver named Robert Arnold considers that buying beer with truck it costs him 6*d.* instead of 3*d.* per quart; has often bought beer with pepper, sugar, candles, &c.; he is charged 8½*d.* per pound for sugar at a truck shop, but the beer-shop keeper will only allow him 7½*d.*

Samuel Damsell, the churchwarden of the parish of Bisley, stated that—

He was a malster, and general shopkeeper, and ironmonger; that he found the truck system injure his trade; he says there is very little business now done, and that little is done in truck. A few weavers in the room were asked by witness if there was ONE who paid in cash, and the reply was in the negative.

— Innell, an overseer and a butcher, states that—

Nearly half the parish of Bisley is excessively poor; he is only overseer for one-fourth of the parish, and he cannot receive the poor-rates from half the people in his district, as they have no money; does not know any parish so badly off as this. Considers it to be in the very worst of condition on account of the truck system. The goods are sold 2*d.* in a 1*s.* dearer than at other shops; is sure that the weavers are compelled to deal with the trucksters, as they would have *no* work given them if they did not; the weavers *are* paid in money, but it is understood and expected that they lay it out immediately on the truckster's premises.

He further states, that—

He keeps a general retail shop and also a beer-shop. The truck system injures him in both these trades; he has been in business upwards of 20 years, and has known three or four tradesmen obliged to shut up shop in consequence of the truck system. This remark applies only to the Oakridge district. It was decidedly *not* that they were undersold, but that they could get no customers to their shops. As a beer seller he has frequently been obliged to take truck, but he believes that in the Oakridge district truck is not so common as in the vales, because there *is a* circulation of *money* from Mr. Cripps, of Cirencester, who employs some of the weavers in that district, and always causes them to be paid in money. In the retail shop it is very common for weavers to bring bacon, cheese, and other goods to exchange them for such articles of consumption, or else, as they may require for their families. He further adds that he has taken truck frequently for coals, and makes no deduction from the trucksters' prices, except in cases where it is *too* flagrant and exorbitant. It was further stated by the same informant, that he has observed an alteration in the condition and appearance of the weavers for the last ten years; that theyhave been gradually sinking, which he attributes to the lowness of wages. He added that the spirit of the New Poor Law, which is to inculcate providence, cannot be fulfilled when men are paid in perishable articles.

Charles Hill, a shoemaker at Chalford, stated that—

He frequently makes shoes and boots for truck; made three pair last week, and is in the constant habit of doing so, for, if he did not, he should lose the greater part of his work. The truck shops, however, sell boots and shoes, which witness finds injurious to his trade. He makes for weavers; but the truck shoes are very bad, bought up at the London and Bristol slop shops; and some of them are 2*s.* or 3*s.* a pair dearer than witness would charge for them. The weavers, not liking these shoes, have brought him truck, and he has made for them, and he allows the weavers the same price for their articles as they are charged by the truckster, except in cases where the charge is too gross; for instance, he has had tobacco offered which he could not take at the truck price by 8*d.* a pound. The general articles of truck are sugar, tea, and cheese. The following is a comparison of price in these three articles:

	Truck.			General Dealer.		
	s.	*d.*		*s.*	*d.*	
Sugar . . .	0	9	per lb.	0	8	per lb.
Tea . . .	1	8¼	„	1	4¼	„
Cheese . . .	0	10	„	0	8	„

The money which he can obtain to go to market to purchase his leather, &c., comes from the agricultural people and others, not connected with the weavers. This informant also keeps a beer-shop; sells sometimes a pint or two of beer in a day, but must take truck for it. It is usual for weavers to pay for their beer *in truck*. When he finds himself overstocked with truck goods, he lays them by for domestic consumption. It is no use attempting to sell the goods, as no one would buy them; and, if they would, a loss must accrue, on account of their high charge. He also states, that it is a common thing for people to come from Cam, Nibley, Coaley, Uley, and Horsley, for work at Chalford, for which they take truck. Several of them join together and bring their pieces on a donkey, which is laden back with the truck goods for the different parties.

The result of the foregoing evidence proves not only the injury to the weavers, but also to others, owing to the truck system (that gangrene of an unhealthy state of trade). It is also proved, by the above accounts, that the respectable village shopkeeper feels the loss of his customers who work for the truck payer, and who are compelled to deal at the employer's counter—his trade is diminished. The truck-paid workmen have no money; no, not always money's worth, because the goods sometimes supplied to them will not fetch the price their masters have imposed upon them. Rents are paid in truck goods; shoemakers are paid in truck goods; in fact, the circulating medium in the truck regions are pounds of bacon, bread, and candles, instead of copper, gold, or silver.

The Truck system annihilates every principle of saving or economy—the goods must be used, or spoiled—and the working man can never by industry lay up a store to save himself from destitution and the workhouse.

It is proper to observe that few manufacturers adopt truck; but the great mischief is the certain tendency to reduce wages.

BEER SHOPS.

During my inquiries concerning the condition of the weavers, their habits, &c. &c., my attention has been frequently called, by various persons, to the injurious effects of the beer-shops, or, as they are termed, the "kidley winks." There is scarcely a factory which has not a beer-shop, or many beer-shops, in its immediate vicinity. If there is a spot more secluded than another in the parish, I generally expect to see a beer-shop in the midst of that seclusion.

In one place, Forest-Green, there is a small licensed public-house, wherein the drinking trade is not only carried on, but attached, and under the same roof, belonging to the same master, is a pawnbroker's shop—which is convenient for the customers, who, after pledging their healths, can pledge their coats.

The beer-shops beset the steps of the working man, and to expect that he has resolution to withstand the enticement of joining or mixing with his fellow-workmen or that he has the moral courage to withstand their ridicule if he should endeavour to abstain from the enticement, is to expect too much stoicism on his part. We are too apt to expect perfection from servants, and in judging their errors we ought to consider how far under similar circumstances we might have erred if placed in their positions. The labouring man has no resource to obtain amusement or relaxation of the mind, except through the dangerous medium of the beer-shops. The rich man has his club, the theatres, opera, and society, as a relaxation to his mind, but the poor mechanic or labouring man has only a turnpike road to walk in, or a beer-house to sit in. The men who earn high wages, such as grinders, needle-drillers, sawyers, and others, congregate in those places, and the greater portion of their wages is too frequently spent in drink, because no other resource is open for the employment or spending of that money; therefore, before we blame the working man and accuse him of drunkenness, which, sooner or later, plunges him in crime or want, I think it is the duty of society to encourage other habits by affording him means of mental enjoyment or healthy recreation. It is well observed by Dr. Channing that, people should be guarded against temptation to unlawful pleasures by furnishing the means of innocent ones. In every community there must be pleasures, relaxation, and means of agreeable excitement, and if innocent are not furnished, resort will be had to criminal. Man was made to enjoy as well as to labour, and the state of society should be adapted to this principle of human nature. Men drink to excess very often to shake off depression or to satisfy the restless thirst for agreeable excitement, and these motives are excluded in a cheerful community.

Small allotments, for instance, will induce many good men to keep from the beer-shop, who, by working in their garden, not only save sixpence from the beer-house, but bestow sixpenny-worth of labour on their land; so, in fact, while saving sixpence, they would be realizing a shilling. Mr. Hone, late governor of the Stroud Union workhouse, considers that the allotment system would be beneficial in breaking up the injurious effects of the beer-shops—knows that it has had a good effect in Sussex.

Then, again, I never see those amusements once so prevalent on village greens:

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Beer-shops.

there is no cricket-club among the peasantry, there are no athletic sports, such as foot-ball matches, wrestling-parties, or foot-races; the innocent recreations which formerly gave such zest and energy among the younger portions of the labouring community, are lost; but they might be advantageously revived, if patronised by persons of higher rank and station in various districts.

There is a veil of privacy over a beer-shop more than over the tap-room of a licenced public-house; and it is this feeling of security that so frequently renders the beer-shop the rendezvous for the dissolute, who too frequently enlist the idle. It is in these retired houses that depredations are concocted; and the idle man, who has not yet become vicious, there learns by example that a rogue's shilling is sooner made than an honest man's. The lavish manner in which the wages of crime are ever scattered, and the careless, boisterous, and reckless bearing of the guilty frequently break down the better feelings of the idle frequenter of the beer-shops, who, in order to enjoy the excitement produced by the society of men apparently, free from care, and always supplied with money, ultimately joins the gang, and turns a thief.*

I here subjoin a communication I had the pleasure of receiving from Mr. Charles Sevill, upon the subject of beer-shops. He is practically acquainted with the district, and, therefore, I presume his opinion will have the greater weight.

Beer-Shops; their effects.—Drunkenness.—Teetotalism.

"Sir, "*Burleigh, February 4th,* 1839.

Mr. Seville on Beer-Shops.

"When the Beer-Shop Bill was introduced, I understood its principal object was to benefit the lower classes of society; that it would also check the brewers' monopoly, and, perhaps, promote the agricultural interest, by the increased consumption of barley. It may have effected the latter object, but I believe it is admitted by all parties that it has failed in the the other two—at least that, although the public-house property of the brewers has lessened in value, yet their monopoly, as far as the sale of beer goes, has rather increased than diminished. In the borough of Stroud, and particularly in those parishes where the distress is aggravated by the loss of the regular orders which the East India Company used to send out for the manufacture of woollen goods for the China market, the effect has been, and is, decidedly bad. It is not that the men are particularly given to drinking, but, where the wives and children are in want of bread, every farthing ought to be carried home. This observation is made with reference to the weavers especially.

"One deplorable effect, which I have heard of rather than seen, is, that women are given to drinking; eight or ten of them sometimes join, and take possession of a beer-shop kitchen, where they will run riot, in a manner almost peculiar to women, when the moral boundary is once broken down. Before their orgies are over, it is ten to one but some men go into the house; and, as they never leave the scene of their *first* debauch till the shades of night will, in some measure, conceal them, their *second* cannot be matter of surprise.

"These very women would not commit such excesses in a *real public house*. I don't mean to say that they would not drink at all, but they could not plan these private parties with the chance of having it so much to themselves, if it were not for the multiplicity of beer-shops.

"The effect on the Hand-loom Weavers and other operatives, not excluding the agricultural population, is decidedly bad. A man who weaves in his own cottage often spends three or four days before he can get a "chain," or "warp," from a clothier, and it is constantly happening that thirty or forty of them meet at a factory, and stand about the counting-house door for hours at a time, and, at last, only five or six will get any work or receive any wages. It is no wonder that men thus brought together should talk over and lament their fallen condition. They cannot go many hundred yards before "*to be*," or "*not to be drunk on the premises*," stares them in the face. Some that have been paid their wages, either in money or goods, are almost sure to go in, and, the threshold once passed, they cannot come out without having lessened the miserable pittance they ought to have taken home to their families; for the weavers generally marry very young, and are almost sure to have families; from this circumstance: their intercourse with the female sex generally begins with the first impulse of nature, and they hardly ever marry their first love unless she prove to be in the "family-way;" but, when this is the case, they do generally marry before the child is born. The consequence is, that almost every poor man has a family of children.

"This loose system of morality extends to almost every class of the manufacturing population in this district, and I am inclined to think that the same cause, the same OPPORTUNITY, lead to the same effects in other manufacturing districts.

"The OPPORTUNITY which beer-shops afford must, of course, tend to increase this immorality.

"My decided conviction of beer-shops is, that thousands of women and children are constantly suffering through the temptation which every roadside presents—at least, where there are ten houses, one of them is almost sure to be a beer-shop.

"In rural districts their effects are still worse—they become (particularly in detached lonely places) the nurseries for poachers, thieves, and prostitutes.

* During my inquiries under the Constabulary Force Commission, I asked various thieves of all ages, in different prisons, what first induced them to be criminal, and in nine cases out of ten the pithy reply was, "Drink and bad company."

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. Miles*, Esq.

Beer-shops.

"I could say much more against the beer-shops, but the public seem to be so unanimous on the subject, that it is hardly necessary for me to do so; yet, having heard it suggested that it would be better to throw the trade completey open, for any one to sell beer, I cannot help saying that this would be going from bad to worse. Beer ought not to be sold in any house that the excise-officers had not a right to enter; and perhaps the better way would be to allow any shopkeepers to sell it, who took out other licenes. But I would not allow the sale of *one* licensed article to be sufficient—for instance, tobacco—to cover the sale of beer; for, although the law might not, and I think ought not, to allow of its being drunk on the premises, yet the law would probably be evaded. By licensing the sale of beer to shops which sold tea, coffee, &c., the parties doing so would have some property and character at stake; besides, the number and variety of characters going in and out of their shops would be the best check to secret drinking on the premises.

"*Teetotalism.*—I know but little on this head. Some laughable stories are told about it in this neighbourhood, but still I know some instances where it has had a good effect, and, upon the whole, I would rather say a good word than a bad one on the subject, though not to the extent of becoming a disciple myself.

"I am, &c.,

"*To William Augustus Miles, Esq.*" (Signed) "Samuel Sevill."

Rev. J. Burder on Beer-Shops.

The Rev. John Burder, Dissenting Minister at Stroud, concurs in opinion with Mr. Sevill as to the injurious tendency of beer-shops. He also makes his remarks concerning teetotalism, which are fully confirmed by the change produced by it in Wales, &c., the advantages enjoyed at Witney. Mr. Hooper, of Eastington, a manufacturer, also bears witness to the beneficial effects of abstinence among his labourers. The following is the letter of the Rev. John Burder relative to beer-shops, and also to the general character of the working-classes. There is a remark in it to which I call your attention, namely, "It is lamentable that so many people should be out of work, while so many works of public utility continue to be desiderata." The Rev. Mr. Burder is also of opinion that Mr. Buckingham's plan would be beneficial, namely, that good wide promenades should be attached to every town (I should add, a "play-field" as well).

"Sir, "*Stroud.*

"The most prolific source of evil here is drunkenness, and the number of beer-shops greatly augments the evil. Yet I should be sorry to go back to the old law respecting licences. I think that the whole system of beer-shops, public-houses, and inns, requires revision. I would have the names of a larger number of housekeepers requisite for obtaining and renewing a licence, and would have the licence higher.

"I would make it so difficult to get a new licence, that the number of such houses should gradually be brought down to very few. The law should be more strictly enforced as to hours and as to drunkenness in the street.

"So deeply, Sir, am I impressed with a conviction of the amazing mass of misery which is occasioned by drink, that for three years past I have abstained altogether from all intoxicating drink, chiefly for the purpose of encouraging those persons to abstain, who, if they drink a little, are sure to drink much. I have seen many instances of the happiest result of total abstinence in persons who were ever drunkards, and I am persuaded that the prevalence of this plan would be of incalculable benefit to the community.*

"It has often occurred to me that the Guardians of the Poor, in connexion with the Trustees of Roads, might be authorized to employ idle hands in making, repairing, and cleansing roads, trimming hedges, &c. The roads hereabouts are wretched, and there are very few footpaths which are at all usable. This is a serious evil to working persons and children, who pass daily along the roads, and whose shoes are not water-tight.

"I wish also that Mr. Buckingham's plan could be realized, of having good wide promenades attached to every town.

"It is lamentable that so many people should be out of work, while so many works of public utility continue to be desiderata.

"I will only add, that the poor people of this neighbourhood, on account of the admirable patience they have manifested under great sufferings, deserve all the attention which Government can give them.

"The very circumstance of a Commission having been appointed to inquire into their condition is a gratifying proof of humane intentions; and allow me, in conclusion, to express the satisfaction I feel that they should have chosen a gentleman so well qualified as yourself to assist them in their investigations.

"I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

"*Will. Augustus Miles, Esq.*, (Signed) "John Burder.
&c. &c. &c."

Mr. Gough on Beer-Shops.

The following observations concerning the beer-shops and the effect of them, especially in the manufacturing vicinities, show in strong colours their evil tendency, even upon young girls, women, and children. These remarks are given

* In corroboration of the opinion of the Rev. J. Burder, I refer to the evidence under the Welch and Witney districts, concerning the beneficial results of the "Total Abstinence System." Also *Vide* p. 470, evidence of Mr. Hooper.

to me by Mr. Gough, who is well acquainted with the district, and to whom the commission is much indebted for the most persevering and unwearied services. Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Beer-shops.

"This country perhaps was never inflicted with a greater national curse than the present beer-shop system; and, though it is possible for the Government to repeal or modify the laws which allow such a system to be in operation, it can never eradicate the mischief which it has effected by superinducing habits of idleness, drunkenness, and dishonesty, among the labouring and poorer classes of society.

Mr. Gough on Beer-Shops.

"Though the cry is universally heard of low wages, poverty, and starvation, yet drunkenness is quite as prevalent, if not more so, than when that cry was not so general. The facilities for obtaining drink are so great, and the temptation so undeniable to a poor man who has sufficient pence in his pocket to pay for it, or whether he has not, provided he has money's worth, which he can leave in lieu, that nothing short of an absolute repeal can restore even a partial return to the habits of former years, when these facilities did not exist, and when beer could only be obtained at some respectable licensed public-house.

"One of the greatest evils attached to the system is, that many of them, especially in this manufacturing district, are kept by persons connected in some way or other with the manufactories in the neighbourhood; several are kept by weavers. These houses have in many instances chandlers' shops attached, at which the workmen are induced to deal; the consequence is, that the money which ought to have been spent in articles of necessity for the family is too often exhausted in tippling, no man ever going to the shop for groceries, &c., without having at least a pint of beer, when, if any company should be in jolly mood, he is prevailed upon to spend both his time and his money with them, neglectful of everything except his present gratification. Many a working man has to date his loss of work to this practice, which is too often encouraged and winked at by the parties who keep these houses; though they may be in the confidence of their employers, and know also the ultimate consequence to the working man.

"These shops also afford facilities for the putting off of truck goods, provided a certain part be had out in drink. They are also little unlicensed pawnshops, where the game-bag of the poacher, the petty purloinings of juvenile thieves, the watch of the artisan or labourer, and the sugar and candles of the truckster, are alike receivable; and from this system a considerable profit is obtained; a sacrifice, however, must be made by the party selling, which becomes doubly severe, inasmuch as he must drink out part of the exchange.

"They also harbour the worst of characters; and, being in too many instances situated in secluded spots, all manner of vice is generated and planned, and every bad feeling of the human heart finds its hideous correspondent and counterpart.

"At the beer-shops the wages of the workmen are often paid on a Saturday evening; and, when it is considered that on that day the mills are closed at four o'clock in the afternoon, sufficient time and opportunity are afforded them for indulging in drink. A pint they are expected to spend when they receive their wages,—more they always take, and thus the young especially are trained up to habits which grow fast upon them, and, in the majority of cases, never leaves them, or even retrogrades, till they are either become habitual tipplers or confirmed drunkards. This plan, however, is not so general as it was a few years ago; the manufacturers, having become alive to the evil, have done much to remove it, and it is now confined to a very few cases.

"It may also be stated that factory-women and young girls receive their money at these houses, and may often be seen in a state of intoxication, and using language disgusting to human nature, and disgraceful to their sex. Many of these females can take their share of drink with the men, and will often go home sober when the man is overcome by its effects. The evils consequent on this system, where young persons of both sexes are brought to the beer-house to drink in company, and to drink to excess, as is often the case, may easily be anticipated, and cannot be too strongly reprehended. Thus it is that so many factory-girls are sly, if not open prostitutes, and misery is entailed upon heads of families for which nothing can make amends.

"In short, the beer-shop system has not one redeeming feature; the voice, the universal voice, of the country is, 'Do away with the beer-shops, or the beer-shops will do away with the moral, the social, and industrious habits of the working classes.' The system affords a premium for crime, and is an incubus on the industry of the country. In these houses feelings of animosity and revenge are generated towards the employers of labour. Thefts and robberies, and every description of petty depredation, or matured crime, are concocted; the domestic comfort and happiness of the labourer's family are sapped and destroyed; they are schools where every latent vice matures itself in; the high road to degradation as a nation, and of ruin to any civilized and industrious people."

Coaley.

The Rev. J. Bellingham, Minister of Coaley, severely deprecates the beer-shops, and the dissolute condition of his parishioners.—

"It ought," he observes, "to be borne in mind, that the poverty of the class whose interests are now sought to be promoted arises in a great measure from habits of personal intemperance, and though, doubtless, the introduction of machinery some years ago must have greatly tended to depress the honest and sober workman, yet it is a positive fact, that it matters not, in most cases, what extent of wages may be earned. The majority will, as opportunity allows, spend the greatest portion in the licensed houses for drunkards and dissipated wretches. To my own knowledge, the father of a family in the parish has, together with three children, earned four guineas per week, and still the whole family have been in the most abject condition possible, entirely through habits of drunkenness.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Beer-shops.

"In the majority of cases, both as regards the weavers, as well as other manufacturing workmen and agricultural labourers, the poverty which they plead is superinduced by their fatal propensity to strong drink, which is indulged to a most lamentable and heart-rending excess; and the facilities which the existing laws have continued to afford, ever since the period of their enactment, to the idle, the drunken, and the debauched, will, it is most seriously to be apprehended, swell the amount of the nation's responsibility. The spirit and beer-houses are so many haunts of vice and wickedness, schools where incipient vice is matured to crime and infamy, and eternal ruin. Would to God, they might be suppressed from one end of the land to the other.—Would that our rulers may at length be convinced of the irreparable injury that the nation has sustained in the prevalence of these sinks of all that is horrible, and vile, and devilish. If I could possibly compress into the compass of a single sheet all the instances which I have known since the period I have, by the mercy of God, been admitted into the number of the labourers in his vineyard, I am sure it would in the highest degree confound and astonish the senses of any well-ordered mind,—instances in which individuals have been entirely ruined, and families have been famished and driven to desperation."

Randwick.

The Minister of Randwick, the Rev. J. Elliott, very forcibly observes that—

Beer-shops are an unmixed evil, (not curable by any legislation short of *entire repeal*,) fruitful in immorality, and consequent poverty. It is lamentable that their produce to the revenue should be retained at the cost of public morals. He believes the *entire repeal* of this measure, and its deficit to the revenue laid upon newspapers, would do much to relieve the poor. Teetotalism, is one of those ephemeral expedients which he would neither check nor encourage; defective, however, in principle, inasmuch, that it sets a private compact upon higher ground than the Christian obligation by which all are bound to deny intemperance and live soberly.

Nailsworth.

Anthony Fewster, of Nailsworth, observes that—

Beer-shops are, without doubt, detrimental to the morals of the lower classes, and, therefore, should be dealt with by the legislature. Still, it would be highly inexpedient to fall back upon the old system of monopoly. Beer, should be sold "not to be drunk on the premises," at a very low licence duty. Many of the working classes have, much to their credit, become teetotalers, which in all cases has tended to their social and moral improvement. Teetotalism, he is sorry to say, is on the wane at present in this district, the cause of which he attributes to the fact that few persons in the superior classes of society lend it their influence.

Stanley.

The Rev. Jeremiah Smith, Minister of King's Stanley, observes that—

The beer-shops on the present plan must be stopped. He says, he is an advocate for the free sale of beer, but not to be drunk on the premises, nor within a certain distance of the house where it is bought, except in the purchaser's own house. He states this, because he has observed beer-retailers erect sheds near their own houses, where their customers sit and drink, and the only way to prevent this, is by not allowing it to be drunk within a given distance.

Painswick.

The Minister of Painswick, in deprecating the evil of beer-shops, considers that—

They have done much to lower the moral feelings of the poorer classes in England. He states that, in the beer-house a poor man will find a comfortable fire and plenty of companions, whereas at home he may have but scanty fuel and noisy children. Thus, a man, in passing daily to and fro, is often tempted to enter, and to drink till ultimately his visits and his potations become habitual.

He moreover observes that—

These houses give credit to a greater extent than duly licensed houses, which is another great temptation to a poor man. When, says he, there were only public-houses, the number was less; the persons who kept them were respectable; they would not give that credit which the beer-houses do, and they did not offer such facilities and attractions to the poor man. Added to this, the number of beer-houses that there are, the unfrequented places in which many are placed, the law which limits them to be closed at night is almost useless, for it would require a regular police to go round the country to enforce that law. It may well be conceived what favourable places for plotting evil and carrying it on are these beer-houses rendered.

For his own part he states, that he is convinced that no material good can ever be expected to be done to the country while they remain; and he believes, that many a family, once respectable, has reason to bemoan the passing of that bill, as one of the greatest evils brought to their doors. Only place youself, he continues, in the situation of a poor man to see how great the temptations of such places must necessarily be to him; and when a father of a family once takes to drinking, he becomes at once a most thoroughly selfish being—all ties of family are forgotten—wife and children are neglected—every thing indeed is sacrificed to obtain drink!

It would doubtless, therefore, be a great blessing to remove the temptation to drunkenness out of the way of the poor people, and if they were thus taught to look for happiness at home, instead of seeking it in the beer-shops, there would be (putting religion out of the present question) some prospect of their becoming anxious for the education of their children.

The Rev. W. Cockin, jun., of Hampton, observes— Hampton.

One step which would tend greatly to the moral improvement of the poor would be the putting down of beer-houses. They will be found in every direction, placed at the very gates, or even within the court of manufacturers. Besides this bad influence upon the more steady and industrious classes, their general effect is most injurious, being placed frequently in the most retired spots, as receptacles for the most vicious and abandoned characters. These remarks do not, of course, extend to those houses licensed to sell beer *not* to be drunk on the premises. These are as good as the others are bad, because they prevent a man's sitting down, and drinking cup after cup, till he is almost insensibly led into habits of intoxication, and, on the contrary, lead him to buy at once what he thinks sufficient, and to take that home to his family, like any other part of their provisions.

Captain Slade, of Uley, in reference to the effect of high wages, unless there is a higher standard of the moral condition, observes that— Uley.

Mr. Shepherd, of Uley, gave great wages to boys, as much as 14*s.* and 15*s.* a-week, and the result was, that they were saucy, drunken, and abusive. The mills of Mr. Shepherd, of Uley, cost 60,000*l.*, and were sold for 2,300*l.* They are now converted into iron-mills; the workmen earn from 26*s.* to 30*s.* a-week, and he states that their habits are drunken and immoral—they never save one farthing. He stated a case of a man at these mills who owned that he earned 26*s.* a-week, and yet begged, the other morning, twopence of Captain Slade, to purchase a glass of beer.

The Overseer of Uley confirmed the opinion of Captain Slade, and said that—

On the morning I saw him, two of the men working at these iron-mills passed his door in a state of intoxication at nine o'clock in the morning.

The same remark concerning wages is exemplified at Nymphsfield, among the sawyers, who work for Mr. Mills; they are improvident, and spend much in beer; they can earn 30*s.* a-week, with little labour; they work when they choose, and then retire to the beer-shop. There is one man, a superior and skilful sawyer, he can earn 3*l.* a-week, but he never has a farthing in his pocket. The population is about 800, and 30 out of that number are sawyers. Improvident habits of Sawyers at Nymphsfield.

When trade was better, the parish was inhabited by many weavers; but they have removed, and sought other labour.

Mr. Hooper, of Eastington, who attends to the welfare and good conduct of his work-people, Eastington Workmen paid on Saturday *Morning*.

Objects to the custom of paying two or three weavers with a large note and leaving them to share it, "or break it," at a public house. He pays his men on *Saturday morning before breakfast* instead of Saturday night. He considers that beer-shops tend to demoralize the working classes. He further states that—he has a weaver now working for him who was a noted drunkard. He reduced his family to rags and wretchedness. This man about twelve months since joined the Temperance Society. A beer-shop keeper exasperated at losing so good a customer sued him for a debt he owed. Mr. Hooper, believing his workman to be reformed, paid the debt and costs. This man is now completely altered and amended; he is remarkably steady and is tolerably independent; his family and home are now respectable. Mr. Hooper also observes that—factory wives are generally slatterns and bad managers; they neglect their children; the house is seldom well regulated; the domestic hearth has no endearments; and the husband goes gloomy and sulky to the beer-shop.

Mr. Peter Playne says—

There are many beer-shops in the neighbourhood, and they are the greatest evils; men get into these houses idling their time and spending their money which ought to go to their families. Beer-shops deprecated.

Mr. Charles Stanton of Upfield Lodge observes that—

Beer-shops have been injurious to the morals of the district and have induced a system of congregating of an evening more than was usual at the public-house.

Mr. Harris, a manufacturer at Dursley, states that—

The beer-shops are the *greatest curse and most infernal evil* that ever befell this country, they are nests of vice.

Mr. Long, a manufacturer at Wootton, says that—

Some years ago the beer-shops were in great request, but now money is more scarce and their attendance less frequent.

Mr. Hone, late governor of the Stroud Union, states that—

The beer-houses are the vice and curse of the country; houses of this sort are open in lone places to which people resort, and where the love of drink grows upon them to such a degree that they remain tippling till they have drained their pockets, and then they pawn their clothes. There is a beer-shop at Forest Green where pawnbroking is carried on under the same roof.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

BEER-SHOPS DEPRECATED.

Mr. Cam, a manufacturer at Cam, states that—

The beer-shops are a very serious injury to the neighbourhood, as a great deal of mischief is concocted in them.

Enoch Hunt, at Inchbrook, publican—

Does not think the factory people drink much now, as they have not the means; but in better times, among the weavers, felling-day was generally a tippling day.

The parties who cry out mostly against beer-shops are the clothiers; they have an idea that they are receptacles for thieves and slingers, &c.

It was stated by the Supervisor of Excise, at Stroud, that—

Formerly the weaver was more addicted to drunkenness than at present, because wages were better and *money* more easily earned; but they are frequently led at present into intoxication by the custom of going to a beer-house to receive their wages; he has, in the execution of his duties been frequently unable to get through the mass of them standing about the kitchen and passages not only of beer-shops, but of public-houses on the days when they are paid. The payment of the weaver is not confined to one particular house, but they are changed from one to another; the reason of this he states to be the landlord's taking turn with one another for the custom of the weavers on the paying days, and in return, the landlord, whose house they attend, provides *change* for the men or for the employer. It frequently happens that the landlord may have a direct interest, or be concerned in the factory as a workman or mechanic.

Many of the beer-shops keep chandler's shops also.

He further states that—

It often happens, in reference to payment at beer-shops and public-houses, that the landlord has a cheque sent him by the manufacturer for—say 10*l*., 20*l*., or 30*l*., which the landlord cashes in order to enable the manufacturer to pay his workpeople. This cheque is sometimes held for a week or a fortnight to accommodate the manufacturer's account at the Bank.

Mr. John Skelton, the sheriff's officer for the Stroud district, says—

He has had many executions against beer-house keepers; he thinks the beer-houses are great nuisances; there would not be half the distress in the families of the poor if they did not exist, they are great temptations to the poor man. A man cannot go one hundred yards from his home without coming to a "kidley wink;" if he has no money in his pocket, he can get drink if he has money's worth. The masters of these houses take anything in pawn or purchase.

It is said that in Chalford where no money is ever paid, but truck is given, the men pay for their drink in candles, bacon, and groceries.

In conclusion I beg to refer to the subject of the "Total Abstinence System" under the Welsh Report, and also under the Witney Report.

The following tables refer to the public-houses and beer-shops in the Stroud district, a manufacturing district. I also subjoin a return from Cirencester, embracing an agricultural district, together with the population to each parish, and it will be seen that the proportion of public-houses and beer-shops is two-thirds more on the population in the manufacturing district than in Cirencester, which is an agricultural district.

It will also be seen in the 3rd table that out of 366 beer-shops in the Stroud district, 55 of that number are kept by persons connected with the clothing trade.—

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

BEER-SHOPS.

STATEMENT of the PUBLIC-HOUSES and BEER-SHOPS within the STROUD DISTRICT, up to the 5th July, 1838.

PARISH.	Population.	Public-Houses.	Number of Beer-Shops without Chandlers' Shops attached.	Number of Beer-Shops with Chandlers' Shops attached.	Total Number of Beer-Houses.
Arlingham	744	2	3	..	3
Avening	2,396	2	11	..	11
Brookthrupp	193	..	1	..	1
Bisley	5,896	15	28	7	35
Brimpsfield	382	2	1	..	1
Cranham	394	1	3	..	3
Cowley	323	2	..	..	..
Dunsbourn	111	2	1	..	1
Eastington	715	2	19	4	23
Fretherne	224	..	2	..	2
Frampton	1,055	1	6	1	7
Frocester	414	1	..	..	..
Horsley	3,690	10	26	5	31
Hampton	5,114	20	36	2	38
Haresfield	611	..	2	..	2
Longney	453	..	1	2	3
Miserdine	441	3	..	..	..
Moreton Valence	324	..	3	1	4
Painswick	4,099	8	21	5	26
Pitchcombe	224	2	2	1	3
Rodborough	2,141	3	14	2	16
Randwick	1,031	1	6	..	6
Stroud	8,607	27	48	20	68
Stonehouse	2,469	5	22	6	28
King Stanley	2,438	3	20	3	23
Leonard Stanley	942	1	5	4	9
Saul	443	1	4	..	4
Salperton	216	2	..	1	1
Standish	536	1	2	..	2
Upton St. Leonard's	898	2	..	2	2
Wheatenhurst	423	1	2	..	2
Woodchester	885	1	7	3	10
Witcombe	174	1	..	..	..
Winstone	164	..	..	1	1
Total	49,202	122	296	70	366

The average number of beer-shops, within the last 5 years is 392
The present year 366

26

Decrease 6½ per cent.

(Signed) HENRY EVANS,
Supervisor of Stroud District, Gloucester Collection.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Beer-shops.

Statement of Public Houses and Beer Shops in Cirencester District, up to 5th July, 1838

Parish.	Population.	Public Houses.	Number of Cider and Beer Shops.
Ashton Keynes	915	3	3
Ampney Crucis	599	1	2
Ampney St. Peter's	180	2	1
Avening	2,396	4	6
Badgendon	167	1	..
Bibury	338	1	2
Barnsley	318	1	..
Cricklade St. Sampson	1,197	5	5
Cricklade St. Mary	445	1	3
Coates	343	2	..
Cherrington	251	1	..
Cirencester	5,420	33	15
Colesbourne	252	1	..
Chedworth	1,026	2	4
Daglingworth	239	..	2
Kemble	426	..	1
Leigh	355	..	2
Minety	585	3	1
North Cerney	622	1	2
Oaksey	494	..	1
Poulton	368	2	1
Purton	1,714	2	4
Rodmarton	369	..	1
South Cerney	980	3	8
Somerford Keynes	392	1	1
Siddington	409	1	..
Stratton	468	1	4
Tetbury	2,939	16	5
Withington	743	1	2
Total	24,260	89	76

Average number of beer-shops within the last 5 years . 76
In the present year 76

(Signed) James Skinner,
Supervisor.

An Account of Beer-Houses within the Stroud District, which are kept by Weavers, and by Persons who are employed in Clothing Mills other than Weavers.

Parish.	Beer-Houses kept by Weavers.	Beer Houses kept by Persons employed in Mills, other than Weavers.
Bisley	1	2
Horsley	3	1
Hampton	4	1
Frampton	1	..
Pamswick	1	4
Rodboro	5	1
Randwick	7	1
Stonehouse	1	..
Stroud	6	5
Standish	..	1
Leonard Stanley	1	2
King Stanley	3	3
Woodchester	1	..
Total	34	21

Sir,—The above is a correct account.

I am

Your humble servant,

Stroud 18*th August*, 1838.

Henry Evans,
Supervisor, Stroud District.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

EMBEZZLEMENT.

EMBEZZLEMENT OR SLINGING.

Embezzlement, or Slinging, as it is provincially called, is common in Gloucestershire.

The manufacturers look upon it as a certain deduction from profit, though uncertain as to amount; and there the matter ends.

If the manufacturers would subscribe and employ police men throughout the county, or active constables possessed of local knowledge, most of the receivers would be in a short time outrooted.

Many of the old weavers look upon the embezzlement of a "*vew* ends" as their peculiar perquisite; so common was the practice.

The dealers in slinge act with so much cunning and precaution, that it is difficult to detect and convict them; it is usual for them to purchase a small lot of wool, merely for the purpose of having an invoice to produce in case their premises should be searched. In cases where slingers have been convicted, the law directs that the condemned wool, consisting of every sort and quality, as well as waste, should be sold; and these slingers always endeavour to purchase slinge at any cost; their object is to possess themselves of a bill of sale, so that, in case of detection at any future time, they can always account for the possession of slinge, provided it does not exceed the quantity mentioned in the bill. I, therefore, suggest that it would be more advisable to burn all condemned wool, rather than allow it to become a pretext for future fraud.

These receivers live in remote districts, carrying on some ostensible calling, and are well known to the weavers; the price of the stolen material varies according to the necessities of the slinger; I have known instances where slinge worth 7*s.* a pound has been sold for 10*d.*, and on its being remarked to a weaver whether that was the usual price, he said the slinger must be a fool, and did not know his trade.

It is almost impossible to trace the various means through which slinge comes into bulk, but I have noticed that near every factory there are beer-shops, which, from the general character that these houses bear, they are frequently considered to be the rendezvous of slingers.

In some cases I have observed small cake and apple shops to be open near the factories, and I much doubt whether they may not be inducements for children to barter at them whatever yarn they can contrive to thieve.

To such an extent has slinging been carried on, that there are many persons in various parts of the district who have been small clothiers, now retired from business, and who, it is notorious, made their means by slinging.

The conveyors of slinge from place to place are generally children and women. The time of removing it is by daylight, as the officer has no power to stop and search them till after sunset: thus we trace the pernicious effects of slinging upon the rising generation as well as the defect in the present law.

Inactivity of Parish Constables.

The non-detection of such an organised system of pilfering must be attributed to the inefficiency and the inertness of parish constables, who are all of them aware of the notoriety of the fact, but take no means to prevent it.

Police.

About two years ago a subscription was entered into, and two officers were appointed to a district extending about 20 miles, including the parishes of Hampton, Horsley, Avening, Woodchester, and Rodborough; their powers extend over the county. Two officers were likewise appointed at Stroud; one is appointed at Ebley, and one at Stonehouse. The officers of the Hampton district are from the London force, and it is only lately that they have been able to obtain proper knowledge of the organised system of slinging. They have recently secured two notorious slingers—one at Hampton, and the other a desperate character at Nailsworth, who had been once transported for the offence, sent to the hulks, and let loose again upon society by having his sentence remitted, besides having been at other times twice convicted in heavy penalties.

These slingers carry on their trade with unblushing effrontery, as will appear by the following anecdote:—A notorious slinger, named Hester Clark, was convicted about 10 years ago in the penalty of 20*l.*; the magistrate, imprudently, took as security a bill of exchange to that amount from a third person on her part; the woman decamped, and, on returning a day or two after the date of the bill had transpired, the magistrate sent her to prison for non-payment of the fine; she, however, pleaded that the bill was given in payment, and brought an action against the magistrate, which was tried at Gloucester, but the verdict was in

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

favour of the magistrate: these proceedings cost him from 80*l.* to 100*l.*, and this loss the manufacturers allowed him to pay out of his own pocket.

Another instance of litigation occurred on the part of a slinger named Evans, in whose house slinge, or stolen property, was discovered to the amount of 300*l.* or 400*l.*; he appealed against the conviction, but it was confirmed.

EMBEZZLEMENT.

I subjoin the evidence of the serjeant of police relative to the subject of "slinging:"—

System of Embezzlement.

"At the first commencement the officers were not aware of the system of slinging, but, having become acquainted, have found several cases; has three now under hand; one of these cases is by a collector of embezzled goods, and carries on a regular trade at Pinfarthings, in the parish of Hampton, and has done so for 25 years. She and her daughter carry a bag, and collect at the weavers' houses; considers that slinging is carried on among the weavers, and that it is principally done in the day-time; that it is removed to small manufacturers and others, who either buy it and make it up for themselves or for the collectors.

"The slinge is generally spun into abb and warp, and made up into flannel; considers there is an organized system of slinging going on, and that, if an opportunity occurs, the generality of weavers would not let it escape. It is usual to employ persons who have neither house, home, or furniture, to carry the slinge when in bulk, and is mostly removed before sun-set, they being afraid of night, in consequence of its suspicious appearance.

Removed by daylight.

"There have been seven cases of slinging in the neighbourhood of Hampton, Woodchester, and Stroud; the greatest number of cases in Hampton; thinks there are more receiving-houses about Hampton Common than anywhere else.

"Witness considers the beer-shops are great curses and the causes of crime; has had 38 convictions during his time, but has no proof that they are connected with slinging; knows that some of them are receptacles of bad characters."

Rural Police.

The evidence of many manufacturers and other persons tends to show that a well-arranged and communicating rural police would be desirable, as it would check slinging, and render the transfer of stolen property more difficult.

Of the utility and benefit of a rural police I have already afforded much evidence to the Constabulary Force Commission; and I conceive that it would be attended with much advantage in Gloucestershire.

Transfer of slinge to the North.

The transfer of slinge is carried on to a considerable extent. There is a system among the dealers in slinge of exchanging stolen property from one district to another, in order to elude the possibility of a manufacturer swearing to his wool, not only in this country, but also from Wiltshire and Somersetshire. There is an active constable of Wootton, viz., Charles Cogswell, by trade a saddler, who has traced this organized system, but who does not continue his exertions owing, as he says, to the apathy of the manufacturers, who do not reward him for his trouble to protect their property. It is his opinion that slinging is still carried on to the same extent as ever; and considers that, as the manufacturers take no pains to prevent slinging, they have no right to complain.

Flockers deal in slinge.

Slinge is even sent into Yorkshire in large quantities under the name of flight and waste: within the last four months a flock-maker in this district sold in Yorkshire, by public auction, 140 bags, which I am informed realized 1000*l.* Another flocker, who keeps a small mill, was in Yorkshire at the same time, and sold three tons weight of similar material. To such an extent is the slinge-trade carried, that cloth can be purchased cheaper in Bristol than the cost of production at a manufacturing establishment. The Bristol market is in consequence the worst market, for there the manufacturer has to compete with his own stolen material. Bristol is also conveniently situated for the slinge-dealers in Wilts, Somerset, and Gloucestershire.

It is requisite, in explanation of the above statements, to offer some particulars of the flockers' trade.

In almost every process in the manufacturing of cloth there is a waste of wool, which comes under the following denominations:—

1. Hard ends, from the sorter.
2. Waste, from the spinner.
3. Waste, from the weaver.
4. Millpuff from the gig mill and stock.
5. Shearflock, from the cutters.
6. Flight, from the scribblers and carders, the mixture of all the above, and the sweeping of the factory.

These wastes are sold by the manufacturers to a set of men called flockers, who strongly compete with each other in the purchase of this material, and who, owing to the mixture of the different sorts, can always account for the possession of any slinged material, so that, under a lawful trade, they can with impunity carry on

an illegal one; the general character of the flocker is, that he will purchase wool from any person under any circumstances, as indiscriminately as a marine-store dealer.

These flockers generally court the company of those servants engaged in the factories who, by reason of their situation, are enabled to throw in some good wool to the flight and waste which the flocker may have purchased of the manufacturer.

Proposed amendments in the "Slinge" Act.

By 17 George III. c. 56, s. 10, 11, and 12, the police can only search a suspected person carrying slinge after sun-setting and before sun-rising. The consequence is, that slinge is carried with impunity in the day-light by women and children. The power of searching should not be limited as to hours.

The penalty is 20*l.* for the first offence, or one month's imprisonment. A slinger prefers selling his liberty for one month to paying 20*l.*, so he is locked up;—the term of imprisonment is not in proportion to the fine.

CLUBS AND BENEFIT SOCIETIES.

Workmen suspect the motives of their employers.

The workmen employed under manufacturers do not join willingly or uphold any shop clubs, or benefit societies. Many masters have endeavoured to establish these clubs, but they have existed languidly, and have gradually become extinct.

The feeling of the weavers is generally that of suspicion of their employers. They think that, if the masters knew they could earn enough to save, their wages would be reduced, and this feeling induces a corresponding want of economy and prudence. The most prevalent clubs are annual clubs, when the surplus is divided, and spent in drunkenness.

The following communication from Mr. Gough explains this subject very clearly:—

"The general opinion among the working classes with respect to clubs, savings banks, or any provident institution, not managed by their own order, is, that they are only intended as means for prying into the circumstances of the labouring population, with an ultimate view to reduce wages.

"This opinion is universal, and it is a rare thing to find factory people in the present day (however well to do, from constant employ and good wages) placing money in the savings' banks; nor will they, without great compulsion on the part of their employers, subscribe to any club among themselves in the factory, always looking with suspicion at the motives of the master, and regarding all attempts on his part to foster provident habits as so many efforts to enrich his own pocket out of the cheapness of their labour.

Fearful of reduction of wages.

"I have often heard the mill-people say, that, if their masters knew they could save anything out of their earnings, they should soon be bated (to use their own term) in their wages.

"Many manufacturers are managers or directors of savings' banks, and consequently have opportunities of seeing who among their workpeople can lay by money, and I have no doubt but this very circumstance has prevented many factory workmen from taking their little savings to these institutions; and when it is considered that every trifling circumstance is taken advantage of to lower the wages of the working classes, perhaps this jealousy on the part of the men is not unnatural or misplaced; especially in the present state of things, where no mutual feeling exists, and where the master takes the man as the hackney-coachman does a horse, merely for the work that is in him, regardless of him in his relationship as a brother-man, and where the man must necessarily take the master to be anything but a friend, a patron, or a benefactor. Till a better feeling exists between the employer and the employed, no club, established by the former, will last for any length of time, and then only by compulsory means; and not till the master feels an interest in the comfort and welfare of his workmen can he expect to have any claim on their respect or confidence."

Mr. Wm. Playne, sen., observed—

Jealous of their earnings and savings, being known to their employers.

"That the working classes in factories object to clubs, as they consider that their employers, by means of them, could ascertain the amount of their earnings and savings; for this reason the savings' banks are not much used by the clothing population, because in many cases some of the clothiers are managers."

"The poor," he continued, "will not be interfered with; they dislike to give their money to any establishment or club where their superiors have any control over it. They are very suspicious. This is not theory, for I know it practically."

This, I regret to say, is the popular feeling upon the subject, and proves the mistrust of the workmen towards their employers—a feeling which has been unhappily generated, but which it is to be hoped might be removed, if masters, by steady kindness and general interest in the welfare andcomforts of their workpeople, will prove themselves to be the poor man's real friend as well as his employer.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Benefit Clubs, Societies, &c., &c.

Mr. Peter Playne says—

About three years ago he suggested to his men to form a shop-club, offering to assist them in it, and proposing that each man should deposit three-halfpence a week, and the women one penny a-week, which he had calculated would enable them to maintain their own sick; but the plan did not meet their views, nor would they attempt to carry it into effect.

Mr. Charles Stanton says—

His weavers do not subscribe to any benefit societies; he recommended them to join one lately formed at Stroud, but was informed that they did not feel disposed to join it. After a conference with the most intelligent of the weavers, Mr. Stanton wrote a few simple rules, which were made compulsory upon all who worked in his factory, the basis of them was, that every sick weaver, whose sickness did not arise from his own indiscretion, has secured to him for a period of six weeks, about 7*s*. per week; and in order to prevent the idle and skulking from extracting too often from the club, a rule was made that no payment should take place till a man had been from his work a week. This club still exists, the men at work paying so much per head in proportion to the sum required to be disbursed, 1*s*. per week per sick weaver being added to the fund by Mr. Stanton.

About ten years ago a shop-club was instituted at Stanley mills, but it only lasted three or four years.

At Wootton there is no mechanics' institution. The benefit clubs are annual. There is a society in its infancy called, the West Gloucester Friendly Society, of which Lord Segrave, Lord Moreton, and Colonel Kingscote are presidents.

At Nailsworth a mechanics' institution was established about two or three years ago, and about 70 or 80 members entered, among whom were not more than 20 weavers; a lending library was attached,, which the poorer classes seemed pleased with. It was, however, broken up, not from dislike to the institution, but for want of means, produced by the general distress of the district.

Mr. Gough states that—

Mechanics' Institution, Stroud.

"A mechanics' institution was established at Stroud about ten years ago, which is still in existence, though it is to be feared is gradually dying away. It was first established by a few young persons in a very humble manner, who lectured among themselves alternately, and had the gratification of seeing it daily increasing in numbers, respectability, and talent.

"For many years it maintained a position, second to none in the kingdom, as a provincial institution. A good library of books and scientific apparatus had accumulated, chiefly from presents made by gentlemen in the neighbourhood; these were regularly circulated and used among the members, with several of the best periodicals of the day; and many have to date their taste for reading and the consequent improvement of heretofore misspent time, to the existence of the Stroud Mechanics' Institution.

"This institution, however, which once bid fair to be long-lived and flourishing, is now only held together by a few members who were the original promoters of it, and who are determined, notwithstanding the discouragement they receive, to stand by it till the last. It has been gradually dwindling for the last four years, and the cause is attributable to the circumstance of its having been made by some members of influence, more the arena for promoting political than mechanical or other useful purposes.

"So long as it remained an humble mechanics' institution, and managed by persons of an equality in life, it flourished and succeeded; but when once the door was open for the admission of political partisans, and the management taken away from its original founders, to give place to more influential parties, it was not difficult to foretel its destiny.

"It has, however, done much good, considerable emulation at one time existed among the members; and many, who were formerly addicted to drinking, have become reading and thinking people, better workmen, and more useful members of society."

The following is a return of the members of the Mechanics' Institution at Stroud:—

1 Accountant.
2 Attornies.
3 Bankers.
1 Blacksmith.
2 Booksellers.
1 Brushmaker.
2 Carpenters.
1 Chemist.
4 Clerks to manufacturers.
2 Dyers.
Factory man.
2 Founders.
1 Furrier.
1 Grocer.
1 Innkeeper.
6 Manufacturers.
2 Ministers (Dissenters).
1 Plasterer.
1 Surgeon.
1 Tailor.
1 Upholsterer.
1 Wheelright.
1 Woolsorter.
1 Wool merchant.
3 Of no calling or profession.
4 Youths.

Mr. J. C. Tabram, of Nailsworth, says,—

"The savings' bank was established last February at Nailsworth; the general fund is about 500*l*.; has *one* weaver a depositor, but thinks he does not lay by any thing from his *earnings*, but that he had a little money left him lately. The savings' bank fund is com-

posed principally of trustee property, such as building funds, benefit club money, &c.: there are only about 27 depositors as yet. The loan society has been established about two years; many applications, say 500 in number, have been made, to which 400 have been granted; the amount is 1200*l.*, arrears 80*l.*, and a certain loss of 10*l.*: this society is supported by loans from various neighbouring gentlemen; but in consequence of the arrears, it is expected that no more loans will be issued this year. As regards benefit clubs, they are now only annual. Witness states, that at Nailsworth a mechanic institution was established two or three years ago; it lasted about two years, broke up last January. There was a lending library attached to the society, and the poorer classes seemed pleased with it; there were about 70 or 80 members, some of them weavers, say 20: it was not broken up from any dislike to the institution, but from the distress of the district, and the consequent want of means."

Mr. A. Fewster, of Nailsworth, says,—

"The mechanics' institution at Nailsworth, however, has recently become defunct for want of support. Some of all these useful institutions effects uniformly good, except as to loan societies, of the beneficial effects of which I have some doubt. We have had one of these in operation here between two and three years. A considerable number of weavers connected with each. Clubs, &c. with the exception of savings' bank. The weavers cannot and do not make deposits."

The Rev. J. Elliott, minister of Randwick, says,—

"We have an excellent friendly society upon a self-sustaining principle, with such a graduated scale of payment according to age, as shall hold out at any future period of its continuance equal inducement to the young. This club is popular only with the most intelligent and industrious class; it may ultimately prove a great advantage to the neighbourhood, though its progress is at present retarded by the annual clubs, which make no provision for old age. Our Cainscross savings' bank is extensive in its operation and most valuable in its effects."

Mr. Griffiths, Relieving Officer of Thornbury Union, states, that

"Most of the mechanics and labourers are in annual clubs, and in cases of sickness they have 8*s.* a week. A new club, a branch of the Dursley club, is recently established here, and has 100 members: the advantage of which are, that the sum allowed in time of sickness is proportionate to the amount paid in; it may likewise be put as an annuity when he is 60 or 65 years of age. This principle is better than that of the old clubs, when the members paid in 6*d.* a week. It is called an annuity club as well as a burial and sickness club."

Savings' Banks.

The savings' banks at Dursley and at Cain's Cross have considerably increased in number and in amounts; many of the depositors are servants and children. The returns which I have obtained do not prove any advance in the state of the weavers, nor of any class, because at first all classes of servants and work people felt a prejudice or jealousy in allowing masters to know the amount of their savings. The increase of amounts and numbers may only prove the decrease of these feelings of jealousy or prejudice, and in proportion to the increase of deposits allowance must be made for the increase of population.

The persons engaged in factories do not, however, form a fair average proportion of the numbers of depositors.

Dursley Savings' Bank.

Date.	No. of Depositors.	Amount.	Date.	No. of Depositors.	Amount.
	£.	£. s. d.		£.	£. s. d.
Nov. 20, 1824.	124 under 20 each	1,024 8 8	Nov. 20, 1826.	154 under 20 each	1,273 16 10
	87 ,, 50 ,,	2,578 7 7		99 ,, 50 ,,	2,937 6 4
	57 ,, 100 ,,	3,707 7 0		60 ,, 100 ,,	3,942 7 7
	26 ,, 150 ,,	3,012 7 3		17 ,, 150 ,,	2,018 16 1
	4 ,, 200 ,,	673 16 4		7 ,, 200 ,,	1,128 10 10
	5 above 200 ,,	2,408 1 8		7 above 200 ,,	2,876 13 8
Total .	303	13,404 8 6		344	14,177 11 4
Nov. 20, 1825.	146 under 20 each	1,201 11 6	Nov. 20, 1827.	174 under 20 each	1,373 3 6
	91 ,, 50 ,,	2,894 4 0		126 ,, 50 ,,	3,712 5 11
	67 ,, 100 ,,	4,257 4 11		55 ,, 100 ,,	3,793 3 2
	21 ,, 150 ,,	2,644 11 4		18 ,, 150 ,,	2,088 8 6
	6 ,, 200 ,,	986 16 1		10 ,, 200 ,,	1,780 12 6
	6 above 200 ,,	2,737 8 0		5 above 200 ,,	2,424 10 9
Total .	337	14,721 15 0		388	15,172 4 4

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

SAVINGS' BANKS.

Dursley Savings' Bank.

DURSLEY SAVINGS' BANK—*continued.*

Date.	No. of Depositors.	Amount.
	£.	£. s. d.
Nov. 20, 1828.	195 under 20 each.	1,546 17 8
	127 ,, 50 ,,	3,727 2 1
	58 ,, 100 ,,	3,799 16 7
	16 ,, 150 ,,	2,007 1 10
	6 ,, 200 ,,	1,029 4 2
	6 above 200 ,,	1,500 3 9
Total .	408	13,610 6 1
Nov. 20, 1829.	206 under 20 each	1,560 8 2
	139 ,, 50 ,,	4,204 4 7
	58 ,, 100 ,,	3,900 12 3
	15 ,, 150 ,,	1,942 15 3
	7 ,, 200 ,,	1,159 9 3
	3 above 200 ,,	751 13 8
Total .	428	13,519 3 2
Nov. 20, 1830.	207 under 20 each	1,538 17 0
	145 ,, 50 ,,	4,380 17 4
	60 ,, 100 ,,	4,130 5 7
	17 ,, 150 ,,	2,094 19 1
	9 ,, 200 ,,	1,490 1 2
	3 above 200 ,,	776 19 0
Total .	441	14,411 19 2
Nov. 20, 1831.	211 under 20 each	1,547 3 4
	141 ,, 50 ,,	4,232 13 6
	55 ,, 100 ,,	3,871 18 3
	19 ,, 150 ,,	2,344 16 0
	12 ,, 200 ,,	2,004 1 7
	2 above 200 ,,	490 7 10
Total .	440	14,491 0 6
Nov. 20, 1832.	208 under 20 each	1,591 5 0
	135 ,, 50 ,,	4,257 12 3
	45 ,, 100 ,,	3,191 11 3
	21 ,, 150 ,,	2,485 4 1
	11 ,, 200 ,,	1,842 11 9
	1 above 200 ,,	266 12 11
Total .	421	13,634 17 3
Nov. 20, 1833.	214 under 20 each	1,627 6 11
	135 ,, 50 ,,	4,082 0 6
	55 ,, 100 ,,	3,794 4 10
	24 ,, 150 ,,	2,900 16 11
	11 ,, 200 ,,	1,855 16 4
	1 above 200 ,,	275 12 1
Total .	440	14,535 17 7
Nov. 20, 1834.	265 under 20 each	1,668 19 11
	172 ,, 50 ,,	4,972 6 8
	59 ,, 100 ,,	4,189 10 8
	28 ,, 150 ,,	3,448 8 3
	11 ,, 200 ,,	1,875 2 1
	1 above 200 ,,	284 17 3
Total .	536	16,439 4 10
Nov. 20, 1835.	246 under 20 each	1,871 5 6
	168 ,, 50 ,,	5,207 10 3
	61 ,, 100 ,,	4,194 8 9
	23 ,, 150 ,,	2,899 7 11
	15 ,, 200 ,,	2,517 15 1
	1 above 200 ,,	294 8 8
Total .	514	16,984 16 2
Nov. 20, 1836.	326 under 20 each	2,085 11 0
	187 ,, 50 ,,	5,896 1 10
	62 ,, 100 ,,	4,120 15 11
	24 ,, 150 ,,	3,021 14 4
	15 ,, 200 ,,	2,535 2 4
	1 above 200 ,,	304 6 7
Total .	615	17,963 12 0
Nov. 20, 1837.	271 under 20 each	2,180 18 10
	177 ,, 50 ,,	5,586 14 6
	69 ,, 100 ,,	4,430 6 5
	23 ,, 150 ,,	2,785 15 6
	16 ,, 200 ,,	2,769 19 4
	1 above 200 ,,	314 16 5
Total .	557	18,068 11 0
Nov. 20, 1838.	287 under 20 each	2,132 7 2
	210 ,, 50 ,,	6,628 10 5
	77 ,, 100 ,,	5,228 15 6
	21 ,, 150 ,,	2,599 19 11
	16 ,, 200 ,,	2,678 11 3
	1 above 200 ,,	325 13 6
Total .	612	19,593 17 9

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Savings' Bank

Cain's Cross Savings' Bank.

Cainscross Savings' Bank.

Date.	No. of Depositors. £.	Amount. £. s. d.	Date.	No. of Depositors. £.	Amount. £. s. d.
Nov. 20, 1824.	205 under 20 each 99 ,, 50 ,, 63 ,, 100 ,, 42 ,, 150 ,, 15 ,, 200 ,, 4 above 200 ,,	1,501 18 7 2,941 4 9 4,329 6 5 4,574 17 11 2,459 13 9 860 1 6	Nov. 20, 1831.	317 under 20 each 196 ,, 50 ,, 94 ,, 100 ,, 27 ,, 150 ,, 19 ,, 200 ,, 12 above 200 ,,	2,606 17 8 6,062 11 3 6,370 19 2 3,298 7 3 3,242 0 1 3,022 19 3
Total .	428	16,667 2 11	Total .	665	24,603 14 8
Nov. 20, 1825.	212 under 20 each 110 ,, 50 ,, 82 ,, 100 ,, 32 ,, 150 ,, 16 ,, 200 ,, 11 above 200 ,,	1,680 9 8 3,392 3 6 5,313 5 0 3,726 18 6 2,610 5 6 2,355 3 3	Nov. 20, 1832.	339 under 20 each 199 ,, 50 ,, 84 ,, 100 ,, 34 ,, 150 ,, 21 ,, 200 ,, 11 above 200 ,,	2,527 1 9 6,115 3 9 5,589 13 8 4,228 1 2 3,556 18 9 2,890 10 9
Total .	463	19,078 5 5	Total .	688	24,907 9 10
Nov. 20, 1826.	236 under 20 each 137 ,, 50 ,, 64 ,, 100 ,, 27 ,, 150 ,, 13 ,, 200 ,, 13 above 200 ,,	1,698 19 1 4,191 16 4 4,360 4 5 3,255 3 9 2,297 18 2 2,824 18 4	Nov. 20, 1833.	394 under 20 each 228 ,, 50 ,, 81 ,, 100 ,, 36 ,, 150 ,, 21 ,, 200 ,, 12 above 200 ,,	2,821 4 6 7,026 8 1 5,955 3 2 4,461 13 2 3,633 6 5 3,189 6 9
Total	490	18,629 0 1	Total .	772	27,087 2 1
Nov. 20, 1827.	265 under 20 each 178 ,, 50 ,, 68 ,, 100 ,, 24 ,, 150 ,, 11 ,, 200 ,, 18 above 200 ,,	2,059 8 8 5,569 10 5 4,650 7 8 2,882 8 6 1,873 16 6 3,979 1 10	Nov. 20, 1834.	441 under 20 each 282 ,, 50 ,, 104 ,, 100 ,, 30 ,, 150 ,, 26 ,, 200 ,, 14 above 200 ,,	2,937 17 9 8,559 9 2 7,017 5 11 3,613 2 2 4,502 17 6 3,691 14 11
Total .	564	21,014 13 7		897	30,322 7 5
Nov. 20, 1828.	321 under 20 each 220 ,, 50 ,, 117 ,, 100 ,, 24 ,, 150 ,, 15 ,, 200 ,, 18 above 200 ,,	2,376 13 10 6,781 7 9 7,879 11 7 2,941 4 6 2,605 18 2 4,153 19 6	Nov. 20, 1835.	478 under 20 each 274 ,, 50 ,, 113 ,, 100 ,, 38 ,, 150 ,, 26 ,, 200 ,, 14 above 200 ,,	3,223 11 5 8,627 14 6 7,479 11 10 4,482 15 7 4,460 13 7 3,726 13 11
	715	26,738 15 4	Total .	943	32,001 0 10
Nov. 20, 1829.	319 under 20 each 199 ,, 50 ,, 104 ,, 100 ,, 22 ,, 150 ,, 15 ,, 200 ,, 16 above 200 ,,	2,512 14 8 6,306 4 1 6,989 8 6 2,677 3 4 2,636 14 6 3,798 7 3	Nov. 20, 1836.	576 under 20 each 289 ,, 50 ,, 126 ,, 100 ,, 38 ,, 150 ,, 28 ,, 200 ,, 12 above 200 ,,	4,014 9 1 8,953 13 3 8,511 10 11 4,549 2 0 4,914 0 0 3,404 0 11
Total .	675	24,920 12 4	Total .	1069	34,346 16 2
Nov. 20, 1830.	326 under 20 each 187 ,, 50 ,, 94 ,, 100 ,, 25 ,, 150 ,, 14 ,, 200 ,, 16 above 200 ,,	2,518 17 1 5,870 6 4 6,398 0 8 2,972 7 9 2,452 11 10 3,876 10 5	Nov. 20, 1837.	599 under 20 each 333 ,, 50 ,, 142 ,, 100 ,, 44 ,, 150 ,, 29 ,, 200 ,, 11 above 200 ,,	4,168 18 4 10,128 11 3 9,450 7 4 5,237 18 7 5,109 5 0 3,208 11 6
Total .	662	24,088 14 1	Total .	1158	37,303 12 0

Cainscross Savings' Bank—*continued.*

Date.	No. of Depositors.	Amount.
	£.	£. s. d.
Nov. 20, 1838.	705 under 20 each	5,062 3 8
	377 ,, 50 ,,	11,509 5 7
	153 ,, 100 ,,	10,599 7 9
	41 ,, 150 ,,	4,920 12 6
	37 ,, 200 ,,	6,478 19 4
	9 above 200 ,,	2,761 0 5
Total .	1322	41,291 9 3

EDUCATION.

Education.

Education is a subject upon which I felt at every step more accurate information to be required than I had the means of obtaining; and it is a subject so beset with difficulties (as to the detail), that in the absence of that information I can scarcely venture to approach it more than by stating the results of my inquiries.

Present system not adapted to youth.

I must, however, observe, that in my opinion restricted education is detrimental to the best interests of education as well as to the ultimate interests of those who would render it exclusive.

The present system of education is too limited, too superficial; and, moreover, it is not based upon principles resulting from a close examination of the influence of circumstance upon the development of the young intellect.

First, it is too limited with regard to the subjects taught; for more is required than a parrot-like narration of Scriptural texts or catechistical answers. Secondly, it is too superficial, owing to the irregular and (at most times) short period that a poor man can spare the child from work or pay for its tuition, being only three years (vide Report of the schools, page 504). Thirdly, it is not based upon principles resulting from a close examination of the influence of circumstances upon the development of the young intellect, because the present system is not sufficiently calculated to afford pleasure and excitement, or to instil practically into the young mind the value of time, industry, and patience, as the means of obtaining future resources for his comforts and well-being in society.*

Study should be blended with amusement.

Study, or rather the attaining of useful knowledge, should be blended as much as possible with amusement, especially to a child; and as the children of the poorer classes can be only spared from labour during their more tender years, their instruction should be rendered in as pleasing and familiar a form as possible, so that in after years they may seek and derive a pleasure by improving their minds.

It is not from books alone, or the mere reading of the Scripture, that the better feelings are likely to be elicited. The Rev. H. Jeffreys, of Bisley, (one of the poorest parishes in the manufacturing districts,) observes, in his valuable communication concerning his parish,—"Education is there encouraged, and in some measure valued, and it is not want of education which has caused distress." "Some of our most dirty, ill-behaved, wretched, and extravagant people, are as well informed as to reading, &c., as any in the parish."

The groundwork may be laid by books and reading, if the child is taught to understand what it utters; but more is required in the superstructure, and that deficiency is ably anticipated in the Industrial School, where circumstances and incidents are continually arising to call forth the observation of youth, and are judiciously adapted to increase their intelligence and skill, as well not only to give them a knowledge (as far as man can impart) of the things around them, but also to call forth the higher sentiments, and to give them an aptitude for method, industry, and exertion.

I believe that the plan of confining a child solely to the routine of biblical instruction, is not sufficient for his worldly welfare, because I have found among the young thieves, hundreds of whom I have examined, that many of them had received that education, which they learned like parrots, and like rogues forgot.

Secular Instruction.

I beg, however, most distinctly and unequivocally to observe, that I am not

* "They *cannot* dive into the inmost recesses of the brain, to nip in its very first germs every brightest faculty, but conducting its developments as the Chinese do that of their peach and plum trees, *they encompass each tender shoot of the intellect with so many minute fetters, religious, political, and social, that* DWARFS *are produced where* GIANTS *were intended.*"

adverting directly or indirectly to any plan of education wherein religion is not to be inculcated, because I am persuaded that no such system could be beneficial, or exist except in theory.

Mr. Wall, the master of St. Chloe school, observes,

That the disputes concerning religious education are chiefly confined to the leaders and public speakers of the different sects; at least he has never known the parent of any child, whether churchman or dissenter, make a private objection to an extensive course of reading or study.

Mr. S. Marling, of Ham Mills, near Stroud, says,

He is deeply impressed with the absolute necessity for all education being based on the principles of the Bible, and he would countenance no system in which sound moral and religious instruction were not made the foundation of every thing else; yet he says he must confess his fears, that there is a tendency in many quarters to attend to this subject only, to the almost total exclusion of other very important and very necessary parts of education; not that too much regard is paid to the former, but far too little to the latter.

My proposition is, to introduce more of general knowledge and more secular information, in order to train the child for admixture in society, by giving him habits of inquiry, observation, industry, and economy; not only by theory but by practical means either in training or industrial schools.

Opinion of the Bishop of London.

"Religion," observes the Right Reverend Bishop of London, in a charge, delivered in 1834, "ought to be made the groundwork of all education; its lessons should be interwoven with the whole tissue of instruction, and its principles should regulate the entire system of discipline in our national schools. But I believe that the lessons of religion will not be rendered less impressive or effectual by being interspersed with teaching of a different kind. The Bible will not be read with less interest if history, for example, and geography, and the elements of useful practical science, be suffered to take their turn in the circle of daily instruction. On the contrary, I am persuaded that the youthful mind will recur with increased curiosity and intelligence to the great facts and truths and precepts of Holy Writ, if it be enlarged and enlivened by an acquaintance with other branches of knowledge. I see no reason why the education given to the poor should differ from the education of their superiors, more widely than the different circumstances and duties of their respective conditions in life render absolutely necessary. One thing is certain, and it is a very important consideration, that if we teach them the methods of acquiring one kind of knowledge, they will apply them to the acquisition of other kinds; if we sharpen their faculties for one purpose they will be sure to use them for others. *Some* information on subjects of general interest many of them will undoubtedly seek to obtain, and it is plainly desirable that they should receive it from our hands in a safe and unobjectionable form. It is desirable, also, that they should not be accustomed to consider that there is anything like an opposition between the doctrines and precepts of our holy religion and other legitimate objects of intellectual inquiry; or that it is difficult to reconcile a due regard to the supreme importance of the one, with a certain degree of laudable curiosity about the other. The experiment of mixing instruction in different branches of useful knowledge with Scripture reading and lessons, or the truths and duties of Christianity, has been tried with success in the sessional schools at Edinburgh by a zealous and able friend of the poor, Mr. Wood, to whose publications on the subject I would refer you for further information. It has also been tried in more than one large parochial school of this diocese, and the results have been very encouraging. I am therefore desirous that additions should be made to the school catalogue of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, adapted to supply materials for a more varied course of instruction than that which is ordinarily pursued in our schools."

Industrial Schools.

The Industrial School is a system well adapted to train, to lead forth, to educate the infant mind. The child there learns habits of order, method, industry, and emulation *practically*. He there imbibes those qualities which form the groundwork of future contentment when he commingles in society; and it is the want of that groundwork which has caused so much misery and discontent among the working classes of the community.

The leasing of a plot of ground to a child, at a childish rent, is highly valuable to that child. It gives him a knowledge of property; the cultivation of it gives him a value of industry. The cultivation of his flower-border gives him an elegance or refinement of mind. This term may be derided; but, suppose a person was about to hire a servant or a labourer, and he had to visit the cottages of two candidates for that service, the plot of ground in front of one cottage should be overrun with weeds, and the plot in front of the other should be neatly trimmed and redolent of flowers and perfume, the person would be more inclined to engage the services of the latter, because the cultivation of the flowers would impress upon his mind that the owner was possessed of a better regulated mind and of better habits than the other, whose mind he would consider to be as ill conditioned as his ground.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

EDUCATION.

Mr. S. Marling, of Ham Mills, near Stroud, observes,

That those of his numerous workpeople whose ingenuity is most conspicuous in the culture of their gardens, and in their other domestic arrangements, are the best workmen, husbands, and fathers.

I beg to insert the following extract concerning the Industrial School near Ealing; whereby, it will be seen, the effect of industrial education, blended with religious and other instruction, must be beneficial to the child in after years.

The following is an account of the system of industrial instruction pursued in the garden of the Ealing Grove School, as given by Mr. Duppa:—

"Gardens of the sixteenth of an acre were measured out and let to the elder boys at 1½*d.* per month; seeds they either bought of their master, or procured from their friends. Racks for the tools were put up and numbered, so that each boy had a place for his own and in that he was required to keep them.

Industrial Schools.

"The objects of this school are to educate children, destined for country pursuits, in a manner to make them better workmen and more intelligent and happier men than is at present the case. For this purpose it was conceived necessary that they should early acquire the habits of patient industry,—that they should be acquainted with the value of labour, and know the connexion between it and property,—that they should have intelligence, skill, and an acquaintance with the objects by which they are surrounded,—that the higher sentiments, the social and moral part of their being, should obtain a full development. The habit of patient industry is endeavoured to be given to them by requiring that they should labour for a portion of the day, viz.—three hours, and this partly for the institution, partly for themselves, in their own gardens. During the period in which they work for the institution they are paid according to the labour they are able to perform; the monitor who watches over them reporting the industry of each to their master, who remunerates them accordingly. In their gardens they are allowed to labour for an hour and a half a-day, and as they pay a rent for the land and purchase the seeds, they become anxious to spend that time more actively in bringing their gardens into as forward a state as they can. On account of the rough state of the ground, and the novel duties of the schoolmaster, there was, in the first instance, a gardener hired, who directed them in the cultivation of their gardens, and instructed them how to obtain a rotation of crops in order that the ground should never remain unoccupied; but his services have now been for some time discontinued. So industriously have the boys laboured, and so well have they succeeded, that their gardens, with few exceptions, presented, before the crops were harvested, an appearance of neatness and good husbandry. They have all since either disposed of their vegetables, or taken them home to their families. But vegetables were not the only crop, for, around the border of each, flowers have been cultivated. It is a great matter to induce a taste for, and to give a knowledge of, the manner of cultivating flowers. They are luxuries within the power of every person to command.

Gardens.

"There is a considerable gaiety and alacrity in all this; the boys learn to sing many cheerful and merry songs; they strike up a tune as they go out in bands to work, and as they return they do the same. Their tools are taken down from their appropriate places and are duly returned to them; so that, whenever the school may be visited, it will be found that there is a place for everything and that everything is in its place. But this is not for the sake of gratifying the eye of the visitor. Of all habits that give value to industry and exertion, that promote comfort and favour virtue, there is not one more efficacious than this. It is, too, a habit in which the labouring classes are peculiarly deficient: the cultivation of it is considered in this school a point of great moment. Nor is it confined to the arrangement of the tools: prudence and foresight are closely connected with the accurate keeping of accounts. Accordingly, each boy has a little book of receipt and expenditure. The profit of his garden, the earnings of his labour, &c. are entered on one side; the payment of rent, the purchase of seeds, &c. on the other. An extract from the children's books will show their character. When sufficient time has elapsed, there is but little doubt, not only that the gardens will become more profitable, but other branches of industry will be so organized as to bring in a return of some importance. We do not make this assertion at hazard, as last year one of the boys cleared 1*l.* 18*s.* 10*d.* from his sixteenth of an acre of land, after paying the rent, seeds, manure, &c. &c.

"Thus far has a sound foundation been laid: habits of industry and cheerfulness while at labour—habits of order and arrangement in the management of expenditure. And did the education cease here, these are not all the advantages which would be derived from it. The gardens are all exposed—all know the value of produce. It has been asked by persons who have visited the school—'Do not the children rob one another?' 'Is their little produce safe?' It is safe; they do not rob one another. The rightful acquisition of property begets a knowledge of the principles upon which right is grounded. It is clear to them that a mutual respect for one another's rights is the only guarantee for the safety of property. Mutual aggression would soon destroy their little gardens. The children do not rob, and are thus acquiring habits of justice and honesty.

"Again, many of the operations in their little gardens require greater strength than one child is possessed of—they look for assistance to their neighbours, and it is given. This, to those who have not reflected on this subject, may appear a trifle; but the harmony of society is greatly dependent upon the cultivation of good will and a readiness to oblige and assist; and any plan is worthy of consideration which can early make the value of this social quality evident to children, and can ground a habit upon it"

The following is the account kept by a child of his earnings, &c. &c., on a plot of ground at the industrial school.

GEORGE KIRBY, aged 14 years.

Cash.

1836.	Received. £.	s.	d.	Particulars of Receipt and Expenditure.	Paid. £.	s.	d.
March 4	..			Onion-seed	0	0	2
April 1	..			One month's rent	0	0	1½
4	..			One quart of peas	0	0	3
May 1	..			One month's rent	0	0	1½
1	0	0	2¾	For work.			
6	..			One bushel potatoes	0	2	0
10	..			Lettuce-seed	0	0	2
24	..			Scarlet beans	0	0	4
30	..			French ditto	0	0	2
June 1	..			One month's rent	0	0	1½
14	..			Cabbage-plants	0	0	1½
16	0	0	7½	Lettuce-plants.			
23	0	0	10	For labour.			
July 1	..			One month's rent	0	0	1½
14	0	1	4	Two pecks peas.			
16	0	0	1	Onions.			
18	0	0	2½	Scarlet runners.			
24	0	0	9	Ditto.			
30	0	0	4	Ditto.			
August 1	..			One month's rent	0	0	1½
4	0	0	9	Scarlet runners.			
7	0	0	8	Potatoes.			
9	0	1	1	Scarlet runners.			
11	0	0	8	Potatoes.			
16	0	0	4	Scarlet runners.			
27	0	0	2	Ditto.			
Sept. 1	..			One month's rent	0	0	1½
13	0	0	6	Scarlet runners.			
17	0	0	2	Ditto.			
Octob. 1	..			One month's rent	0	0	1½
15	0	1	10	For labour to September 30th.			
19	0	8	6	Potatoes.			
26	0	6	0	Ditto.			
	1	5	0¾		0	4	1
	0	4	1				
	1	0	11¾				

Owing to the present system of education, the poor man's child when he becomes an adult, has no resource open whence he can derive mental gratification after his working hours; so that the interval of labour is but too frequently the period of sensuality or debauchery. The working man, for want of other means to procure amusement or recreation, goes to the beer-shop; but if he had been trained in his early years to derive pleasure from other sources than by the excitement produced by fermented liquors, the beer-shop would be abandoned by him.

Music the delight of children.

Music is a means well calculated to give a rational excitement: it possesses a power as subtle, but as universal, as galvanism. It is acknowledged and felt from the prince to the beggar: the mouse, the horse, the spider, and the snake, own its influence.

I have often witnessed groups of poor children, shivering in rags, listening most attentively to the lively airs upon the itinerant organs; and why should not that natural taste be cultivated among the poor as well as among the richer classes? It would require but little time from other pursuits, and afford to the child in after life a resource, a charm, which, in his childhood, he enjoys, and which we ought to cultivate.

Music tends to unbrutalize the mind.

It may, however, be advanced, that singing has been the ruin of many young persons. I grant it; but why has it been the ruin? Because a good self-cultivated voice is scarce; it is an exception among the many; but if music and singing were taught, that voice would no longer be an exception. It may be advanced that music leads to drunkenness and debauchery. I own that, in many cases, it tends to demoralize. I know that there are many

houses of low description, in the vilest neighbourhoods of the metropolis, where music is provided, and many meet nightly to enjoy it, and that drunkenness and crime may result, not from the music, but from the congregating of numbers; the lowest of the low, the very scum of young pickpockets, neglect to prowl the street, and resort to these places; but does this prove that music is pernicious? or rather does it not prove that music is wanted, is sought for eagerly, and that it is natural to the human ear, however degraded and lost the person might be.

Less drunkenness where music is cultivated.

Music has a genial tendency, and I therefore infer that to youth it would be beneficial. In Sweden the children sing to a scale at the public schools. Music is taught in Germany and on the Continent, yet the people are less addicted to drunkenness than in England; and I attribute it to the very circumstance that music, by being more cultivated, destroys the sottish tendency inasmuch as it imparts to the poorer classes other means of social enjoyment than drinking glass for glass, or quart for quart in a public-house or beer shop. The most striking instance in corroboration of this opinion occurs in the parishes of Coaley and Stonehouse, in this county. (Vide pages 430 and 431.)

I have thus digressed because it is an experiment of considerable import to the happiness of the working classes. Mr. Hickson, in his lecture on the introduction of vocal music as a branch of national education, shows the advantages to be derived by infusing the spirit of music in the mind and over the feelings, for he judiciously and humanely observes:—

Music desirable as a branch of national education. Mr. Hickson's opinion.

"One of the most important of all secrets, to be learned in education, is that of cheerfulizing the heart, for when we have done that, we have done that which is most favourable to the growth of kindly and generous feelings."

"Music (he continues) may be regarded as having an indirect moral influence in weaning the mind from coarse and brutalizing pursuits, and from pleasures consisting in mere sensual indulgences. The reason is, that music is a means of pure and innocent enjoyment, which, in proportion as it is cultivated and rightly directed, will approve itself to the mind, as of a higher, better, and more satisfactory character than any of the grosser pleasures pursued by the slaves of vice. * * * * * * *

"And here let me protest against the doctrine that it is not part, or ought to be no part, of the business of an instructor to teach the means of rational enjoyment to the people. That music *is* a means of social enjoyment will be admitted; and *that* ought to be a sufficient argument for rendering it, if possible, a means of enjoyment to the poorest members of the community. After all that can be done for the melioration of the condition of the working classes, they will have to submit to quite enough of privation, as compared with the lot of a rich man, without withholding from them any innocent source of pleasure which we might enable them to command.

"I have no sympathy with those who think that the duty of individuals, or of legislators, with regard to the masses, ends in teaching them resignation and submission, and in enabling them, at best, to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow; but who would do nothing to cheer their hearts or gladden their existence, by throwing a little sunshine into the cottage, as if nature had designed them to be merely living, moving, animated machines, existing not for themselves, but solely to furnish the means of gratification to a superior race of mortals.

"Happily, however, for the lot of the poor, nature has not left it to our own cold hearts to decide this question. Some amount of pleasurable relaxation from labour is necessary to every condition of animal existence. The slave will have it, though he work in chains for six days out of the seven, or without it he will die, and thus escape the lash of his cruel taskmaster. Some change of a pleasurable character, to relieve the monotony of a life of labour, is necessary for all; but, what is most to the purpose, we can withhold it from none—we can merely choose the form it shall assume.

"This is, then, the real question at issue, whether we shall leave the people, while in a low moral state, to choose their own sources of gratification (although we may know that, while in that state, they will choose such as will be of a low and debasing character), or shall we first enable them to appreciate, and then place within their reach rational and intellectual enjoyments? In short, will you have prize-fighting, bull-baiting, gambling, Tom and Jerry amusements, a taste encouraged for witnessing executions and reading of murders; will you have intemperance, as a means of excitement, rendered all but universal, or will you allow an art like that of music to be cultivated in their place, and teach society to obey the laws of harmony both in a moral and scientific sense?"

Confirmed by Dr. Kay.

Dr. Kay, in his Report to the Poor Law Commissioners, 1838, upon the training of pauper children, adverts to this most desirable subject, and observes,—

"In the Prussian, Dutch, and German schools, and recently in some English, and in the schools of the Glasgow Educational Society, singing has been introduced as a branch of instruction with signal advantage. The children are practised in such psalmody as is appropriate to the devotional services of the household. The routine of school discipline is also beneficially interrupted at the point where weariness and disorder ensue, by an exercise which

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Education.

diffuses new energy and harmony through the school. The children march into the school from the garden, the workshop, and the play-ground, singing such moral songs as have been introduced into infant schools with success. The intervals of any change of lesson or occupation are filled up with singing. We are also assured that in Germany the cultivation of vocal music has a most beneficial influence on the habits of the people; they have been, to a large extent, reclaimed from debasing pleasures by this innocent amusement.

"In the prison for the correction of juvenile offenders at Rotterdam, I was informed that music was valued as an important element of the moral agencies employed. I heard the national anthem and some beautiful hymns sung by the boys in the prison in a most impressive manner from notes with which each was furnished.

"Mr. Hickson has rendered a valuable service to the public by the interesting and useful lectures which he has lately delivered on the importance of vocal music as an element of popular primary instruction."

Mr. Jones, a manufacturer at Newtown, says he has encouraged music among his workpeople, and that it is a great source of rational amusement among them.

I beg to offer a few remarks upon charity schools and gratuitous education.

Charity education not valued by the poor.

I have observed that, where the parents pay a penny or twopence per week for the tuition of their children, education is much more prized than when it is gratuitous. This I have often witnessed during my inquiries as Commissioner of Charities; therefore, in my opinion, the intentions of a charity are defeated by this feeling among those classes whom it was intended to benefit, and many charities become useless or pernicious. It is said that charity covers a multitude of sins; she must be her own cloak, for she generates a multitude of evils.

Charity dress debases the child.

The charity dress debases the child, for in his earliest years he is marked and pointed out among his fellows as a poor man's child; and ostentation puts upon him the livery of pauperism. I would not use the dress so injudiciously, but I would make it the badge of merit, to be won by good conduct in the school, so that the child should feel himself raised in the eyes of strangers, rather than self-lowered and self-degraded.

Emulation and domestic influence.

There is a simple method of giving a stimulus, not only to the children, but also to the parents, that their children should be well conducted in the schools. The domestic influence over a child is half the battle, and without that powerful auxiliary, the efforts of the master are comparatively trifling. The method I propose is this: that every child, on entering the school, should pay till, by good conduct or superior talent, he is promoted to a higher class, and then payment should cease. Again, that the charity children should be selected from among the best boys of that chosen class just mentioned, and *then* allowed to wear the dress as a reward for diligence and good behaviour, and not as a stigma of poverty.

That in cases of extreme poverty, the amount of schooling might be lent by the Guardians to the parents, or paid to the school upon the production of the master's certificate of attendance.

I moreover propose that the highest class of boys should be actually in receipt of weekly payments, as a reward for their good conduct; by which means a constant emulation would be generated throughout the school, and tend much to the advancement of the children.

My division would be after this proportion: one-half of the scholars to pay so much per week; one quarter to be selected from those pay scholars to receive gratuitous instruction, and the remaining quarter to be promoted from the gratuitous scholars, and to receive in equal division the weekly money paid by the junior half.

Say 100 boys.

Children to be paid in upper classes as a reward.

1st class, 50 boys, 1*d.* per week, 4*s.* 2*d.*

2nd class, 25 boys, free, and promoted from Class 1.

3rd class, 25 boys, promoted from class 2, and receiving 4*s.* 2*d.*, or 2*d.* per week each.

Children to be promoted by committee or trustees.

The money paid by the parents at the commencement would only be a loan, because it is repaid in a double ratio when the boy enters the 3rd class.

I earnestly beg to call your attention to this proposal, because I consider that immense benefit would be created by the most simple means.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

EDUCATION.

Sunday Schools.

The Sunday-schools are useful, inasmuch as the child once a week has an opportunity of practising what it may have imperfectly learned; and there are many instances of children having learned to read and write with no other aid than what was afforded by these excellent and benevolent institutions.

Female education neglected.

Before I conclude upon the subject of education, I cannot but lament that the instruction of girls is not rendered more general and industrial. The factory girl is a sad instance of the neglect of female training. Her dress is tawdy, or else slattern; her house, when she marries, is slovenly and untidy; her bonnet may be dressed in ribands, but her stockings are in holes, and her children are in rags. When a girl leaves school, or goes into service, she has to learn how to dust a room, or light a fire, or clean a knife. She has no knowledge of her duties; and it is for the purpose that such knowledge should be imparted to her that I should strongly urge the more general adoption of the industrial system carried out further, than to the sedentary employment of sewing, knitting, and marking. The minister at Woodchester states that, there are various bequests, to the amount of 84*l.* for instructing *girls* to sew and read. This amount is paid in equal shares to seven dame-schools in the parish—almost sinecures to the old ladies—one has one scholar only. There is scarcely a good female servant, however, to be hired in the district; at any rate, not in proportion to the bequests. Every person acknowledges the extreme difficulty of obtaining a good domestic servant; and yet how easily might the child be trained, if proper means would only be adopted by those who undertake the important charge of piloting the young mind.

Infant Schools.

Relative to the good effects of infant-schools a witness states that he has observed the children at the factory who have been brought up at infant-schools are more acute and intelligent than those who have not had that advantage. He says they have more thought, method, and observation, as well as more aptitude. "Formerly," he says, "it was usual for the mothers to leave their children in the care of some old woman, where they would sit upon a stool and mope all day over the fire till the mother returned from work and fetched them home."

I now proceed to the subject of education, and statistical remarks thereon in the county of Gloucester.

I forwarded blank returns to every minister of the church, and to every dissenting minister in each parish, wherein I considered weavers to be located.

The returns were to the following effect:—

Number of infant schools.	Number of scholars.	Male.	Female.
Some inquiries concerning day-schools and Sunday-schools.	Number of scholars whose parents are hand-loom weavers.	—	—
		Male.	Female.
		—	—

The number of infant, daily, or Sunday schools, supported by

Endowment.	Payments from scholars.
Subscription.	Part payment and part endowment or subscription.

The number of schools of each sort established since 1833, and number of scholars in each, together with the number of children of hand-loom weavers attending such schools.

The number of schools to which lending libraries are attached.

The number of industrial schools.

The number of teachers who may have been trained in normal schools.

I further solicited information, under the head of general remarks:—

State whether additional means of education, and of what description are required. Be pleased also to state your views as to the disposition of the working classes for more extended instruction, or any other information you may consider useful. Also your opinion concerning the moral and pecuniary condition of the hand-loom weavers in your district, comparing them with other classes.

These papers were forwarded to twenty-one parishes, containing a total population of 63,189 persons. There are no returns due from the ministers of the church; four of the returns are incomplete. There are nine due from the Dissenting ministers; but the required information is, in some cases, supplied by the minister of the parish, and probably obtained by return from the schools of dissenters.

The following is a summary of the number of daily schools and scholars :—

12 infant schools.	866 children.	139 children of hand-loom weavers.
55 daily schools.	3877 „	463 „ „ „ „
Total 67	4743	602

With regard to the returns of the Sunday-schools, as there is a variation in the total number returned by the Church and by the Dissenters, I have placed them in tabular form. Number of schools not private.

The number of Church Sunday-schools is 28; in which 3979 children are taught, of which number 802 are weavers' children.

The returns concerning the support of the school, whether by endowment or otherwise, are extremely incomplete, and in some cases totally unnoticed.

The number of schools established since 1833 are two infant and eight daily schools; but I am not furnished with the number of children attending them. One Dissenter's Sunday-school has been established since 1833, and one Church Sunday-school.

There are thirty-one lending libraries.

Eight to daily schools.

Thirteen to Church Sunday-schools.

Ten to Dissenting Sunday-schools.

There are three industrial schools.

Six teachers in the daily schools have been trained in a normal school.

Relative to the opinions of the clergymen and Dissenting ministers and others, as to whether additional means of education are considered desirable, &c., as well as their opinions concerning the condition of the hand-loom weavers, I have received various communications which may be deemed important, and which will subsequently appear in these pages.

The information afforded me is numerically as follows:—three ministers consider the present means of education to be sufficient; ten consider extension of education desirable in their parishes; fourteen ministers bear evidence to the depressed condition of the weavers, and that poverty precludes their children from the benefits of education; four state that the weavers are a moral and well-conducted class; one speaks of their drunken and immoral conduct; four consider that the weavers are either averse or apathetic concerning education; one that they are desirous for it; and four ministers very strongly deprecate the evil tendency of beer-houses.

Mr. Charles Stanton, a manufacturer, stated, that he has noticed a great indifference concerning education, not only among the weavers, but among all classes of factory people; and he considers that the working people do not sufficiently value the means of instruction afforded to them.

By returns obtained from visits made from house to house of 1135 out-door weavers, I find the total number of children to be 2834; and that 272 of that number receive daily education. Then I find that the gross total of hand-loom weavers' children in the country receiving daily tuition is 602; so that the proportion of families who send their children to school might be presumed to be 2500; but the total number of weavers' families is about 3000; so that about 500 families do not avail themselves of education for their offspring, most probably owing to the extreme poverty of the district, and fully corroborating the abundant testimonies I have obtained as to that depression.

I beg to call your attention to the fact proved by the following table, whereby it will be seen that low wages induce a proportionate deficiency of education among the poorer classes. Wages in reference to education.

The average amount of wages earned by the families, say five in a family, is 10*s.* per week; that is to say, of the fourteen parishes in this schedule. It will be also seen that the average number on the whole population receiving education in twenty parishes is one in thirteen.

The averages of earnings are 10*s.*; the average of education is one in thirteen.

Of the fourteen parishes where I have been enabled to ascertain the wages from actual inquiry from house to house, and which appear in the schedule, it will be seen that the wages in seven parishes are above the average of wages, and that seven are below that average.

The effect of this upon education is, that in the seven parishes where wages

are higher, five educate more than one in thirteen; and in those parishes where wages are lower than the average, five educate less than one in thirteen.

Schedule of Parishes in reference to Wages and Education.

Average wages of a family, 5 in number, 10*s*.

Average number, on the total population in Gloucestershire, receiving education, 1 in 13.

Wages in reference to education.

Parish.	Population.	Educated.	Wages.	Parish.	Population.	Educated.	Wages.
			s. *d.*				*s.* *d.*
Avening . .	2396	1 in 18	7 0	Nibley . .	1575	1 in 37	
Bisley . .	5896	1 „ 18	10 8	Painswick .	4099	1 „ 14	10 10
Cam . . .	2071	1 „ 17	9 9	Rodborough .	2141	1 „ 12	15 0
Cirencester .	5420	1 „ 12		Stanley . .	2438	1 „ 23	9 1
Coaley . .	1124	1 „ 10	8 2	Stinchcombe .	352	1 „ 9	
Dursley . .	3226	1 „ 20		Stonehouse .	2469	1 „ 7	11 0
Eastington .	1800	1 „ 14		Stroud . .	8607	1 „ 10	11 5
Hampton . .	5114	1 „ 10	10 3	Uley . . .	2543	1 „ 11	8 10
Horsley . .	3690	1 „ 22	9 6	Woodchester .	885	1 „ 6	11 4
Kingswood .	1446	1 „ 17		Wootton . .	5482	1 „ 21	9 7½

Statement of Parishes in reference to the Averages of Wages and Education.

Average of Wages, 10*s*.

Average number receiving education in the weaving districts, 1 in 13.

Parishes *above* the Average of Wages.	Wages.	Educated.	Parishes *under* the Average of Wages.	Wages.	Educated.
	s. *d.*			*s.* *d.*	
Bisley . . .	10 8	1 in 18	Avening . .	7 0	1 in 18
Hampton . .	10 3	1 „ 10	Cam	9 9	1 „ 17
Painswick . .	10 10	1 „ 14	Coaley . . .	8 2	1 „ 10
Rodborough .	15 0	1 „ 12	Horsley . . .	9 6	1 „ 22
Stonehouse . .	11 0	1 „ 7	Stanley . . .	9 1	1 „ 23
Stroud . . .	11 5	1 „ 10	Uley	8 10	1 „ 11
Woodchester .	11 4	1 „ 6	Wootton . .	9 7½	1 „ 21

I now submit, in a tabular form, the returns supplied to me from the Clergymen of the different parishes, and to which I have already alluded.

NAME OF PARISH.	Population.	Infant Schools.					Daily Schools.					Total Number of Schools.		Total Number of Children receiving Daily Education.		Total of Children receiving Daily Education.	Total of Hand-Loom Weavers' Children.	Number of Schools and description to which lending Libraries are attached.		Increase of Schools since 1833.		Number of Industrial Schools.	Number of Teachers trained in Normal Schools.
		Number of Infant Schools.	Number of Children. Boys.	Number of Children. Girls.	Number of Children of Hand-Loom Weavers.	Total.	Number of Daily Schools.	Number of Children. Boys.	Number of Children. Girls	Number of Children of Hand-Loom Weavers.	Total.	Infant.	Daily.	Boys.	Girls.			Infant.	Daily.	Infant.	Daily.		
Avening	2,396	..	..	..	..	..	1	68	63	..	131	..	1	68	63	131	..						
Bisley	5,896	1	Incomplete			52	5	171	97	20	268	1	5	..	..	320	20						
Cam	2,071	..	..	..	..	..	2	60	60	..	120	..	2	60	60	120	..	..	1	..	1		
Cirencester	5,420	1	..	..	..	60	3	248	146	15	394	1	3	..	..	454	15						
Coaley	1,124	..	..	..	..	..	2	46	63	5	109	..	2	46	63	109	5	..	..	1	2		
Dursley	3,226	1	Incomplete			42	2	120	..	..	120	1	2	120	42	162	..						
Eastington	1,800	..	..	..	..	..	1	60	70	28	130	..	1	60	70	130	28						
Hampton	5,114	..	..	..	..	..	3	296	217	59	513	..	3	296	217	513	59	..	1	..	1		
Horsley	3,690	1	20	25	19	45	1	60	60	28	120	1	1	80	85	165	47						
Kingswood	1,447	..	..	..	..	..	1	66	19	28	85	..	1	66	19	85	28						
Nibley, North	1,575	..	..	..	..	..	5	12	30	13	42	..	5	12	30	42	13	..	..	1			
Painswick	4,099	1	Incomplete		8	87	4	95	115	8	210	1	4	95	115	297	16	..	..	1			
Rodborough	2,141	1	20	23	2	43	2	98	33	9	131	1	2	118	56	174	11	..	1		1	..	
Stanley	2,438	..	..	..	..	..	1	57	50	28	107	..	1	57	50	107	28	..	1				
Stinchcombe	352	..	..	..	..	..	1	21	20	..	41	..	1	21	20	41	..	..					
Stonehouse	2,469	..	..	..	..	..	2	Incomplete			350	..	2	..	..	350	..	..					
Stroud	8,607	2	rementioned in returns of the Perpetual Curate, and stated to be included in the daily schools.				5	140	196	84	336		5	140	196	336	202	..	1	..	1	3	
By return of the Dissenting Minister		4	154	206	63	360	1	36 (250)	24 (288)	3 (137)	60 (538)					(898)							
							Un. House					4	Diss. 1	(404)	(494)								
							1	74	68	50	142		Un. H. 1	264	298	562							
Uley	2,543	1	54	50	39	104	2	60	63	47	123	1	2	114	113	227	86						
Woodchester	885	1	42	31	6	73	6	30	58	8	88	1	6	72	89	161	14	..	1	..	..	..	3
Wootton	5,482	..	..	..	..	..	4	137	120	30	257	..	4	137	120	257	30	..	1	..	2	..	2
	62,775	12	290	335	139	866	55	1955	1572	463	3877	12	55	1826	1706	4743	602	..	8	2	8	3	6
			Incomplete.					Incomplete.		Incom.				Incomplete.									

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

NAME OF PARISH.	Population.	From Returns made by Ministers of the Church of England.											From Returns and Statements made by the Dissenters.										
		Church.					Dissenters.				Number of Schools with Lending Libraries attached.	Number of Schools Established since 1833.	Church.					Dissenters.				Number of Schools with Lending Libraries attached.	Number of Schools Established since 1833.
		Number of Church Schools.	Number of Children. Boys.	Number of Children. Girls.	Number of Weavers' Children.	Total.	Number of Dissenters' Schools.	Number of Children. Boys.	Number of Children. Girls.	Number of Weavers' Children.	Total.			Number of Church Schools.	Number of Children. Boys.	Number of Children. Girls.	Number of Weavers' Children.	Total.	Number of Dissenters' Schools.	Number of Children. Boys.	Number of Children. Girls.	Number of Weavers' Children.	Total.		
Avening	2,396	1	87	97	..	184	No return.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	No return.	..	..	1	47	53	..	100	1	
Bisley	5,896	Incomplete.	130	152	176	282	No return.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7	..	..	..	598	1	
Cam	2,071	1	40	30	..	70	2	54	36	26	90												
Coaley	1,124	1	32	42	5	74	1	48	56	18	104	..	..	..	No return.	..	..	1	..	..	78	134		
Dursley	3,226	Incomplete.	100	80	..	180	1	Incomplete.		..	150	..	..	..	ditto.	..	..	3	192	281	..	473	2	
Eastington	1,800	1	86	94	50	180	2	120	100	73	220	1	..	No return from the Dissenting Minister.										
Frocester	414	1	27	23	..	50																		
Hampton	5,114	3	234	210	101	444	3	162	221	91	383	4	..	..	No return.	..	..	3	169	208	90	377	3	
Horsley	3,690	1	110	115	60	225	No return.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	348	324	250	672	1	
Kingswood	1,447	1	76	79	55	155	1	95	109	68	204	2	..	1	60	65	35	125	1	82	114	50	196	2	
Nebley	1,575	1	34	52	18	86	3	50	70	32	120	..	..	..	No return from the Dissenting Minister.									
Painswick	4,099	2	97	106	16	203	4	145	159	47	304	..	..	2	97	106	203	203	4	152	151	32	313	1	
Rodborough	2,141	1	50	60	..	110	No return.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	No return.	..	..	1	76	137	35	213	1	
Stanley	2,438	..	109	107	55	216	1	92	88	45	180	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	142	142	102	284	1	1
Stinchcombe	352	1	46	48	..	94	No return.	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	No return.									
Stonehouse	2,469	2	Incomplete.			350	2	Incomplete.		..	220	..	..	..	ditto.									
Stroud	8,607	6	300	300	84	600	No return.	..	..	..	..	1	1	6	..	..	108	640	7	494	641	282	1,135	..	1
Uley	2,543	1	104	108	92	212	3	65	44	53	109	..		..	No return from the Dissenting Minister.									
Woodchester	885	1	66	79	77	145	No return.	..	..	..	..	1			No return.	..	..	1	58	62	..	120		
Wootton	5,482	3	46	73	13	119	No return.	..	..	..	..	1			No return.	..	..	4	..	..	161	821		
	57,769	28	1,774	1,855	802	3,979						13	1											

For want of clothing and decent apparel, the children, in many instances, cannot attend religious worship at Wootton and other districts.

A weaver, named James Fowler, states, that

"It is the habit of the teachers of the Sunday school in the Established Church, to visit the absentees, and to know the reason of their non-attendance: he has frequently made these visits, and found that 50 out of 150 children, absentees, did not attend, on account of their wretched clothing."

Distress of Parents injurious to their children.

The means of the weaver are so low, said a weaver, named Samuel Corsman, of Rodborough,

"that they cannot send their children to school; that they cannot attend Divine Service for want of clothing; and that even many weavers, in Forest-green and the neighbourhood, cannot, and are ashamed to, attend worship, on account of the wretchedness of their clothing.

Esau Burford, a weaver at Forest-green, states—

"That he has four children, all too young to earn money; complains that he can only send one child to school, in consequence of being unable to clothe them, and that they cannot get enough to eat, much more to find clothes for the children, fit for them to go out in."

Another weaver, named Dyer, of the Ham Mills, says

"That he has six children, three of whom are too young to work; two of them go to Sunday-school; and that he should send more, but cannot provide them with decent clothing."

A weaver, named Thomas Burford, of Forest Green, states—

"That he has nine children living; three are out at service, and the other six at home, in the greatest destitution and misery; that he cannot send his children to school for want of the means to clothe them; they go to Sunday-school when they can find clothes for them, which God knows, is now very seldom."

A weaver at Hampton Common, named Stevens, states that—

"He has eight children, six of whom are at home, five under fifteen years of age; that one of the children goes to church, the rest have nothing decent enough to appear in; he states that they are as barefooted as his hand, and are running about the common wild; he much regrets that they cannot attend Sunday-school, but, he observes, we are pawned and sold up, even to our bedding, and stripped of everything, in order even to find them bread."

A woman, named Deborah Lewis, a weaver, states that

"She has four children; two of them too young to work, and two that are employed; these two go to Sunday-school, the others have no clothes fit to appear in."

A weaver, named William Evans, states that

"Three of his children are educated by the kindness of three humane neighbours; they attend a national school; says he has not a penny to pay for any of his children in the way of education."

A weaver, named William Sparkes, stated that

"Out of a family of six children he educated four to the best of his ability, and as far as his means allowed him, and considers that the education they possess has been of great use to them in life; their good and steady conduct, arising from education, was the means of recommending them to persons in respectable stations in life, and thus, step by step, they have got on; the eldest is in America, 25 years old; left England two years ago; he worked at weaving till he was about fifteen years of age; trade then became dull, and he sought other employment, such as pressing, packing, &c., and finally went abroad at his own expense—that is, he joined three others, who made a common purse, and went to New York; he got work in a fortnight after he arrived there, in a manufactory, and is now at work, and continues in work; gets about 30*s.* a-week, and says it does not cost him six cents. a-week for beer, and has been saving four dollars a-week.

A weaver, named Thomas Payton, states, that

"He always tried to give his children what education he could afford, and that one of his boys so pleased the Rev. Dr. Williams, Rector of the parish of Woodchester, that he obtained him a situation abroad in a religious capacity; witness considers the benefits arising from education are most effectual."

The weavers at Wootton-Under-Edge, are, in general, averse to bring up their children to the trade; and one man stated that he would sooner follow his children to the grave than see them weavers.

A weaver stated, that

"In consequence of the depressed condition of the weavers they could not afford to send their children to school."

And, although there is a free School at Kingswood, a weaver stated, that

"He could not send three of his children there for want of clothing."

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Education.

Mr. Hooper, a manufacturer, at Eastington, not only dismisses a drunken man from his factory, but he also requires his work-people to send their children to Sunday-schools. He gives to each child a ticket, on Saturday, which must be returned by them on Monday, signed by the teacher, on pain of being deprived that day, or the next, of work. There have been 4368 attendances of the children in his factory, and only 18 omissions.

The following is the form of ticket:—

School Ticket.

Sunday, July 1st, 1838.—Harriett Burford has attended this school to-day.—Ann Warner, Teacher.

Mr. S. Marling, of Ham Mills, has established an infant-school at the Thrupp, under the immediate superintendence of Mrs. Marling; and most of the parents employed at his mill, and residing in the neighbourhood, send their children to this school. He, moreover, discountenances licentious conduct in his mill, and dismisses from his employment any girl who might be pregnant. He has only had occasion to dismiss seven for such conduct; and men, whose conduct may be loose or immoral, are also punished by dismissal. The attention of these gentlemen to the behaviour of their workpeople forms a striking contrast to many manufacturers, who say that the best workmen are the greatest drunkards, and consequently are employed by them, without reference to their domestic, or rather undomesticated habits.

I subjoin the following letters—one from Mr. Wall, master of an endowed school, called St. Chloe,* the other from Mr. Price, a schoolmaster at Dursley.

Mr. Wall proposes institutions where the best English authors should be read publicly after the usual hours of labour; he further observes that the wages of a labourer ought to be adequate to his support and the education of his children, and that it should not be granted as a charity; his suggestions are best explained by himself.

"Sir, "*St. Chloe School, Hampton, 16th February*, 1839.

Letter of Mr. Wall.

"I comply with your request, that I should give you my opinion on Education with some reluctance, because it is a subject on which, although I have thought much in a desultory manner, I have not formed any very definite conclusions.

"The use of Education is either to make the person more useful to the public, or to increase his own gratification; but the present complaint of the poor is the want of work on the one hand, and an inadequate means of subsistence, even with work, on the other: and I cannot see how the question of Education bears upon it; they are not now incompetent to the work required, and their state of privation must necessarily exclude much mental gratification: improved education may be suitable to an anticipated better condition of the labourers, but cannot relieve their present distress.

"I will, however, proceed to answer the intimated questions.

"Q. Whether the Education should be voluntary or compulsory?

"A. I think voluntary; because I cannot discover any compulsory mode that is not in other respects objectionable.

"Q. To what extent is voluntary education likely to be accepted?

"A. If no influence be used, the more needy parents will probably send their children to work, when it can be obtained, and to school when the employment fails; but where the parents are in better circumstances, and the children intelligent, the children will be sent to school almost constantly. It is probable that about half of those who had entered would be the average attendance, and very few would remain entirely without education.

"With this attendance, reading, writing, and the more useful rules of arithmetic may be generally acquired, while the more constant and intelligent attendants, might learn book-keeping, English grammar, geography, mensuration, and any other study suited to their peculiar prospects.

"Some persons imagine that music, drawing, and mechanics, may, with advantage, be extended to labouring individuals, and preserve them from more pernicious pleasures; and certainly, I have known examples of such persons acquiring arts and accomplishments under very discouraging circumstances, and thus obtaining much private pleasure and public respect.

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* St. Chloe, St. Loe, or St. Louis School, parish of Hampton, founded in 1699, by donation of 1000*l.* from Mr. Cambridge, to be expended in purchase of house and land for the purpose of educating boys belonging to or born in Woodchester, or the tithing of Rodborough; the children not to be younger than six, and able to read before admission. The master to be a learned man and of the Established Church.

The parents pay for books, and the gratuitous instruction consists in reading, writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, geography, and grammar.

Before the school at Amberley was opened, the number of scholars consisted of 42, and young children under the prescribed age were permitted, as a matter of favour, to attend.

The celebrated Dr. White, Arabic Professor in Oxford, and Bampton lecturer, had been a *Randwick hand-loom wearer*.

"The languages are, however, seldom acquired to any considerable proficiency by persons who enter early on active business, and seem more suited to those who are to employ the greater part of their youth in study; but they are necessary to the public speaker or writer, as no person can understand his native tongue properly without the knowledge of at least one other language to compare it with.'

Mr. Wall's letter.

"I think it a remarkable circumstance that no institution exists in England, at least so far as my information extends, for the public reading of the English poets and best prose writers; and I am impressed with the opinion, that institutions for that purpose, say weekly, in the evening, after the usual hours of labour, would elicit the excellence of those authors, make them better understood, more highly appreciated, and cause them to be more read at home, and thus give an expansion to the mind, and afford a pleasurable, cheap, and innocent mode of employing leisure hours.

"The disputes concerning religious education are, I imagine, chiefly confined to the leaders and public speakers of the different sects; at least, I have never known the parent of any child, whether churchman or dissenter, make a *private* objection to an extensive course of reading or study.

"Q. At whose expense should the school be established?

"A. If the parents are to remain in their present impoverished state, the schools must necessarily be free, and established by a school-rate, but the far higher view of the subject is to enable the parents to pay for their own children; the labourer should be made respectable, and the education of his children should be part of the reward of his labour, and not given to him as a charity, if it could be made compatible with still more important considerations.

"Few schools in the country, where the parents pay, are at present sufficiently extensive to admit of resident branches of many different masters; those who teach music, drawing, dancing, and the modern languages, and sometimes writing and arithmetic, travelling from school to school, and teaching at each perhaps not more than two or three hours in a week; consequently, the knowledge acquired by the pupil is both expensive and superficial, and laid aside on his leaving school.

"I have sometimes imagined that in places of considerable population, establishments might be formed with the different masters in daily attendance, and made permanent by a small foundation to each branch, where a pupil might be taught to any extent required, for the usual price of one branch, or even less, so as to bring it within reach of workmen in good employment.

"Q. By whom should the master be selected?

"A. A single patron would probably bestow the situation on a favourite; and a popular election would give it to a partizan of the strongest political or religious party; instead of to the person most fit for the situation.

"It would perhaps be impossible by any general rule to procure impartiality in all cases; but the best method which I am prepared to suggest is, to choose him by a majority of a committee of say nine persons, but that the churchwarden, town clerk, or some such officer, shall advertise for candidates, receive the offers, and fix on the day of selection before the committee is appointed, and that the one shall follow the other so speedily as to afford no opportunity for a canvass.

"The committee may be taken from the school-rate in the following manner:—

"Divide the names of the payers into nine grades, according to the amounts of the respective payments, and allowing an equal amount of rates to each grade.

"From each grade draw a name by lot, and let the nine persons, whose names are thus drawn, form the committee.

"I remain, &c.

"Edward Wall."

Mr. Pryce, of Dursley, laments that the withering effects of sectarian zeal should be allowed to extend itself over education; he also confirms the depressed condition of the hand-loom weavers, and it is a matter of great importance whether some decisive measures should not be adopted to prevent the injury entailed upon the rising, owing to the low pecuniary condition of the present generation. The benefit of Sunday schools is acknowledged, and Mr. Pryce believes that, if these facilities were not granted, many persons would have no means of learning to read.

The following is his letter upon the subject:—

"Sir, "*Dursley, November 13th*, 1838.

Mr. Pryce's letter.

"The subject of education upon which you request my sentiments is one of those questions which has been rendered somewhat difficult, in proportion as it has been encouraged or retarded by the interest or selfishness of party; hence, while in religion and politics we perceive its baneful influence in the animosity enkindled by sectarian zeal and contending factions, so on the subject of education it is to be lamented that the same spirit is permitted to extend its withering hand over the best interests of the rising generation. But disclaiming all party views and feelings I beg to assure you, that I come to the question without the

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Education.

Letter of Mr. Pryce.

slightest bias in favour of the opinions advanced by any individual to communicate to you my own decided convictions upon the subject of education, which has been matured by nearly twenty years' experience as a teacher of the young.

"That there is a lamentable deficiency of instruction afforded to the children of the poor is a fact which I think cannot be denied by any impartial observer, and I also think that, as a nation, we ought to take shame to ourselves that, in this particular, we have permitted our Continental neighbours to be in advance of us. If we refer to Scotland also, we find among its peasantry a degree of intelligence which cannot but excite the astonishment of those who are not acquainted with the religious and moral cultivation bestowed upon their minds in the period of youth; in short, a comparison between the lower classes of the community in England and Scotland can scarcely be instituted, for the latter rises immeasurably above the former both in intelligence and, I may say, moral worth; and all this is the result of education, a fact which is fully borne out by even English authorities. While the English labourer, whether he be engaged in the factory, the cultivation of the soil, or in almost any other branch of trade, is too frequently sunk, through the operation of an active spirit upon an uncultivated mind, into the lowest depths of a debasing and brutalizing sensuality, the Scottish peasant rises superior to the vices which degrade human nature, and stands boldly forth, a living example of the power with which early culture enables him to withstand the ordinary temptations to vice and profligacy which beset his path, in common with the peasantry of other countries, and to achieve a victory over himself in the mastery of his natural propensity to evil, greater than that of him who taketh a city.

"Upon inquiry I find that, in consequence of the small earnings of the hand-loom weavers, those who are by any means enabled to send their children to school, can do so but for a very limited time, as they are compelled to remove them to assist in supporting the family, just at the time likely to be most useful to them, when their minds will most readily receive impressions of good or evil. The consequence of this is evident, for as they are immediately brought into contact with men, often of the most depraved habits, so they as readily imbibe their opinions, copy their example, and cherish a love for practices which are ruinous in the extreme. Happily there are exceptions, otherwise the labouring poor would be sunk almost beyond the hope of rescue. They have, indeed, large claims upon our sympathy, and it behoves the legislature to adopt some remedy for this mighty evil and speedily remove this blot upon our national character. Whether it can be done without, at the same time, devising some means for compelling parents to send their children to be educated till they arrive at a certain age, I am not prepared to say; but that the instruction of the children of the labouring population is a subject demanding the immediate attention of the Government I am fully prepared to maintain. It is my firm conviction that were it not for Sunday schools, not one in ten of the children of our hand-loom weavers, and the lower class generally, would ever be able to read the word of God; and if most of these seminaries for the young did not hold out to their pupils some little instruction in writing as a reward, they would never acquire a sufficient knowledge of letters to be able to write even their own names. It is true we have day schools for the instruction of youth, where they might obtain at least the rudiments of an education; but either from the operation of low wages, or the depravity of the parents, the opportunity is not embraced with a readiness which argues much in favour of the poor.

"My opinion of the 'moral condition' of the lower class of the people may be gathered from what I have already said. It is truly distressing to witness the poverty of many a family in this neighbourhood, and the consequent ignorance of the younger branches, whose squalid appearance betoken in some degree the nature of their privations. It might be supposed that from their situation in life, the hand-loom weavers ought to be able to support themselves and families in comparative comfort, but is this not the case; for, either from the grinding oppression of their masters, or the falling off in their trade, or both, they are so much reduced as, in many instances, to be scarcely able to provide the means of subsistence for those dependent on them, and altogether unable to give their children even a shadow of an education; and they are, consequently, not unfrequently left to follow the bent of their own depraved inclinations, which lead them to the commission of crime for which they are often banished the country. I am quite satisfied that if there was more education diffused amongst the people there would be less crime in the country; and I have no hesitation in saying that if the poor were better instructed, they would feel a degree of honest pride in keeping themselves above the low and grovelling vices engendered by ignorance, and would be led to cultivate a desire to imitate whatever is 'lovely and of good report' among their fellows; our jails would have fewer inmates, and the taxes on the community at large for the support of paupers would be much lighter than they now are. I by no means expect a state of perfect innocence and happiness consequent on the general diffusion of education; but I do expect that the condition of the poor would be ameliorated beyond any thing we can at present contemplate.

"Such, Sir, is in few words my opinion of the condition of the hand-loom weavers, and of the generality of the poor in this neighbourhood. With regard to schools we have in Dursley, beside two seminaries for the education of the upper classes, one on the national system, where a penny a-week is required of each pupil, and another quite free, which is supported by Dissenters, and is conducted by a minister of the Independent persuasion. There are also four Sunday schools in the town. The following table will show the number of children in each of them and how they are employed when not in either of the day schools

DAY SCHOOLS.

National, Boys	86	154, total.
,, Girls	68	
Back Street (Independent), Boys only	30	

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

	Number of Children.			Number working in Factories, or at Wire-setting for Cardmakers.	Number attending Day-Schools.	Number working as Labourers, Shoemakers, &c.
	Boys.	Girls.	Total.			
National	130	69	199	140	20	39
Wesleyan	61	84	145	36	40	69
Tabernacle	70	90	160	40	50	70
Boulton (Independent)	62	115	177	60	23	94

"N.B. The day scholars in the national schools are, many of them, to be found in the Sunday schools of the Dissenters, where they attend regularly. None of the pupils in the national day schools are fourteen years of age; but I saw some there on Sunday last that could not have been less than sixteen, and one or two at least twenty.

"In the system of education pursued in the national schools there is, I think, a decided defect. The catechetical portion of their instruction is not sufficiently comprehensive; the questions of the master and the answers of his pupils are too formal and admit of little variation; while, on the contrary, in the schools on the British system the interrogatory part is infinitely superior, giving full scope to the mental powers of the masters, and eliciting answers from the pupil calculated to astonish and delight their hearers; and these, upon a vast variety of subjects, connected with their future well-being in society. If the Government intend adopting 'a system of general national education, combined with sound religious instruction,' there is none with which I am acquainted that will bear comparison with the British and Foreign system, which affords instruction to the children of all denominations without respect to sect or party.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"GEORGE PRYCE.

"*W. A. Miles, Esq.*

"*&c. &c. &c.*"

Mr. Samuel Marling, of the Ham Mills, has favoured me with his opinions in the following letter; and one important feature is the stress he lays upon the benefit of a training school. I have often observed that when men, however ignorant, may have failed in any pursuit and calling, they adopt as a last resource the calling of a schoolmaster, and to such persons the interests of the rising generation are too often consigned.

"DEAR SIR, "*Ham Mills, March 20th*, 1839.

"I ACCEDE with pleasure to your request of giving you an outline of my ideas on the subject of the education of the labouring classes. Happily its importance is now admitted by all, and the present question is not, whether they shall be educated, but in *what manner*, and by *what means*, and I sincerely trust that will soon be determined by the introduction of some comprehensive and effectual scheme. Mr. S. Marling's letter.

"I am fully persuaded that the inquiries you have been making in this district, relative to one particular class of labourers, have proved, that for that class especially, and indeed for *all*, a sound system of education adapted to fit the rising generation for their respective stations, is imperatively and immediately required.

"The system of education adapted in our common schools should have a reference to our social condition, as a manufacturing, agricultural, and commercial people; to our peculiar geographical situation and political relation. Our territory at home is limited and occupied, but we have possessions in the American and Australian continents, which ought to be rendered an easy outlet for our rapidly increasing population, and an inexhaustible supply for their increasing wants. It is my opinion that, in not a few of our schools, as much of the elements of what is commonly called learning is taught, as can be necessary for the children of the labouring classes; but the formation of those habits of industry, and the communication of that knowledge of agriculture and the arts, which are calculated to make them skilful workmen, and good and intelligent labourers, is sadly neglected.

"I am deeply impressed with the absolute necessity there is for all education being based on the principles of the Bible, and would countenance no system in which sound, moral, and religious instruction were not made the foundation of every thing else; yet I must confess my fears, that there is a tendency in many quarters to attend to this subject to the almost total

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Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Education.

Mr. S. Marling's letter.

exclusion of other very important and very necessary parts of education; not that too much regard is paid to the former, but far too little to the latter.

"There exists at present amongst all ranks of society, a general desire to promote the cause of education, and very much is being done by personal efforts and pecuniary assistance; but most unhappily, a spirit of religious sectarianism prevails, and exhibits itself in some of its worst forms on this subject, when all denominational distinctions ought to be merged in one combined effort to benefit the rising generation. Though this spirit cannot be at once eradicated, yet much may be done to mitigate its injurious effects.

"That the people are exerting themselves is a matter of congratulation; and the Government, in my opinion, will but promote the good cause, not by superseding those exertions, but by fostering, enlightening, and aiding them.

"It is with great diffidence that I would suggest any particular plan, but I may venture to say that a great improvement may be effected by the establishment of a "*Training School*," which might serve two most important purposes, viz., the qualifying of masters and mistresses, and present a model of what a common school ought to be, the expenses to be defrayed out of the resources of the county. A committee or council might be connected with it, before which teachers in this and other establishments might be examined, and if found duly qualified, diplomas should be granted by the said council.

"Thus the first step would be gained, the next would be to induce the patrons, committees, or managers of the existing schools through the country, to employ *only such* teachers as have passed their examination before the council, of what might be called the National Training School. This, I think, might be done by offering to every school where such a teacher is employed, an annual pecuniary grant on one other condition, viz., that certain prescribed branches of knowledge be taught. The grant need not be large, but a moderate amount would be a powerful inducement to establish schools, and would do much to insure an efficient discipline in all schools which receive the grant; for I should further recommend, that visitors be appointed, and that those schools should lose their grant for the year in which the conditions were not complied with.

"In connexion with these schools, I think it would be well to have for the elder boys (if not for the girls) an *industrial department*, in which gardening, and the rudiments of agriculture *especially* should be taught, and as much practical knowledge in other departments of industry as might be found attainable.

"For this purpose an extensive plot of land would be required, where perhaps each boy might have his own allotment; in this I cannot anticipate much difficulty, as it would not be necessary to have the land attached to the school. In London it might not be so practical, but in all country places, and even in large towns, it might be effected.

"Some such system as this, I am convinced, is wanted. It must be evident to all reflecting minds, that in the present enterprising age, when changes and improvements in almost every department of our social economy are constantly taking place, the children of the labouring population should be trained to habits of *adaptiveness*, so as to be able to apply themselves to those new circumstances in which they may be placed; thus mitigating the painful vicissitudes which are frequently occurring, especially in our manufacturing districts. Extensive changes in any long established system, however beneficial in these ultimate results, can hardly ever be effected without considerable suffering to those, whose daily bread has been obtained under the exploded system.

"The habits and acquirements of those who generally emigrate from our distressed districts, are for the most part but ill adapted to cope with the difficulties which they must encounter in any of the colonies. The same training necessary to render a man a *successful emigrant*, would also render him a more useful member of society *at home*.

"After a tolerably extensive acquaintance with the state of the manufacturing population of this district, I am convinced that those whose ingenuity is most conspicuous in the culture of their gardens and in their other domestic arrangements, are the best workmen, husbands, and fathers.

"In these schools, too, considerable attention should be paid to history, especially of England; the advantages of our well-balanced constitutional Government should be rendered clear to the children; the instruction should be given respecting the laws which as they advance to years of maturity, the children will be expected to obey. Their reasonableness and equity should be rendered apparent, as well as the advantages resulting to all classes of society from their general observance. No one department of national education has, I think, been so much neglected as this; surely it is but reasonable that those who are to obey the laws should be informed what those laws actually are.

"But my limits will not permit me to proceed further into detail; but I must observe, that if the Government is to give any efficient aid to education, *it must have no respect to religious parties*. But in all schools a certain system of moral and religious training must be adopted, therefore, that must be left to the patrons of the school to supply that which may be most generally approved; and it is my opinion, that this branch will be far better attended to by them, than if controlled in any way by the public authorities.

"Assistance should be given to the building of school-rooms as at present, but on a more liberal scale.

"I conceive that any system of parochial or district taxation for the purposes of education, would work badly in this county, on account of the peculiar position of religious parties; it would tend to perpetual irritations and disputes. If the resources of the country will not allow of any large appropriation of money for aiding in the support of schools, some *specific* tax for

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Mr. S. Marling's letter.

this especial object might be introduced, and I believe there is none to which the people would willingly submit.

"The plan I have now shadowed out, possesses I think not a few advantages; it proposes that the Government should do just enough to draw forth the voluntary efforts and energies of the people, without which the vitality necessary to the success of any scheme, will be wanting, while at the same time it gives the Government the power to introduce and maintain at a very moderate cost, the most efficient and best digested scheme of education in all the schools which would receive the public grant, and all schools, I conceive, would be desirous of the grant, consequently all would adopt the improved system.

"Your own request must be my apology for troubling you at such length. The subject is one of immense consequence, and something should be done immediately; delay will only present us with new difficulties.

"I am, &c.,

"*W. A. Miles, Esq.* (Signed) "Samuel S. Marling.
&c. &c. &c."

Opinions of clergymen and others.

The following letters and communications have been addressed to me from some of the clergymen, the Dissenters and others, relative to education, to the depressed condition of the hand-loom weavers, and also to the pernicious effects of beer-shops, especially at Coaley; but before I lay before you these letters allow me to quote a communication from Anthony Fewster, a quaker, residing at Nailsworth. He says,—

"The advantages of a general system of national education, combined with sound religious instruction, would be unspeakably great. No legislative enactment can be worked in this country that is not founded on the broadest basis. A system which shall comprehend *all* that is wanted; and this a certain party (powerful for evil) will labour mightily to prevent."

Avening.

The minister of the parish of Avening states that—

It is only, however, within the last few years that they have been rendered at all efficient; the number of scholars is now increasing every quarter. I think the working classes are beginning to become alive to the benefits of education; because the influence of a religious education is becoming visible in the improving conduct and morals of the young. If the inquiries are made with a view to know whether a system of education would be supported, which included all denominations of Christians, by excluding any definite system of religion, I conceive that such a plan would not be encouraged by those who now support the school in Avening.

The Dissenting minister at Avening states that—

"Avening is an extensive parish, and there are many hand-loom weavers there. A day-school belonging to the church is the only one in the parish; if another could be established among ourselves it would be desirable.

"The weavers in this neighbourhood are badly off, their wages are very low; this neighbourhood has greatly suffered through the alteration in the East India Charter."

Bisley.

The minister of Bisley states that—

"An infant school was established by me a few years since at Chalford, in this parish, but given up for want of funds."

He observes—

"I need scarcely say, that the extreme poverty of the people operates in various ways as an impediment to any attempt to provide additional instruction for the children of the poor, greatly as it is needed."

The curate of Bisley, the Rev. H. Jeffrey, obliged me with the following communication concerning the parish of Bisley:—

As to the state of education in this parish, so far as it is conducted under the eye of the Church, the following may be relied on as a correct statement:—

In the town of Bisley itself there is a Blue School, as it is called, with an endowment for clothing and educating 15 boys, which school is now full.

There is also a free school for educating 15 boys free of expense, in which school there are at present four vacancies. Mr. Brotherton, the master of the two schools has 6 private scholars. His number of scholars altogether is therefore 31.

There is a daily school for girls at Bisley, supported by payments of 1*d.* per week from the children, 3*l.* annually from the Churchwardens (from a fund left express for encouraging education,) and the remainder of its expense is defrayed by the Vicar of Bisley. In this school the girls are taught to read, to knit, to sew, to mark, &c.; they are well instructed in the principles of their religion, and have opportunity of going to church every day.

Total number of daily scholars at Bisley is

Girls	40
Boys	31
	71

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Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

EDUCATION.

At Oakridge, which is a principal district in the parish, and full of very poor weavers, chiefly in the employ of Mr. Cripps, of Cirencester, a church has lately been built, a parsonage house attached, and two good school-rooms. The Curate, who resides at Oakridge, educates at his own cost, and free of all expense to the children,

Boys	60
Girls	57

Bisley.

who come every day, and are taught to read, *write*, knit, sew, &c. These children have also the opportunity of going to church every day.

At Chalford, a daily school for boys is supported by 5*l.* annually from the Churchwardens, 1*d.* payments from the boys, and 2*d.* from those who learn to write, and the remainder of the expense is defrayed by the Curate of Bisley. The boys are instructed in religion according to the principles of the Church of England, and in the fundamental rules of arithmetic, as well as in reading, and some are taught to *write*. The number of boys in this school are 50.

At Bussage, another district in the parish, a dame school for boys and girls, is supported by 3*l.* annually from the Churchwardens, 1*d.* payments from the children, and the remainder is defrayed by the Vicar of Bisley. The children are taught to read, to sew, to knit, but not to *write;* of course they are instructed in the principles of their religion. The number of children here are 52.

Total number of children instructed in our Daily Church Schools—

	Boys.	Girls.
Bisley	31	40
Oakridge	60	57
Chalford	50	..
Bussage, Boys and Girls	..	52
		149
	141	141
Total		290

I am not aware, observes the Rev. H. Jeffrey, that there are any Dissenting daily schools in the parish; there are some little private schools here and there, about which it is out of my power to furnish you any precise information.

The Church Sunday Schools in the parish are as follows:—

	Boys.	Girls.
Bisley	84	77
Oakridge	76	82
Chalford	59	63
Total number of children in the Church Sunday Schools		441

There are several Meeting Houses in the parish, most of which have Sunday scholars, but of their exact state and present attendance I can give you no information.

At Bisley there is a Methodist Meeting, and whenever we turn a Bisley child out of the Church schools he is usually admitted into the Meeting school; but it is not often to the profit, as the boy or girl attends perhaps once or twice, or more, and then ends in idling away the Lord's-day in the streets. Bisley itself contains about 600 inhabitants, situated just round the church, a very large portion of which spend the Sunday in idleness and dirt; the main of our scholars in the Sunday school and day schools come from the more distant districts.

To the Sunday schools at Bisley and Oakridge, and the daily schools at Bussage and Chalford, there are penny clubs attached, the children paying 1*d.* a week, which is doubled for them at Christmas, when they receive their 8*s.* 8*d.* in clothes. About 170 children pay in this year; their money is doubled by the kindness of individuals taking an interest in them and the schools. All that pay in do not have their money doubled; it depends on their behaviour.

Chalford.

In Chalford Vale the weavers are unable to avail themselves of education for their children, because they require their services to quill, &c.; they cannot afford the weekly payment to the school, to which must be added, if the child attended, the amount which he would earn at quilling, viz., 1*s.* 4*d.*

There are Sunday-schools attached to almost every place of worship.

A Dissenting minister, at Chalford, the Rev. J. Rees, in reference to his congregation thinks that—

Their morals are not as yet low, as a proof of which he states, that notwithstanding the deep distress in the district, crime and robbery have been trivial; there is, however, a progress towards deterioration, which he attributes to the want of means of attending religious instruction, as through want of labour and want of wages very many weavers are deprived of decent apparel. It breaks the spirit of the man, renders him careless of religious worship, or even to appear in public.

In visiting the cottages he finds them poverty stricken and squalid, indicating wretchedness to such an extent, that feeling pain in witnessing scenes that he cannot relieve, he has reluctantly abstained from visiting.

The weavers are patient under their distresses; and he has seen fine specimens of Christian principle shining in the darkness of poverty.

There are three boys' day-schools in this neighbourhood; there is no systematic education, and he considers it absolutely necessary; suggests the propriety of national education in such a neighbourhood as this.

The minister of Cam says—

Cam.

"I came only to reside in the parish last week, and being a perfect stranger as yet to the parishioners of Cam, I am able to give but very little of the information required. The hand-loom weavers in this parish are generally in great distress, on account of the want of work; with regard to their moral state I forbear to say anything, as I could not give information yet, which I could feel certain was correct."

The curate of Coaley says—

Coaley.

"As far as the branches of knowledge are concerned, which are essential towards rendering persons capable of superintending their own business and guarding their own interests, no additional means of education are required. The disposition of the working classes at Coaley is inimical to instruction generally; and it is only by adopting a system of patient, mild, and persevering exhortation, that they can be led at all to fall in with the views of their clergyman on that point. And with respect to those that profess to be favourable to it, poverty is the grand hinderance they plead; and a plea which might readily command the sympathy of all, were it not that in the majority of cases, both as regards the weavers, and other manufacturers, and agricultural labourers, that poverty is superinduced by the fatal propensity to strong drink—which is indulged to a most lamentable and heart-rending extent—and the facilities which the existing laws have continued to afford ever since the period of their enactment, to the idle, the drunken and the debauched, will, it is most seriously to be apprehended, swell the amount of the nation's responsibilities.

"So many haunts of vice and wickedness; schools where incipient vice is matured to crime, and infamy, and eternal ruin. Would to God they might be suppressed from one end of the land to the other. Would that our rulers may at length be convinced of the irreparable injury that the nation has sustained in the prevalence of these sinks of all that is horrible, evil, and devilish.

"If I could possibly compress into the compass of a single sheet all that I have known since the period I have, by the mercy of God, admitted into the number of the labourers in his vineyard, I am sure it would in the highest degree confound and astonish the senses of any well-ordered mind; instances in which individuals have been entirely ruined, and families been famished and driven to desperation.

"It must also be borne in mind that the poverty of the class whose interests are now sought to be promoted, arise in great measure from habits of personal intemperance; and although, doubtless, the introduction of machinery some years ago must have tended greatly to depress the honest and sober workman, yet it is a positive fact, that it matters not in most cases what extent of wages may be earned, the majority will, as opportunity allows, spend the greater portion in the licensed houses for drunkards and dissipated wretches.

"To my own knowledge the father of a family in the parish has, together with three children, earned four guineas a week, and still the whole family have been in the most abject condition possible, entirely through his habits of drunkenness."

The minister at Dursley says—

Dursley.

I think, *generally* speaking, that the working classes here are desirous of receiving proper instruction, and our means for that purpose are rather limited, and we would be glad to receive assistance.

Mr. Harris, a manufacturer at Dursley, stated to me that—

The weavers are a steady class of men, but that many families for want of decent clothing cannot send their children to the schools.

The dissenting minister says—

"There are but few hand-loom weavers in the town. From my short residence in the town I cannot speak fully of their condition, but I should think them to be the worst off of any of the poor. I consider it would be highly desirable to have additional means of education; and from the great majority of the poor being Dissenters, it should be upon liberal and comprehensive principles."

The minister of Frocester says—

Frocester.

"A weekly school for children under ten years of age would be acceptable to many families in this parish. During last winter I had a weekly school, but was induced from circumstances to give it up at the beginning of the summer; but I hope soon to establish one on a permanent footing, though I do not think that more than twenty, on an average, would be able to attend.

"The population, though stated at the last census to be 414, does not now I think exceed 376.

"There are no hand-loom weavers in the parish."

The minister of Minchin-Hampton states that—

Minchin Hampton.

"An infant-school has been tried in the parish for many years until Midsummer last, when on account of the very small number of children, never exceeding forty, it was not thought advisable to continue it. Children as young as three or four years of age are admitted into

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the daily schools. All the Sunday-schools are for boys as well as girls, except one of those connected with the church, which is for boys: this being the case with only the daily schools except one, there being of these

Two for boys and girls, and
One for boys exclusively.

Opinions of clergymen and others.

"Of the 513 children attending daily schools 380 likewise attend Sunday-schools within the parish.

"It is well to observe that the children of the hand-loom weavers who are receiving instruction, are almost entirely confined to one district of the parish: that the two daily schools in the town, containing 323 children return only 12 as having parents hand-loom weavers.

Minchin Hampton.

"I would remark that I do not think the great body of suffering poor will be at all reached by this inquiry; it is the whole manufacturing population, of whom weavers form a very small proportion, and not merely one branch, who are in such deep distress. Had the inquiry extended to this, I believe nine-tenths of our children would have been found to belong to this class of persons. The distress of the entire district is beyond the conception of any one who has not witnessed it; it was not only want, but actual starvation which was endured throughout last winter. Their condition is now but little better than it was then, except that they have not to endure cold as well as hunger.

"One step, which would tend greatly to the moral improvement of the poor, would be the putting down of beer-houses: they will be found in every direction, placed at the very gates, or even within the courts of manufactories, presenting temptation, and even forcing it upon the poor. Besides this bad influence upon the more steady and industrious classes, their general effect is most injurious, being placed frequently in the most retired spots as receptacles for the most vicious and abandoned characters. These remarks do not extend of course to those houses licensed to sell beer *not to be drunk on the premises*. These are as good as the others are bad, because they prevent a man sitting down and drinking cup after cup till he is almost insensibly led into habits of intoxication, and on the contrary lead him to buy at once what he thinks sufficient, and to take that home to his family like any other part of their provisions.

"The putting down of beer-houses, however thus desirable, will be found a very insufficient remedy for the overwhelming distress of this district.

"Emigration seems to be the natural remedy, and indeed, the only one that can fully meet the exigencies of the case. Even emigration must be conducted on a very extended scale to be productive of any real good, and from the favourable reports which have been received from those already gone out, I do not think there would be found any indisposition among the poor to avail themselves of this means of relief."

The petty constable of Woodchester states that—

"In reference to education in the parish of Hampton, that he made close inquiries of the parents, and that the answer invariably was, that the children could not attend the school in consequence of their destitute and ragged condition. There are many schools in this parish, and education is cheap, but not available to the poor, in consequence of the distress existing, not only among the weavers, but also among the labouring classes generally."

The dissenting minister at Hampton states that—

"Although a large number of children are instructed in the schools supported by members of the Established Church, still I think another daily school might be very advantageously established in our district of the parish, but the Dissenters here are too poor to be capable of supporting it. Many of the hand-loom weavers are Dissenters. I think their moral condition quite equal, if not superior, to that of any other class of the poor. As it regards their pecuniary condition, it is very bad, and is daily becoming worse in consequence of the gradual introduction of power-looms."

Horsley.

The minister at Horsley thinks

A larger infant school would be very desirable, as affording the means of preparation for the other schools, and allowing the parents the opportunity of obtaining work from home, both of which objects they appear anxious to secure.

Kingswood.

The minister of Kingswood says—

"There is wanted a daily school for girls. The endowed school here is designed for boys, but from the want of a female school, girls are admitted into it. I know not whether an infant school would not answer still better, but I much doubt whether funds could be raised in the parish for either, as the circumstances of the people are much reduced through the depression of trade. There is a good school-room ready for use."

Nibley.

The minister of Nibley says—

"I am of opinion that no additional means of education are required, but many children are deprived of the means already afforded them, from the great poverty of their parents."

Painswick.

The minister at Painswick states that—

"There are certainly wanted additional means of education, especially day schools; but the disposition of the working classes for education is not very encouraging to any one to

attempt such a thing, as the far greater part are altogether indifferent on the subject. Where religion has made an impression, there a desire for education is awakened; parents become anxious for the training of their children, and are willing to exert themselves to obtain it; otherwise it appears to me that if they do send their children to school, they do it more as a sort of favour to you, and the children are left to do much as they like, but of course their interest is not much attended to."

Opinions of clergymen and others.

"There is no doubt but the beer-houses have done much to lower the moral and social feelings of the poorer classes in England; these houses necessarily prove places of real temptation to the poor man, here he finds a comfortable fire and plenty of companions; he remembers that at home there will be hardly any fire and likely a noisy set of children; these houses give credit to a large extent, which is another temptation the poor man had not before. When there were only public-houses the people who kept them were more respectable, they would not give that credit that the beer-houses do, and they did not offer the same facilities and attractions to the poor man. Added to this, from the number of beer-houses, there are the unfrequented places in which many are placed, the law which limits them to *ten o'clock* at night is almost useless. It would require a regular police to go round the country to enforce that law. It may well then be conceived what favourable places for plotting crime and carrying it on these beer-houses are; for my own part I am fully convinced that no material good can ever be expected to be done to the country while they remain; and I believe that many a family, once respectable, has reason to mourn the passing of that Bill, as one of the greatest evils brought to their doors. You have only to place yourself in the situation of a poor man to see how great the temptation of such places must necessarily be to him, and when the father of a family once takes to drinking, he becomes at once a most thoroughly selfish being; all ties of family are forgotten, everything indeed is sacrificed, wife and children to obtain drink. It would, doubtless therefore, be a great blessing to remove the temptation to drunkenness out of the way of the poor person, and if they were thus taught to look for happiness at home, instead of the beer-house, there would be, putting religion out of the present question, more prospect of their being anxious about the education of their children.

"The first requisite, as it appears to me, is to excite among the people a desire after education, for which, at present, the greater number are without care. Where the parents are impressed with religion there is in general a feeling for the education of the children, that they may be properly trained; but this is not rarely found; one obstacle with the hand-loom weavers is want of money.

"As to the working classes themselves desiring education, I do not think they do, but that they would willingly remain in ignorance and let their children grow up in the same state. Religion, as I before said, making the exception; to promote education, therefore, you must promote religion."

Painswick.

The dissenting minister of Painswick states that—

"This parish is not so disgraced by bigotry as many; our vicar is a gentleman of liberal mind, yet it is highly desirable that some system should exist, to the benefits of which dissenting children might have unshackled admittance. I cannot say that the working classes are anxious for extended instruction, though, generally, they set a high value upon the advantages of *sunday-schools*. The number of hand-loom weavers has decreased much of late; many having been compelled to seek their bread by other means; hence the return will show a smaller number of hand-loom weavers' children than you will be prepared to receive.

"I think the hand-loom weavers of this district may be justly considered a moral class of men, perhaps, compared with others—religious also. Their pecuniary state is deplorable, and it has been so for years, though not equally so. How many have supported life, it is difficult to say; I know some, who, during the last three or four years, have not had work more than half their time, and when working they have not earned more than 6*s*. or 7*s*. per week. Their looms, too, seem to have rendered them unfit for other labour when they have followed weaving for many years. The condition therefore of many aged men, whom I know, is very distressing."

Randwick.

The minister of Randwick observes—

"Great advantage must accrue from a system of general national education, not however, merely combined with, but entirely based upon sound religious instruction; this can be only upon accredited Christian principles, and through the channel of the national church. The projected plan by which Christian truth is to be so frittered down, as to be satisfactory to all parties (a thing impossible), can serve only the progress of infidelity, and it will become a platform for the 'deceivableness' of popery."

Rodborough.

The officiating clergyman at Rodborough says—

"I have not distinguished between the children of hand-loom weavers and others; such an inquiry would be attended with much trouble and would issue in no good that I can possibly discern."

After this reply to the information I requested, the Reverend Gentleman continues to observe that—

"Additional means for securing a *sound religious education* to the children of the labour-

ing poor, are greatly wanted in this parish; their disposition to instruct their children has been much lessened from the necessity of the times. Where there is an inability to obtain for their offspring common food and clothing, it is folly to expect a desire to educate them."

Opinions of clergymen and others.

The dissenting minister at Rodborough says—

Rodborough.

"My conviction is, that additional means of instruction are required for this parish, particularly day schools; under this conviction the congregation, of which I am minister, worshipping at the Tabernacle, have within the last twelve months, built a school-room in a destitute part of the parish, intended for a daily and a Sunday school for boys and girls, and capable of holding comfortably 140 children; this school will be opened next month and be conducted on the principles of the British and Foreign School Society. I regret to think that the lower orders are not as alive as might be desired to the benefits of education for their children; the pecuniary condition of hand-loom weavers is most distressing, very many of them being out of regular employ. Their moral state is not so low, perhaps, as that of some other classes of the labouring population, such as those particularly denominated *labourers*, and out-of-door workmen, generally, compared with the latter; my belief is, that weavers are of more sober habits and far less disposed to violence and rioting. I should think them to be, generally, a more intelligent class than those above named."

Stanley.

The minister at Stanley states—

"That every child in this parish may be taught the first principles of our holy religion, reading, writing, and accounts for a mere trifle, and, where the parents are very poor, for nothing. In addition to this day-school instruction, all the sunday schools are free; I have not observed that any of the poor wish for a higher education.

"The beer-shops on their present plan must be stopped; I am an advocate for the free sale of beer, but not to be drunk within a certain distance of the house where it is bought, except in the purchaser's own house. I state this because I have observed beer retailers erect sheds near their own houses, where their customers sit and drink, and the only way to prevent this is, by not allowing it to be drunk within a given distance."

King Stanley.

The dissenting minister of King Stanley observes that—

"Many of the hand-loom weavers' children will not be able to attend school in the winter for want of clothing and shoes, and several of them are now obliged to have their clothes washed of a Saturday evening, in order to appear at all clean on Sabbath morning, and often the children are not in time to read because their clothes are not dry; it appears that most of the hand-loom weavers are in such circumstances that they cannot pay either rent or rates. When the hand-loom weavers were permitted to work in their own houses, their condition both in a moral and pecuniary point was better than now, and I believe, when compared with the state of other labouring classes, it is far inferior to them. It seems that all classes now see the value of education, and would gladly avail themselves of any means of acquiring it."

Stinchcombe.

The minister of Stinchcombe states

"That new school-rooms are very much required, and a memorial was sent up last year in August, consideration of which has been deferred till the next year.

"There are only two hand-loom weavers in the parish; several who were engaged in that employment have gradually given it up, and employed themselves in agriculture or road-making.

"In this district, generally, the weavers are the most destitute of all classes, but are generally as well instructed. And, in general, I do not think there is any very great want of more extended instruction in this neighbourhood."

Stroud.

The minister at Stroud considers

"The means of education to be in reasonable sufficiency. The working classes do not appear, as a body, to value them as schools so much as in the light of nurseries for their children, or as affording them an opportunity for getting their families out of the way for the day. Their chief object is to get their children employed at the earliest possible age, and the school is relinquished directly an opening presents itself, the wages, however small, being esteemed as of more importance than instruction.

The prime want, in this parish, is not of additional means of education, but of additional employment. When a law was enacted, requiring that children in factories should have a certain quantity of instruction in school per diem, the manufacturers discontinued the employment of children subject to that restriction. The effect of this was, that the children were unemployed and uneducated too, for no responding number of admissions have taken place at the schools with which I am connected."

The dissenting minister, the Rev. J. Burder, of Stroud, says—

"It is evident, from the tabular view of education in Stroud, that the children of the poor have hitherto been dependent chiefly on Sunday schools, and the majority of them on dissenting schools. As a dissenting minister I may be thought a prejudiced person; but my firm conviction is, that the dissenting Sunday schools in Stroud are, for the most part, as much superior in sound religious instruction to the generality of the schools of the establishment in this parish as they are in the number of the children. Nearly 200 gratuitous teachers of good

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character have the charge of 1100 children. These teachers, with myself and other ministers, meet quarterly, for the purpose of reporting the state of the schools, and of giving and receiving instruction with regard to the work of teaching. A large proportion of these teachers were once scholars in our Sunday schools. Most, but not all, the children in our Sunday schools are of poor parents. Some few are the children of tradesmen. Few neighbourhoods, containing so much destitution, have been so orderly and quiet as Stroud. I attribute this, under God, to the circulation of the Bible and other good books by the Bible and Tract Societies, partly to public instruction in our churches and chapels, but chiefly to Sunday schools. Our ministers and Sunday school teachers are a moral constabulary, more valuable than police, efficient and useful as that is.

Opinions of clergymen and others.

"Still, I am quite of opinion that our education of the poor is, neither in quantity nor quality, everything it ought to be. I had the pleasure of getting an infant school established on Stroud Hill seven years ago, and we are about to build a British school-house at the bottom of the town.

"On the subject of a Government plan of education I know not what to say. If a religious education can be secured to the population generally, without infringing on religious liberty, I shall rejoice."

Uley.

The minister at Uley says,

"I believe no additional means of education are required. I believe the working classes themselves consider the present means of education abundantly sufficient; and it is my firm conviction that the education of the poor on a more extended scale is neither necessary nor desirable. I believe all the children in the parish are receiving instruction in one or other of the schools. The population of the parish has been very much reduced since the census of 1831, owing to the decay of the manufacturers in the place."

Captain Slade, of Uley, states,

"That the means of education are ample at Uley.

"The school-room was built by Miss Shepherd; it has about 300 daily scholars. An infant school is attached.

"The schoolmaster, Ralph Ashmead, is a shrewd man; he went to Cheltenham to learn his duties. The plan is upon Stoate's circulating principle.

"Miss Slade visits the school daily.

"Education was neglected in prosperous times, as the children went to the factory, and the parents were much more careless of education than at present. A trifle was formerly paid with each child; the education is now gratuitous."

A schoolmaster at Uley informed me, that many children cannot attend Sunday-school for want of clothing, though they attend weekly school.

Woodchester.

The minister at Woodchester states that,

"Although *seven* schools are supported by endowment, they were only endowed for girls to be taught to read and sew. The boys pay a small sum to be taught to read under the mistresses of the girls' schools. Those above seven years of age are entitled to attend a boys' school at St. Chloe, in the parish of Minchinhampton.

"If a classical schoolmaster were placed in every parish, or in every district, it would relieve the clergyman from the duty of teaching his own sons, which must necessarily occupy much of his time where his family is large, and his income too small to pay for their education elsewhere.

"Many of the working classes complain that they are obliged to pay for the instruction of their boys out of their small earnings. It would be well if the trustees were legally empowered to divert some of the income bequeathed to this parish for girls, to the instruction also of boys. No less than 84*l.* are paid to dames to instruct girls to sew and read.'

Wootton-under-Edge.

The vicar of Wootton-under-Edge observes,

"Excepting our infant school, which is a very great desideratum, and which would have been established long ago but for the impoverished state of this once opulent town, we have schools sufficient for the instruction of the poorer classes. Most of those who cannot afford to pay the small stipend required, meet with a friend willing to assist them, and I regret to say that these opportunities, particularly with regard to the females, are not embraced as might be wished. Many benevolent persons assist the children whom they place in the schools, with clothing; and it would be well if we could do more in that way, as the condition of the poorer classes is such, that they are unable to procure proper raiment for their children, particularly of a warm kind, and hence the attendance in the schools is much worse during the winter season than in summer.

"The education afforded to the working classes is considered by them ample. The hand-loom weavers are not more distressed than the other classes. They sometimes earn much more than agricultural labourers, but are more frequently out of employment. They are not so provident a class of persons as farmers' labourers, nor do their children attend with the same regularity, probably on account of the uncertainty of their earnings. All our daily schools have most efficient teachers, and I regret they are so inadequately paid."

The dissenting minister at the Old Town meeting-house, Wootton-under-Edge, states,

"That the hand-loom weavers are in distress owing to the irregularity of their work; and that this is always the case with the weavers even in good times, owing to a surplus of abour.

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"As regards education, Wootton is very well off, and every poor man's child can obtain it at the cheapest possible rate; in fact, there is provision for all classes in this respect; but considers the poor people do not rightly appreciate the means, either as regards Sunday or week-day education. Many, no doubt, cannot send their children for want of clothing; but, on the whole our schools are tolerably well attended; but this attendance is sought for by the teachers, and is not voluntary always by the parents. Can corroborate the statement of the Church Minister, that the poor get their children out to work as early as possible, to earn a little money for their support."

Mr. Long, a manufacturer at Wootton, stated to me that

The weavers are not deficient in scriptural knowledge or attendance at Divine Worship. The poverty of the weavers will not allow them to send their children to day-schools, but most of them attend Sunday schools. The children of most other classes go to school, and therefore possess an advantage over the weaver's child; knows that the parents, weavers as well as others, are most anxious for education for their children; there are schools at Wootton and the parishes round, but they are unavailable to the weaver for want of money.

Schools.

The following summary refers to the personal inspection of 14 schools, wherein 948 children are daily instructed; of which number I have ascertained 198 to be the children of hand-loom weavers, and about two-thirds of the number educated are boys.

It appears that the average period of schooling is only three years, and that the period of leaving school is from 11½ to 13 years old.

I regret that I could not carry out my investigations more completely, owing to want of means to employ some agent for that purpose.

Summary of 14 schools, containing 948 children.

Summary.

Total number of scholars in the 14 schools, 948; of whom,
514 can read, write, and cipher.
582 can write, but not cipher.
621 can read.
82 cannot read.
268 cannot write.
Period of schooling is 3 years.
Age of leaving school is 11½ years.
183 children whose parents are hand-loom weavers.

State of Adult Education.—Shop-Loom Weavers

Adult Education.

The following is a summary of 195 adult shop-weavers, of whom

108 can read and write.
72 can read and not write.
15 can neither read nor write.

Summary of 535 children of 195 shop-weavers, of whom

135 earn wages.
60 attend pay-schools.
26 attend free schools.
195 attend Sunday-schools.

REMEDIES AND SUGGESTIONS.

Remedies and suggestions.

My inquiries have been closely directed to this subject. I have sought with diligence among all classes for their opinions, in hopes of eliciting some clue for the benefit of the weavers. Various points have arisen during those inquiries, advocated by some and reprobated by others; the principal of which are as follows:—

Boards of Trade,
Apprenticeship,
Repeal of the Corn Laws.

Candidly confessing my inability to point out or to recommend any legislative enactment likely to benefit in a sound and permanent manner the interests of the weavers, I respectfully leave the matter to your superior judgments.

Boards of Trade.

Boards of Trade.

Every person (except a weaver) is of opinion that boards of trade are impracticable.

This opinion is founded upon experience; for no agreement or arrangement between masters and masters, or masters and men, either in reference to the selling prices in the markets, or connected with wages of labour, have ever held good in this county, or been productive of any beneficial results to the one class or the other. This is fully confirmed under the head "Combinations and Strikes," p. 448 to 457.

It is the general opinion of masters as well as others not connected with the cloth trade of this county, that natural competition and the rules of supply and demand, are and must ever be the most effectual law.

Moreover, a standard of wages in the fine cloth trade is doubly impracticable, because the material used is extremely uncertain, that is, whether fine or coarse, and moreover the make of the different masters vary, and the alterations are frequent, and it is therefore considered that these causes would bid defiance to any regulation concerning wages, even supposing masters and men would feel inclined to name and adopt a standard price.

It is in evidence under the head of "Combinations and Strikes," p. 448—457.

1. That if a rate of wages could be fixed, the men would be the first to undersell.

2. At the time of the strikes, wages were forced up beyond the market value of labour, and the weavers were the first to prove the fact, by being the first to lower.

Mr. Wight, of Sheepscombe, informed me that at the period of the strike, 70 or 80 weavers came into his mill-yard requiring his signature to a scale of wages; that he signed the paper, and the men departed: this strike lasted six weeks. After matters were adjusted, and the scale was agreed to, Mr. Wright was astonished when the two leaders who required him to sign the paper, came to him and eagerly sought to have work, 6*s*. less per chain, than the stipulated price!

This fact proves there is no stability as to a scale of wages, and it ought to be a lesson to the working classes how they part with their hard-earned money to maintain such advocates, who live by the delusions they can create.

The weavers in Gloucestershire consider boards of trade would be a benefit to the manufacturers, and a protection to the weavers. The weavers, however, at Kidderminster view the matter in another, and, in my opinion, in a more correct light. The following is the reply of the Chairman of the Delegates to my queries:—

Opinion of Boards of Trade at Kidderminster.

Q. Do you consider that any regulation to fix wages would be ultimately beneficial to the weavers?

A. *I, personally, consider it would not. I consider it would be injurious to the manufacturer and workman,—that it would ultimately engender strife between the two interests; I refer* MOST PARTICULARLY TO MR. FIELDEN'S BILL: *I consider that his Bill would leave the labourer at the mercy of the needy speculator in cheap labour,—that it would be his constant aim to keep wages low. It would also injure the manufacturer when there might be a necessity for a reduction; if, through the state of the market, there should be a necessity for a reduction, the manufacturer could not effect the necessary reduction owing to the enactment. On the other hand, should a rise be just and reasonable, the enactment would likewise prevent the men attaining their object;* THUS BOTH PARTIES WOULD BE INJURED. *I consider that the consequences would be ruinous to capital, and injurious to trade.*

The following is an extract of a letter addressed to me by the Chairman of the Delegates, namely, Timothy Exell, wherein, among other things, he lays great stress upon the establishment of Boards of Trade:—

"To Her Majesty's Commissioner.

"HONOURED SIR,

"IT was with feelings of the greatest joy and gratitude that I read over the pages of your instructions, touching the distress of the hand-loom weavers of this county; which instructions you have carefully, perseveringly, and impartially abided by.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Boards of Trade.

"You have patiently and laboriously found out their real and actual condition, which condition is really distressing. You have, with the same promptitude, inquired into the causes, or imaginary causes, and the distress, and the causes of the distress, of the out-door hand-loom weavers, which I consider to be,—

"First, the throwing open of the trade, which overstocked the weavers' labour-market. Secondly, a combination of the manufacturers to reduce the weavers' wages. Thirdly, the introduction of shop-looms and power-looms. Fourthly, the lengthening out of the warping bars far beyond the proper measure that was long fixed by law and custom. Fifthly, the truck system has completed the horrid history of the hand-loom weavers' distress.

"I perceive, by your instructions, that the *third* subject of inquiry, which is the most difficult of all, is the means by which the present distress is to be removed and prevented for the future.

"I, as an individual, and the weavers as a body, in this county, have long wished for the Government to interfere; and I believe that a Board of Trade, allowed and sanctioned, would be a great benefit to the respectable manufacturers, and a protection to the industrious weaver, and prevent the disasters which may again be brought on by the low-paying manufacturers underselling in the market; and I perceive by your instructions that any person who proposes a remedy is to explain the means to be used to bring about the desired object.

"Therefore, I beg to suggest the following plan: First, that Government will allow the privilege of a Board of Trade to the manufacturing counties, and that Board to consist of a fixed number of manufacturers, viz. 12, chosen by themselves, to represent the body, and as many to represent the general body of weavers. The Chairman or President, to be appointed by Government, and the weavers allowed an attorney or counsel to plead their cause; and whatever wages are fixed for per ell or per hundred, shall be binding, for the time-being, on all manufacturers residing within the boundaries of the said county, and no reduction to be made by any manufacturer without laying the cause why he wishes to make that reduction before the aforesaid Board, and no rise on the part of the weavers without submitting the same to the said Board; and I believe that this will be one remedy towards restoring peace and prosperity.

* * * * * * *

"I remain, your obedient servant,

"Timothy Exell.

"*William Augustus Miles, Esq.*"

The weavers of the county of Gloucester have likewise presented a petition on this subject to the House of Commons.

Deeply anxious to ascertain how far such proposed measures could benefit the weavers, I called before me Timothy Exell, the chairman, and John Iddles, one of the principal delegates.

Timothy Exell considered that a board of wages would benefit the manufacturer, by preventing his neighbour from underselling him in wages, and that it would prevent combinations and strikes among the weavers. He thinks a Board of Trade would tend to raise wages; but on being pressed to show by what principle wages would rise, he says, "he never turned his attention to the plan whether or not wages would be raised." On continuing my inquiries, Timothy Exell acknowledged that the labour market became overstocked, that manufacturers availed themselves of low-priced workmen, that a low-paying manufacturer influences the wages of better paying masters. He then states that, in his opinion, if Boards of Trade were established, the high-paying masters would be more inclined to lower than the low-paying master would be to raise wages; and in reference to his statement, in the commencement of his evidence, that *Boards of Trade would have a tendency to raise wages*, and be therefore beneficial to the weavers, he must confess that his opinion is "somewhat shaken;" and on being asked if he thought the weavers would be benefited by the proposed plan, he said "he did not know that they would, and *he threw up the idea of a Board of Trade as a bad job*."

He is of opinion that a Board of Trade, by interfering with the master, would tend to the introduction of power-looms. (He then suggested, as a collateral remedy, that power-looms should be curtailed.)

I found that no probable benefit could accrue to the weavers by causing a rise in their wages, but that, in all probability, Boards of Trade would tend to their depression, as the lower-paying master (who is, in fact, upheld by the public in proportion as he can sell cheap), influences the higher-paying master, who would be compelled to reduce in order to sell his goods. As, then, I found no positive good, but a probable evil, to exist, I further found a positive evil, and no probable good, in the proposed measure, because any interference between the master and his market, relative to wages of labour, would induce power-looms, and the weaver, with his palladium, would be dismissed.

Timothy Exell has already shown the probable position of affairs if Boards of Trade were to be established. The conclusion of my examination is thus:—

Question. Am I to understand that you uphold the principle of Boards of Trade as beneficial to a weaver's interest?

Answer. I repeat, as I said before, *I give it up as a bad job*, but the bulk of the weavers in this county are in favour of it, and I leave the subject to the judgment of wiser men than myself.

(Here follows his signature to the evidence.)

The subsequent evidence of John Iddles shows no better result in favour of Boards of Trade; and though he pertinaciously adheres to the system which he (as a delegate) considered himself pledged to support, the following is the conclusion of his evidence, when I urged him if he could recommend Boards of Trade as beneficial to the weavers:—

"It is my conviction that Boards of Trade would be *injurious*. I cannot get over it, or I would! Of course, as I cannot recommend them, I must abandon them."

His signature follows this reply.

I deem it best to submit the evidence of John Iddles, wherein will be seen the means by which he arrives at his last conclusions.

Evidence of *John Iddles*, master weaver, and a delegate.

Are you one of the delegates of the weavers?—Yes; I have been appointed to act on their behalf.

Have you read the petitions that were sent up to the House of Commons, concerning Boards of Trade and the Apprenticeship System, as remedial measures for the weavers?—Yes, I have.

Have you thought the subject over?—Yes, in some measure.

Do you consider first that Boards of Trade would be beneficial to the weaver's interest?—Yes, I do.

Will you show more fully how it would?—I consider it would prevent the manufacturer from taking undue advantage of the operative in reducing the prices, and also it would be the means of preventing unpleasantness among the weavers; it would also guarantee regular prices, and thereby prevent strikes and combinations. I proposed the subject to Mr. Maclean, a magistrate, and late a manufacturer.

Do you propose that Boards of Trade should extend to other classes of manufacturers?—I am not concerned in any trade but the weaving.

But do you not understand by Boards of Trade that they refer to trade generally?—Certainly.

Then the wages of spinners and others would be regulated by Boards of Trade?—I have nothing to do with spinners.

What do you understand by Board of Trade, whether it refers to the weavers, or to the Trade generally?—I understand the proposition, but I am not prepared to answer it.

Supposing Boards of Trade were established, do you think the weavers would adhere to the price?—Most certainly, if on the system we have proposed; that is, for there to be a sufficient number of manufacturers and operative weavers to enter into an agreement what prices shall be paid for six to twelve months, as fluctuating circumstances do require alteration of wages between master and man, it would be necessary for a fresh arrangement, to be binding for the time being.

Is the trade fluctuating?—Sometimes it is; but provisions are the same whether wages be high or low.

Do you consider that any restriction can be beneficial to a trade which is constantly fluctuating?—The period of fluctuation is uncertain.

I repeat the question?—Yes, I do. There is a variety of goods being made which requires, according to the different calls in the market, more labour to perform the work at one time than at another, owing to the fineness of the abb or chain.

What do you propose should be the standard of pay?—The smallness or fineness of the draft.

Does a manufacturer's *make* frequently alter?—Yes.

Then how could you fix a standard, a fixed measure, for that which is constantly altering; would it not in that case operate injuriously both to master and man?—What I mean by constantly altering is, that manufacturers are constantly altering their work and their draft; that is, we get no more for a 70 skein shoot than for 22.

How would you propose any rate of wages to be established, when a man's make so much differs?—*I do'nt see how any rate of wages could be established.*

Then am I to understand that a Board of Trade upon this point would be inefficient?—I believe it would be efficient.

I repeat again, how would you propose any rate of wages to be established when a man's make so much differs?—In reference to the hundred and the draft of the material.

And do you think that where make is constantly differing, that a standard of wages could ever be brought to bear upon it?—Why, yes, sir. Prices to be regulated, as I said before by the hundred and the draft.

In what way would the weavers be benefited by the regularity of wages?—It would prevent the unprincipled manufacturer from taking the undue advantage which many have taken.

Am I to understand by taking advantage that you mean lowering wages?—Yes, that is what I mean.

Do you know if weavers are in the habit of underselling one another?—It has been the case.

And is it not sometimes the case now?—I believe it is.

Supposing Boards of Trade were established, and a rate of wages fixed, how would you prevent the weavers from underselling each other as they do now?—I believe there would be a unanimity of principle among the operative weavers, not to undersell one another, as they have heretofore done, if a Board of Trade was established.

Is it not necessity that now makes them undersell one another?—I believe it is.

Would not that same necessity exist supposing Boards of Trade were established?—No; I do not consider it would, because one regular rate of wages would prevent it.

How would it prevent the necessity which now makes them undersell?—Because no one would offer less.

That refers to the price, and not to the necessity, which compels a man: I therefore ask you how you would prevent this system of underselling each other as they are now obliged to do from necessity?—I am not prepared to answer that question, further than that if certain prices were fixed, the masters could not offer, and the men could not take it.

How would you prevent a master offering lower wages?—They could not offer it if a regular price was established, until there was a fresh rate of wages made.

What is to prevent his offering it?—He has a right to offer of course.

What is to prevent a weaver from taking a lower price if offered?—I don't see what is to prevent him, except it is the provision made by the law to protect him.

Do you not think that a weaver, if in great necessity, would avail himself of such bargain that he could make with his employer?—He would not be under the necessity of a bargain if wages were fixed.

You have, however, stated that there is nothing to prevent a manufacturer offering lower wages?—I don't see there is; a man has a right to offer what wages he thinks proper.

Then as wages are optional upon principle, what is the use of a Board of Trade? How would it be binding?—It would prevent the master from offering lower wages.

I must again repeat the question, how would it prevent him from offering lower wages?—I am not prepared to answer the question.

Do you think Boards of Trade would have a tendency to rise or fall wages?—Sometimes it would have a tendency to rise, and sometimes to fall them.

Under what circumstances would the tendency be to a rise of wages?—A good trade.

And what would depress wages?—Want of trade.

Do not good and bad trade at present regulate wages?—Yes, among some manufacturers.

Then by your previous answers Boards of Trade would be self-regulating, the same as wages are now self-regulated; therefore, what peculiar advantage would arise from a Board of Trade?—It would lead to an uniformity of price.

How can that be when you state that you cannot prevent a manufacturer from offering what wages he chooses?—If a Board of Trade were established the operative would not be under the necessity of taking it.

Do not men undersell, and will they not continue to undersell one another in spite of Boards of Trade?—They have done it, but Boards of Trade would prevent it.

How will you prevent a manufacturer from offering a less sum than that established by a Board of Trade, and how will you prevent a man from taking it?—I don't see how it could be prevented.

Then what is the use of a Board of Trade when a master cannot be prevented from offering less, and where a man cannot be prevented from taking less, according as his necessities compel him to seek for work?—I do not see that Boards of Trade would be of any use unless provisions were made to prevent the lowering of wages.

I must again repeat the question; how would you prevent lower wages, or a man from taking them if necessity compel him?—I give the previous answer, that I cannot prevent it.

Then am I to understand that Boards of Trade without that provision would be useless?—Yes; I conceive they would.

Are there not many manufacturers who pay very low wages, and are always glad to avail themselves of low-priced labour?—Yes, there are.

What is the cause of men deigning to accept very low wages?—Necessity; from too many on the ground they are under the necessity, rather than go to the union workhouse.

What does that necessity arise from?—Too many operatives for the work required to be done.

If Boards of Trade were established would there not be the same surplus on the ground?—It would be the case.

Then would not the weavers of necessity be glad to get chain as they do now?—I don't see but what they would.

If the wages are to be settled by Boards of Trade, would not the lower-paying masters be always inclined to reduce, in order to make the next scale as low as they could?—Most likely they would.

Do you think the lower-paying masters, if Boards of Trade were established, would be more inclined to raise their wages, or that the higher-paying manufacturer would be more

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Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

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inclined to come down to the minimum rate established?—I believe the higher-paying manufacturers would wish to retain their price, and the lower ones must come up to their standard.

Does not the low-paying manufacturer influence the wages of the higher-paying master?—It has been the case to our great distress.

And would not the same influence operate with the lower-paying manufacturer in the case of a Board of Trade—that is, to lower wages: that is to say, if the lower-paying manufacturer's quantity placed him within the schedule proposed by Mr. Fielden's Bill?—Yes, that might be the case.

Who are the manufacturers in this district making the greatest quantity of cloth?—Playne, Stanton, Stephens, Marling, Davies, Hooper, Barnard, Hunt.

Do you consider that if the average of the wages of these manufacturers (as being the largest makers) were taken, it would be beneficial to the weavers?—Yes.

Do you not think from your own experience that the same influence would operate with the lower-paying master, in the case of a Board of Trade, to lower wages?

[Witness here observed, he would not wish to speak anything injurious to the trade, or to commit himself.]

I repeat whether the influence of those manufacturers who are inclined to pay low wages would not have an effect on the next schedule of prices, at the fixing of the scale?—Likely it might be the case.

What is your opinion whether it would or not?—If I give my positive opinion I must say it would.

Then is it your opinion that Boards of Trade would have the ultimate tendency of reducing wages, owing to the influence of the low-paying manufacturer?—No, I cannot see it.

Does not the low-paying manufacturer influence wages?—Yes.

Would he not influence the scale of wages, supposing he made sufficient quantity to bring him in the schedule?—Yes.

Are the manufacturers, as a body of men, more inclined to raise wages or to lower them?—They are all inclined to lower wages.

How would a Board of Trade tend to the rising of wages?—I do not see it would have any tendency to rise wages.

As you have stated that the majority of manufacturers are inclined to reduce, do you not think that a Board of Trade would have a tendency to the reduction of wages, inasmuch as the manufacturers will keep their wages low, in order to regulate the next standard of wages?—Taking that into consideration I believe it would be the case.

Then how would you propose to prevent that tendency to reduction?—I don't see that it could be prevented; I cannot propose any measure.

Then as you consider that as Boards of Trade will have a tendency to reduce wages, do you recommend them as a safe measure for the benefit of the weavers?—I should not like to recommend any measure that would be injurious to the weavers.

Do you consider Boards of Trade would be injurious to the weaver by tending to the reduction of wages?—*I must own then that it is my conviction Boards of Trade would be injurious. I can't get over it, or else I would.*

Then as you state that you would not recommend any measures injurious to the weaver, am I to understand that you abandon the subject of Boards of Trade as being beneficial to their interest?—Of course as I cannot recommend them I must abandon them.

Will you sign this, your evidence?—Yes.

(Signed) John Iddles.

Apprenticeship.

Apprentices.

It is the opinion of the weavers that their earnings would be increased, and their "calling" protected, by a renewal and strict observance of the apprenticeship system; and a petition to that effect was presented, in the name of the weavers, to the House of Commons.

The chairman of the delegates, Timothy Exell, in a letter addressed to me, "inter alia," thus alludes to the subject:—

"A second remedy that I beg leave to propose is, that no person, male or female, for the time to come, shall enter upon the trade of weaving, without serving the space of five or seven years, and the stamp duty to remain at one pound; and that no person under the age of 14 years commence the performance of weaving, and that no manufacturer shall be allowed to take apprentices, as he does not know the trade, and no man, being a wool-loft man, or a foreman, shall be allowed to take apprentices under any pretence whatever.

"The object to be effected is as follows: 1st. To keep the weavers' labour market steady. 2nd. To prevent, amongst the weavers' children, the system of early marriage, which has been practised to a shameful extent, as there has been no rule nor order existing among us, as a body. And this apprenticeship system extending to all classes of weavers, power-loom weavers as well as hand-loom weavers, will bring into the revenue near 10,000*l.* per annum, and soon restore the hundreds of thousands of Her Majesty's subjects, the hand-loom weavers, to their former state of respectability and comfort possessed by their forefathers, and they would also become a great blessing to society.

"But, before I conclude, I enter my solemn protest against shop-looms, power-looms, long

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warping bars, and truck, which have caused the weavers to drink deep into the cup of poverty and adversity.

"With these remarks, honoured Sir, I have the honour to remain, your obedient servant,

"Timothy Exell.

"*William Augustus Miles, Esq.*"

With regard to the subject of shop-looms, power-looms, and truck, I fully agree with Timothy Exell, that they have had a tendency to reduce the condition of the weavers, that is, of the out-door weavers. The long warping bars of which he so justly complains, are a downright fraud upon labour, not only on the weaver, but other workpeople, I do not, however, believe that these fraudulent measures are in general use. This evil, however, can be remedied by a power to be vested in the Factory Inspectors to regulate the bars to a proper standard, and to fine the offending master.

With regard to the system of apprenticeship, I am fearful it would not benefit the weavers to the anticipated extent, because the market would become stocked by cheap labour, for apprentices under the eye of a skilful weaver would be put into the looms, and by the time a youth had learned his trade, and required higher wages, he would be replaced by some apprentice nearly out of his time, so that few adult weavers would obtain employment. Again, supposing that the labour market should even become limited, and wages, in consequence, tend to a "rise," in consequence of this legislative enactment, the weavers would be injured, if this rise threatened to exceed the cost at which a piece could be woven by power, because the manufacturers would be induced to dispense with human labour, and adopt the steam loom.

The evidence upon this subject I insert at length, because it touches upon the time requisite to learn weaving, and elicits facts of import from unwilling witnesses.

Evidence of *Timothy Exell.*

Question.—One of the proposed remedies in your letter to me is, that no person, male or female, for the time to come, shall be allowed to enter the trade of weaving, without serving apprenticeship, and the stamp duty to be 1*l.* Will you explain to me how that will be beneficial to the weavers?—*Answer.*—As I believe it would keep the weaver's labour market steady.

Have you ever known any good resulting from the apprenticeship system, with regard to the weaver?—The apprenticeship system was repealed before I entered upon the trade.

Then as you do not know practically the working of it. Explain to me the theory of it?—It would make it more difficult for weavers to enter the labour market, thereby lessen the number of hands, which would make the weavers more independent, and without combinations and strikes would naturally tend to better their condition. It would also give a power to the employer of young persons to keep them in subjection, and thereby prevent many disasters which now happen to the young and inexperienced, whereby they have been plunged into ruin having no protector. Before they have known their trade, they have become their own masters, and at an early age they enter marriage state and are ruined for life.

At what age do young persons begin to take to the loom, generally speaking?—At 16 or 17, but they are not competent hands sufficient for a manufacturer to intrust his chain to; but I have known them intrusted with chain at 18.

How long does it take a person to learn the trade?—To learn all the branches, it would take seven years.

What do you mean by all the branches?—I mean plain felt, cassimere, ratteen (not now made), and patent twill (not now made); to take out, set to work, complete, and deliver a piece of cloth in a perfect state without any assistance.

Were you apprenticed?—No.

How long were you learning weaving?—I never learnt all the different branches to the present day.

What branches do you know?—I know plain felt, ratteen, lady's cloth, and six treadle or patent twilled.

How long did you learn before you were able to earn a maintenance?—Two years.

Did you go into the loom without being previously brought up to manufactures, or being about a loom?—I was always in the vicinity of looms, brought up from a child.

At what age did you go into the loom?—About 14.

And at 16 you could earn a maintenance?—Yes, with an overlooker.

How long do you consider it would have been before you could dispense with that overlooker?—I cannot exactly say, it might have been at 18 or 19.

At what age could a person be able to work a piece, taking it from the raw state and ringing it to the perching pole without any assistance?—About 18 or 19.

At what period must he have commenced?—I do not know, but think about 14.

Do you consider that a boy of 14 would have sufficient muscular strength to work the loom?—Yes, I do; but not to be hurried.

Then am I to understand upon your own showing, that 4 years is sufficient instead of 7?—4 years is sufficient to learn; but I do not consider a person at 18 is fit to be his own master.

At what age would you propose young persons should be admitted to apprenticeship?—14 years old.

Do you propose that they should receive any pay?—Yes.

On what scale?—I allude to two sorts of apprentices, the out-door and the domestic. The domestic apprentice, I propose, should be fed and clothed; the bounty to be optional. The out-door apprentice to be paid weekly wages according to the terms made by the parties contracting. Bounty also, optional; in both cases I propose a stamp of 1*l.*

To whom do you propose they should be now apprenticed?—To a man who thoroughly understands the trade of weaving.

Have you not told me that not one in a hundred is a perfect master of the trade of weaving?—No; I said that 2000 out of 3000 are not competent.

Do you solemnly state that you believe there are 1000 weavers who do understand their ibusiness?—No; I will not take an oath of it.

What number could you vouch for out of the 3000?—I could vouch for none.

Of your own knowledge, could you find 20?—Yes.

Could you find 50?—Yes, I could; who could give instructions upon all the sorts I have mentioned, but I cannot say any more.

You are well known to all the weavers of the county?—Yes, I am.

Do you think that manufacturers would, if they could, for the sake of cheap labour, employ apprentices instead of adults?—Yes; if they could get at them.

Would not master weavers prefer apprentices to adult journeymen?—He could dismiss the one, but not the other.

Would not he prefer the work of an apprentice who has been at work 2 years, and enabled to work tolerably careful?—No doubt some would, but I, as an individual, should prefer a perfect workman.

Do you not think that such a system would tend to the preference of young labour, and the exclusion of adult labour?—I do not think it would.

Do you think that any body would bind a child to the trade of weaving?—Not unless there is a better prospect of the trade benefiting.

Do you consider that good weavers are now out of employ?—No, I do not.

Do you consider the apprenticeship system would have the effect of raising wages?—Yes, I do.

To any extent?—Yes; to a considerable extent after awhile, but it would be a work of time.

Do you not think that manufacturers foreseeing this would beset themselves about employing power, to the exclusion of human labour?—No, it would not be so, because they cannot employ a power loom without human labour.

Do you consider the power loom produces more than human labour in a given time?—Yes, I do.

Then supposing power could be made to do one-third more work, would not the introduction of it tend to decrease labour one-third in quantity?—I believe it would, but I do not believe the manufacturer would be benefited by it.

Is it requisite that the person, who attends a power-loom, should be a thorough-bred weaver?—It certainly is, unless he is aided by a foreman.

Is there not a division of labour in the power-loom?—Yes, there is.

Is there not a person whose duty it is to size, another to tie on, and another to set to work, and another to attend the loom?—Yes.

Is it requisite that the person, who stands at the power-loom, should be a thorough-bred weaver?—No, it is not.

Then supposing, at any rate, apprenticeship to be established, the person who stood at the loom need not be an apprentice?—No; I do not consider a person watching a power-loom need be an apprentice.

How many power-looms could a weaver, a legal weaver I should say, superintend?—I cannot say.

Do you think he could look after four?*—Yes; I should think he could.

Then in that case, supposing there were 40 looms in a factory, 10 legal weavers would be the total number required to superintend the looms?—Yes, I should think 10 legal weavers could do it.

Then in that case, where 40 weavers are now employed, 10 would only be needed; are you of that opinion?—Well, I am of that opinion, if it refers to a factory of power-looms.

You have already acknowledged that the apprenticeship system might tend to the introduction of power-looms; do you think it, therefore, advisable to the weaver's interest to adopt any measures that would bring power into the district?—Yes; I believe it would. It would bring things to a crisis,† and remove the painful suspense from the weavers at once.

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* He could overlook 4 or 40.—*W. A. M.*

† In allusion to the crisis above alluded to, in the last reply of Timothy Exell, he is not singular in his opinion; because John Cook, a weaver at Chalford, in reference to the present condition of the weavers, is of opinion, that, if weaving entirely ceased in the district, the population, at the end of six or eight months, would be better off than now; because they would not linger on in daily hope of chain, dragging out a miserable life, with scarcely sufficient to support it; but they would emigrate, or seek by migration other work.

Timothy Exell states that he gives this evidence, not as chairman of the delegates, but as his own individual opinions; and he called the following morning, requesting that a concluding sentence might be attached to his last answer of yesterday, relative to the policy of introducing any measure that might bring power-looms into the district, to the detriment of the weaver's interest; and his remark is as follows: he, however, states that he has not attended any meeting of delegates in the interim:—

"It must remain for the Government to decide whether the body of weavers shall be annihilated and ruined, for the purpose of giving place to power-looms, which I believe would not be to the general interest of the country."

(Signed) Timothy Exell.

Evidence of *John Iddles*, master weaver.

Are you aware of the petition presented to the House of Commons recommending apprentices?—Yes, I saw it, and I consider it very beneficial; it would prevent the trade from being overstocked.

Do you consider the trade is now overstocked with labour?—Not so much as it has been; but it is overstocked.

At what age do you propose children should be apprenticed?—Fourteen.

At what age could an apprentice earn his living?—Nineteen years old.

Would a lad of 19 be enabled to work at a cheaper rate than a man with a family?—Certainly he would; he would have no incumbrance.

Would not the manufacturers prefer having the cheaper labour of young men instead of adults, by reason of the cheapness of labour?—Yes; but a lad could not perform the work, he would not be so well qualified to perform the work as a man of maturer years.

Why not?—Not having sufficient experience in the trade.

Are there not many persons of 19 enabled to earn their own living by weaving?—Yes, if they are in the shop, and have persons to overlook.

Then would not a manufacturer be inclined to stock his looms with young labour, and pay for a person to overlook them, and be a gainer by the bargain?—If the apprenticeship system was established he could not provide sufficient number of hands of that description to perform his work, or to materially injure the trade.

Do you think if a manufacturer found himself crippled, either for want of numbers, or else high wages, he would introduce power?—Yes, he would; but I should recommend that the power-looms should be worked by apprentices.

Do you consider it requisite that a person should understand weaving to stand at the power-loom?—It is not requisite; he can do it without being apprenticed, with an overlooker.

Do you consider that power weaves more than hand?—Not so much, on some work; on other, more.

Can you say what work cannot be done by power?—Yes, the fine kerseys and the stripes; neither the finest sort nor the most inferior, by reason of the fineness or the rottenness of the thread, which cannot stand the blow.

As it has been already stated that the apprenticeship system might tend to the introduction of power, how do you consider, if the system were adopted, it would be beneficial to the out-door weaver?—I don't see as it would, except there was a limitation of looms; meaning the same as it used to be. No person to have more than three looms in his possession, and the same limitation to extend to power.

Then you think that limiting the capital of an employer, and the quantity he makes, and consequently restricting the amount of wages, would be beneficial to the weaver?—I consider it would be beneficial to the weaver, as it would secure the trade to ourselves.

Do you not consider that if weavers were restricted to three looms, to be worked in their own houses, they would be inclined to bring up their children as apprentices to themselves?—It has been the case, and most likely would again.

Then would it not tend to the overstocking of the labour market, by the introducing so many young persons?—Yes, it is very reasonable, and it would overstock the market.

Then you state that the apprenticeship system would have two tendencies:—1st, the introduction of power. 2nd, by allowing limitations to exist, the tendency would be to the overstocking of the market. How do you, therefore, consider the apprenticeship system would be beneficial to the weaver?—I cannot answer that question.

Is it beneficial or injurious: how would it work?—I should hope it would be beneficia

Do you think it would from your previous evidence?—*No, I do not think it would.*

Will you sign this, your evidence?—Yes.

(Signed) John Iddles.

Evidence of *William Keene*, master weaver.

Are you a weaver?—Yes; I was apprenticed.

How old are you?—Sixty years.

At what age were you apprenticed?—About eight or nine years old.

Can you weave any sort of work?—Yes; every sort made in this county.

Do you consider that many weavers understand the trade as well as you do?—No; I know there are not many who can. I can weave a sort of cloth in which flowers are worked,

called "Lappett work;" it was used for waistcoats, but none has been made since the time when George III. was first said to be deranged. The pay was very good on that work; I could earn 30*s.* a-week, because it requires more skill.

Do you consider it requires much skill to do the common work of the county?—No, not so much as the lappet work, but yet it requires some skill and judgment to take a chain, and put it to work, and take it back as cloth to the perching-pole.

How long would a person of moderate capacity be learning to weave?—About three or four years.

Would he be a thorough master of weaving in that time?—Yes, he would.

That is, to earn his living?—Yes, provided the wages paid by the master are sufficient.

Do you think the apprenticeship system would be beneficial to the weavers if again established?—Yes, I do.

In what way?—There would not be so many.

Have you ever known any good resulting from the apprenticeship system, with regard to the weavers?—Yes, until they were broken in upon by the repeal of the Apprenticeship Act; since which hundreds have got into the trade.

Then I presume it is not very difficult to learn weaving?—Yes, it is; they get into it as colts, but they do not half understand it; they creep on bit by bit.

How long was it before you were enabled to earn your maintenance at weaving?—Seventeen years old.

Did you then work without an overlooker?—No; I was not capable without some one assisting me.

Supposing the apprenticeship system, or rather your idea of the apprenticeship system, was acted upon, to whom should the children be apprenticed?—To the weavers, not to the clothiers.

Do you think there are many weavers who could teach, to whom children could be apprenticed?—Yes, there are sufficient able weavers for that.

Do you think that manufacturers would if they could, for the sake of cheap labour, employ apprentices instead of adults?—O yes, that I do.

Do you not think in that case such a system would tend to the preference of young labour?—Yes, I think it would.

And to the exclusion of adult labour?—Yes, Sir.

Would not the wages of young labour be cheaper than that of adults?—Yes.

Then if young persons are preferred to do the labour, the quantity of cloth woven in the county, in the course of the year, will be made at a cheaper rate?—Yes, it would.

To what amount of difference?—About as much as 4*d.* in a shilling. That, in my opinion, would be the effect of the apprenticeship system.

That is, I understand that, instead of 100*l.* wages, 70*l.* only would be in circulation?—Yes.

Do you think that would be beneficial to the county?—O certainly not.

Then how can you uphold the apprenticeship system?—Because so many should not get into the trade without serving a lawful apprenticeship.

You say a person can learn in four years?—Yes.

At what age do you propose that they should enter the loom?—About 14 is plenty young enough.

Then at 18 he would be on his own hands, earning money?—Yes.

Could not a person at 18 afford to work for lower wages than a man with a family?—Yes, he could afford it, but I don't think it proper that he should.

Have you not stated that manufacturers would prefer cheap labour, if they could get it?—O yes, that I have. There are proofs every day.

Then, if I rightly understand you, the labour of young persons at 18 would be more in request than that of old weavers, supposing that a lad at 18 is enabled to weave properly?—If a man is a perfect workman, he ought to have equal wages.

It is well to say "ought," but I ask you, *would* they not prefer a lad at 18, who could afford to work cheaper than an adult?—Yes, certainly.

Then the labour of persons, aged 18, would be preferred, if the work could be done properly and cheaper?—I don't see that.

You have already stated that a boy at 18 can work for less money than a man with a family; you have also stated that there are daily proofs of manufacturers preferring cheap labour; then would not the manufacturers prefer the cheap labour of persons at 18?—They would prefer any one, Sir, that they can get cheap.

Then would not the apprenticeship system, by restricting trade, lead by that means to lower wages, by making young labour preferable to that of a man with a family?—No, I don't see that it would; there would not be so many know the trade by being apprenticed; there are not many brought up to the trade now; low wages have checked that.

Do you still maintain, notwithstanding your acknowledgment concerning the cheap labour of young persons, do you still maintain that wages would be raised under the apprenticeship system?—Yes, I believe it would, because the hands would be fewer.

If there was a demand for young labour, do you not foresee that apprentices would be brought into the trade to meet it?—I cannot answer that, whether it would or not.

Do you not see that, if manufacturers foresaw a rise in wages, owing to the apprenticeship system, they would immediately resort to power?—That is very likely.

And what would be the effect of that upon the weavers?—It would bring them to the Union workhouse, for power is one of the greatest evils.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Apprentices.

Then am I to understand that the apprenticeship system would be likely to bring about an evil, and send the men to the Union workhouse?—Yes, if power is not stopped.

Then do you consider that the apprenticeship system is beneficial?—No, not without power is stopped.

Then do you think that any good would result to the weaver's interest from the re-establishment of the apprenticeship system?—No, that is my opinion, unless power is stopped.

(Signed) William Keene.

With regard to general remedies in a larger and more comprehensive view, the following letter from Mr. Samuel Sevill embraces many points of important interest; and in calling your attention most particularly to his suggestions, I cannot omit pointing out the expediency and utility of the immediate transfer of the knowledge of any new experiments or improvements from the continent to the industrious capital of this country, and the consequent employment of labour. In reference to the inventions of the continental manufacturers, he observes, that "the French take the cream, and leave the skim milk profit for John Bull."

He writes as follows:—

Remedies and Suggestions for the increase of trade, or the benefit of the hand-loom weaver—Opinion concerning the effect of boards of trade, local or general.—Presumed effect of any legislative enactment regulating wages, or interfering between master and man.

Suggestions and Remedies proposed by Mr. Sevill.

"By *local* boards of trade, or enacting laws which would interfere between master and man, I do not think any good would result from either.

"I do, however, think that there are two or three sources from which considerable benefit would flow. The first I have already alluded to under the head of No. 1, the allotment system; and hundreds, indeed I may say thousands, of half-starved creatures in the parishes of Bisley and Minchinhampton, (Gloucester,) might be relieved in the course of next summer, by enclosing and allotting part of the common lands, which are admirably well situated for that purpose. This would afford the speediest and most permanent relief to the hand-loom weaver, and many others who are almost equally in want.

"The second means of benefiting not only the labouring classes generally, but opening a new source of wealth to the clothing districts of this country, would be the completion of the Cheltenham and Great Western Union Railway; which had it been begun when the "Act" was first obtained, might nearly or quite have been finished by this time.

"I have never heard a good excuse for not beginning it at first—the right moment. The subscription list was full, and the shares were for some months at a premium of from 5 to 7 per cent.; but now, although a new Act has been obtained to "alter and amend" the line, they are at a discount of 10 or 12 per cent. It is true that the Directors are going on with some spirit to complete the two ends of the line, viz., from Cheltenham to Gloucester, and from Swindon to Cirencester; the cutting on both which will be nearly a dead level. And it is also true that they have made a show of doing something in the middle part of the line, by sinking some shafts at Sapperton; but still the most *difficult* and *tedious* part is not touched, about four miles through the vale of Chalford, which would take at least two years to complete, and unless this be done, the completion of the two ends will be comparatively of no use to the clothier, or the suffering population in the borough of Stroud. If the whole line were finished, there would then be a certainty of coal on this side of the Severn, (by railway from Coal-pit Heath,) almost as cheap as the Yorkshire clothier obtains his; so that with cheaper labour than the north, and the depreciated value of water-power in the west, there is no doubt but capital would gradually flow into the neighbourhood, and this county would, in time, regain its lost position. A greater variety of goods would, no doubt, then be manufactured, and a cloth-hall would be opened at Stroud with a certainty of success. A market-day for the exhibition and sale of cloth, once a-week at least, would be the result. The London houses would attend, and probably nine times out of ten return on the *same day*. This advantage of doing business in *one day*, would also belong to the clothier, in buying his wool and other articles in London. I consider this power of transacting business to and from London in *one day*, of very great importance to this county. Time is money to the tradesman, and there would be a saving of both, besides the advantage of getting an article in *one* day from the west, which could not be obtained in less than *two* from the north.

Cloth-Hall recommended.

"There is no doubt in my mind, but the introduction of railroads will have this effect, that of lessening the stock of goods now generally held by the wholesale and retail dealers, and the natural result will be an increase of travelling to buy much smaller quantities at a time than formerly, and from the stock of the manufacturer. Still, fewer orders may not be given by letter, particularly if a penny rate of postage was established.

"But how does the West of England now stand in comparison with the North? Why, thus:—The line of railway travelling is complete from London to Manchester, and ere long will be so to Huddersfield and Leeds.

"My conviction, therefore, is, that the only means of affording relief to the clothing districts of Gloucestershire, and of Stroud in particular, lies in the completion—the carrying throughout of the Cheltenham and Great Western Union Railway; that unless it is, these districts will virtually be railed off, and out of the market.

"I am the more anxious and desirous, if possible, to call the attention of the Secretary of

State for the Home Department, the noble member for Stroud's attention to this subject, because I think it a matter of national importance to encourage the *leading* manufactures of the kingdom, to spread themselves into districts, where there is a large and scattered population, in preference to fostering them in concentrated spots, such as Leeds, Manchester, &c.:—places which, at every fluctuation in trade, are almost sure to become political volcanos, of turbulence and contention, within and without.

Mr. Sevill's Letter.

"You, Sir, must be well aware of what would probably have been, and may be yet, the consequence in this country, if the operatives had been concentrated within the circumference of one or two miles, instead of about forty. Situated as they now are, there are many obstacles to their associating together and putting each other into a spirit of rebellion, against everything above themselves.

Scattered population less turbulent than concentrated masses.

"Look at the Manchester people on the corn-law question; how they cried out—how they are still crying out before they are hardly touched, much less seriously hurt;—and this not because they have not been getting as fair profits as any other leading manufacture of the country, but because they have been looking through Time's telescope, and see that their profits will probably be less. What then may not be expected from these masses when a year of real distress comes upon them? It will only want a few such 'Lucifers' as Feargus O'Connor to '*torch-light*' every mill in Lancashire. My decided opinion is, that as far as exports go, the cotton and woollen trade to the Continent have seen their best days, at least that the cotton in particular, cannot hope to progress in the same ratio that it has done for the last twenty or thirty years. Indeed, it strikes me as a mixture of conceit and ignorance in some of the cotton manufacturers, to think they can keep pace with the foreigner, when he sees all the best machinery of England being manufactured every day, under his nose in Manchester, for the purpose, not only of enabling the states of Europe to supply their own wants, but to come into competition with us eventually, in every market of the world.

"My reason for making a distinction between the two manufactures is, that there is much more skill required in the whole process of finishing most of the broad and narrow woollen cloths, than there is for a piece of cotton, which goes through fewer hands, and is much less liable to damage or deterioration. In fact, the manufacture of cotton goods is reduced to such a certainty, that machines may almost be said to be the manufacturers, rather than men.

"As to the condition of the labouring classes generally, and of the operatives in particular, my decided opinion is, that with the exception of some hand-loom cotton weavers, in Lancashire, and some of the clothing districts in Gloucester, particularly the parish of Bisley, which is now proved was almost entirely dependent on the East India Company's exclusive privilege of trading to China; the operatives of this country are quite as well, and in most cases better off, than those of the Continent, and are doing as well now, as at any former period of the history of England.

Board of Trade.

"My third remedy or suggestion, is for the improvement of trade in general. I think that the general board of trade ought to institute a sort of sub-board of trade, more particularly to represent, and in connexion with the arts and manufactures of the country.

"I am not aware how the 'general board of trade' is at present managed, but I have an impression that it does not embrace all the objects I have in view.

"I should say that men who have been, and are practically acquainted with *one* particular manufacture, but at the same time possessing a general knowledge of mechanism, with a hand that does not always want a veil, in the shape of a glove, a head that can take an extensive view of a subject, can trace effect up to cause, and from cause up to its probable results; men who from experience know that all the shades of falsehood, are all the tests of truth; who having tried what is wrong, are the more likely to know what is right; who have been something more than horse-wheel, counting-house merchants, manufacturers, or commercial men; nor the mere matter-of-fact plodding, money-saving man, who because he has made a fortune by attending to trifles, might say, 'I am the sort of man you ought to choose; do'nt you know, Sir, that I have succeeded in life? and who, therefore, so able as me to direct others how to prosper?'

"I know that it is rather difficult to find out the sort of men that I am attempting to describe; because misfortune has probably either clipt their wings and thrown them in the shade, or good fortune has placed them out of reach. But still such men are to be found, and ought to be selected on their merits, totally regardless of party.

About three or four such men would be sufficient to represent all the merchant, manufacturing, and commercial interest of the country. The manufacturing in particular ought to be well chosen, because the arts and sciences ought to be considered as forming a part of the object. One or two such men ought to be constantly travelling from England to the manufacturing states of Europe, to watch and make comparison of the progress made by either party, whether in goods or the machinery by which it was produced. But to qualify a man for such an undertaking, he should be perfectly acquainted with the best mode of producing the same articles in England, so that if he saw a novel production, or merely an improvement, or if he could not by a careful examination of the article itself, see the means by which it was brought about, he should then set to work, and by some means or other find out, and see the machinery. But it would not be of much use for a man to look at it, who was not pretty familiar with similar machinery in England; and he should know the parts as well as the whole. From having been connected with mechanical inventions, I know how difficult it is for a man to follow out the consequences of what may at first sight appear but a trifling alteration, or one of no consequence. But let any man go to the Patent Office, or examine the 'London Journal of Arts and Sciences,' a monthly publication which professes to give a

correct drawing and description of every new machine, and he may see the account of one, ninety parts out of a hundred of which may be old, and yet, by the trifling addition, or even subtraction of one minor part of that machine, may produce a more valuable article. Still, when at first sight a person saw that so much of it was old, he would be strongly inclined to suspect that the thing was altogether a mere trick in trade; that 130*l.* (about the price of a patent) was embarked in the shape of a puff, for the privilege of stamping the article with the word "*patent*." Yet this might not be the case, for a single wheel, or a single tooth in a wheel, more or less, might produce a decided improvement. To corroborate this, I will mention a case in point. I know a man who within the last two or three years, has invented a novelty in a cider-mill; and I know parties, mechanics too, who have been to look at it, and they say that for the life of them they cannot see the least novelty from this, and other cider-mills of the same kind, and yet they acknowledge that the effect produced is different, that the kernel of the apple is crushed, and the rind ground more perfectly than any other mill will do it. Now all the difference lies here—that one of the grinding or pressure roller revolves rather faster than the other, which is effected by one of the wheels having one or two less teeth on it than the other. This simple fact I think must show of how much importance trifles are in mechanism, as well as in the world, and makes me think that all the leading manufactures of England ought to be represented by a sort of 'commercial ambassadors.' I mean cotton, wool, silk, and flax, in particular; nor ought minor articles of manufacture to be left out of view; and as fashion has more to do in the present day with trade than may at first sight appear, I would not have fashion lost sight of, whether it consisted of an article for a lady's bonnet, or a button for a man's coat.

"This brings another case in point. A great many French buttons have lately been imported into this country. The material itself—the basis at least—is nothing but that of the horns of cows or sheep, &c., melted, and run or formed in a mould. These moulds are made to any pattern, and then the composition is poured in and cooled to hardness.

"It is true that our Birmingham men are now making these buttons to a great extent; but if a person of taste and judgment, one whose business it had been to watch these novelties, had been in Paris at the time they first came out, and sent over a few sample buttons, the die-sinkers of Sheffield and Birmingham would at once have gone to work, and made a considerable profit, which has now gone into the pockets of the French.

"It is on novelties, on fashion, on things that have '*a run*,' when they first come out, that the greatest profits are obtained. I have no doubt but that while cottons and woollens, permanent manufacturers were only realizing 5 or 7 per cent., button *weavers* were paying 1 or 200 per cent. to foreigners. The profits to a manufacturer, shopkeeper, or tailor, are probably three times as much on a new fancy waistcoat (relatively) as on the coat your tailor sends home with it.

"The good taste of the French in dress and trifles is notorious; and, as I have said before, a man of taste, judgment, and skill, would very soon see whether a new thing was likely '*to take*' in England; and by sending them to the fashionable tailors, milliners, &c., in the west end of London, and getting them started by half a dozen fashionables, the élité, the thing would be sure to have '*a run*' through all grades of society:

'Which takes from three to seven years,
Ere comet-like it disappears.'

My argument comes to this, That the French take the cream, and leave the skim-milk profit for John Bull.

"Some may oppose the appointment of this sort of commercial embassy, by saying that this has been done in the person of Dr. Bowring and others. But these are not exactly the sort of men I have in view. I mean who have been in trade, practical men; yet, at the same time, men who do not despise philosophy, and are aware that theory is the foundation of practice; men who are neither old nor young, and who could and would associate with those below them, and would occasionally, if necessary, put on a working dress to effect a particular object. This could not be done by men who go out with the 'prestige' of official consequence in their *tout-en-semble*, in their faces, words, and actions.

"Others might say, 'Nonsense, the communication is now so constant and rapid, that what takes place in Paris one day, is known two days afterwards in London.' It is not because this is true with regard to men and letters, and 'men of letters' do this, that my argument is wrong; nor because another might say, 'O there are people in trade always ready enough to catch at, and introduce any novelty that is likely to answer their purpose.' I admit this principle is always in action, but I still contend that the foreigner takes more of the cream than is necessary; that although the Englishman will eventually make 500 buttons, or more, for every five that are imported, yet the profits on those five will very far exceed the profit on a similar number, made as it were, at second-hand in England. Besides, why should not the French act upon the same principle that is constantly done in England? If a cotton printer has good taste and judgment, and thinks he has hit off a new pattern that will become fashionable in the spring, he is not in the habit of sending out half a dozen pieces, to see if they are likely to please; but on the presumption that he is right, he has hundreds of pieces ready stamped against the proper moment, when he sends them off to all the best shops in London and the country. The consequence is, that however much the print may take before others in the trade can get the same pattern engraved on the cylinders, the market is tolerably stocked, for of course the original inventor keeps working away the moment he finds that he has made '*a hit*,' that before others can come into the field, the butterflies may be gone, and the fashion with them.

'The same system is carried out more or less in all trades. I know a 'house' in town, one of the partners is constantly in the Manchester and Huddersfield markets; not only watching every new fancy article that presents itself, but endeavours to see the original design, and even suggests his own ideas of what is likely "*to take*;" and if he sees what he considers a *decided* thing, —produced by a novel process of weaving,—a new combination of materials,—or a particular colour, he then engages with that manufacturer to take a certain quantity up to a certain time; but upon these conditions,—that he shall not sell a similar article to any other man in the trade.

"This principle of doing business is much more profitable in the long run, than wasting money on patents; not one in a hundred of which ever repays the cost.

"The sort of demi-official characters I am proposing, should, at least, know enough of the French language to make their way in the world. They might, or not, be under control, and in communication with the English minister at a foreign court. If they were, they might probably sometimes be able to give information which could not so easily be obtained through any other channel.

Artificial wants to be encouraged in the social state.

"As knowledge extends, so will the wants of mankind; I do not mean bread and cheese, knife and fork wants, but as well as the palate, those which please the senses,—the eye and the ear,—the charm of music,—the beauties of painting,—the arts and sciences, and the thousand other trifles which do, and will still further make up the total of human existence.

"Great events will not so often happen, but small ones will increase.

"Look at the city of London, and three parts out of four of all the towns in the country. Well might Buonaparte call us a nation of shopkeepers: we were so in war, and we are still so in peace.

"If nothing but the absolute necessaries of life were wanted, what would become of them and us?

"I admit that we are a-head; the masters of nearly all the great mechanical inventions of the world; but by exporting those inventions, as we are now doing, they will soon be common. We must of necessity, therefore, gradually become more dependent upon trifles; and here foreigners excel.

"It is, therefore, to meet these changes, that I propose these demi-official, commercial agents. Men quite competent to the object could be found for 300*l.* or 400*l.* a year; but I would also, if necessary, allow them to call in the assistance of a good working mechanic.

The parties, however, ought to be men of character, who would be too high-minded to make a contraband trade of their situation, and sell the interest of their countrymen for the benefit of self.

"I could go much more into detail, but it may be useless. I have, however, a strong impression that 2000*l.* or 3000*l.* a year might be profitably spent in this way.

"In closing these hasty remarks, allow me to say that, if there should be any novelty in the plan,—if it should ever be acted upon, and men should be wanted to carry it out, there is one,—I know one, at the service of his country.

"I am, &c.

"Samuel Sevill.

"*William Augustus Miles, Esq.*" "*Burley, February* 17, 1837."

Corn Laws.

Corn laws are universally stated to be the cause of serious injury to trade. I have the testimonies in abundance of masters and of men upon the subject.

There is a surplus population of weavers, and that being the case, I firmly believe that any alteration in the price of food would make no increase in the quantity of food that a weaver could obtain in exchange for his labour, because since 1820, wages have decreased more than 30 per cent., yet wheat is three-pence a quarter dearer (Vide p. 404). The masters would lower wages in order to carry on, as usual, their competition in the markets, and the labourer, in my opinion, would not be benefited, or permitted, by competition among themselves, or from other causes, to earn more money than would purchase a certain supply of food, whatever the cost of those provisions might be, either high or low.

The introduction of female and juvenile labour to the loom, and the use of power looms, have fixed the maximum of a weaver's wages, and he is not in the same position as other labourers in the market.

Nathan Oldham, a weaver at Chalford, observed that—

"Three years ago, when bread was five-pence a quartern loaf, manufacturers referred to the price of provisions and said the wages were sufficient, but now that bread is eight-pence a quartern there is no rise in wages."

The price of bread does not appear to have any regulating power over the wages of weavers, although low priced bread is deemed a sufficient reason by some manufacturers to justify their low wages. I refer to the Tables of wages and corn prices, p. 404.

It has, however, been stated to me, that the foreign market is annually becoming more limited for the sale of British cloth, owing to the establishment of machinery, and rapid improvements on the continent.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

ALLOTMENT SYSTEM.

Allotment system not beneficial in an impoverished district.

It has been said, and I do not deny the assertion, that the allotment system is good, inasmuch as it gives to the labourer "a stake in the hedge," and therefore binds his interests in the welfare of the community. This remark holds good where a labourer is in regular employment, and where his wages are remunerative in proportion to his labour, and where his labour, as long as he is well conducted, will be employed; but in districts where employment is uncertain,—where wages even when employed are scarcely remunerative, the effect of the allotment system, if carried to a large letting of ground, may induce the labourer to cling so closely to that stake in the hedge, that he will not seek employment in another field, and he will be induced to remain in a state of pauperism bordering on, or tending in extreme cases to, a state of destitution as deplorable as that in Ireland.

Thus, in a manufacturing county, as in Gloucestershire, the allotment can only be advantageous in those districts where the population are in a greater degree dependent upon wages than they would be upon their plot of ground for the means of support, otherwise the population, in a very poor district, would cling to their allotment instead of "beating out" for other work, and the land might in the course of seven years become impoverished, and for want of capital, care, and manure would become ultimately unproductive. Mr. Hall, of Througham, near Bisley, one of the principal farmers in the district, observes that the allotment system would only be a temporary aid and likely to entail pernicious effects. If there was employment for the men the system would not be required or would come to an end; but, as he remarks, in reference to Bisley, one of the poorest and most distressed parishes in the manufacturing districts in Gloucestershire, the allotment system, to a starving population, would only induce them to lean on it for entire support, and only cause them to linger instead of seeking other work.

It will be seen in the course of the following evidence, that it is proposed to enclose the whole of an extensive common in Bisley, and that the poor should have small allotments for their support.

For the reasons previously mentioned, and seconded as they are by the opinion of a clever and practical informant, I only foresee, under the present circumstances of distress, that the parish of Bisley would ultimately suffer by such a plan, and that the population would ultimately become, if possible, more impoverished than at present. There is not sufficient capital for the population, and *any plan which might bind the population to that district, would only tend to the still further impoverishment of the poorer classes, and the destruction or removal of the capital now remaining.*

The same remedy has been proposed for the parish of Hampton, and also for the parish of Coaley; but, if carried into effect, it should be in a limited degree, so as not to be the principal means of support to the poor man.

The principal object of an allotment should be to induce the renter to abstain from the contamination of the beer-shop, so that while labouring on his ground he would not only save the sixpence which he might have expended at the beer-shop, but he gives a certain value of labour on his ground, so that he would be a double gainer. Moreover there is the benefit of example to the children, who would be trained to early habits of patient industry, and who, in after life, would covet the possession of a plot of ground to occupy their leisure time.

In reference to the Bisley enclosure, Mr. N. Jones, a manufacturer at Chalford, thinks it would benefit the poor.

A document was presented to me by some of the weavers, proposing that—

> 'The common should be portioned out in 'lotments' to families in proportion to their number, and to descend, *by right of inheritance*, from heir to heir, and that every possessor should pay a penny per lug annually, to assist in maintaining the workhouse poor; and in default of heirs, that the minister of the parish should let the land to some other family." Moreover it is proposed in the same document "that the persons convicted of robbery, felony, or any crime against the peace of the country, or persons not diligently cultivating their land, should forfeit it, and that the future disposal should be vested in the discretion of the minister of the parish."

The plan above proposed would have, in my opinion, a tendency so glaringly injurious, that I presume I may pass it over. I have, however, done my duty in submitting it to your consideration.

The following communication is from Mr. Samuel Sevill, who has taken great pains with his subject, and to whom I feel myself much indebted for the trouble he has taken in this and other subjects connected with the inquiry.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Allotments.

Mr. Sevill on allotments.

"Sir, "*Burleigh House, June*, 1839.

"Before I received the printed list ('heads of subjects') connected with your present inquiry, I had not given any particular attention to the subject of the 'allotment system,' beyond a general conviction that it ought to be adopted and encouraged wherever time, place, and circumstances would admit of it. Wishing to have that conviction supported in every way I could, I have taken some trouble, not only by reading the best source of information, viz. the tracts published by '*The Labourers' Friend Society*,' but also by personal inspection, and by written communications, to get at the merits of the system.

"I know, by experience, that the most useful things are often the most dangerous when improperly applied; that the same fire which warms, will burn us; that water, as well as support life, will destroy it; and so, but in a small degree, I find it is with the allotment system.

"The true principle seems to be that of letting to every labouring man only as much land as will occupy his idle hours, or the time of his wife and children, if they have nothing else to do.

"As a general rule, it may be laid down that one-quarter of an acre is sufficient for a family, though less will sometimes do, and three-quarters of an acre may sometimes be allowed. That carried to a greater extent, the labourer is apt to lean too much on it for support, which makes him a nondescript sort of character, neither a labourer, and still less a farmer. The least untoward circumstance—an accident, want of manure, or a bad season—reduces him to misery, and he is obliged to fly to the parish for relief.

"Knowing that the system had been carried to some extent in the neighbourhood of Uley (Gloucestershire), and that Mr. Harding, a surgeon of that place, had taken considerable interest in the subject, I wrote him, asking the following questions:—

My Question.	*Mr. Harding's Reply.*
"How has the allotment system to poor cottagers worked? to what extent has it been carried; and if let at a farmer's rent per acre? and if not, what is the difference?	"Not worked well for the rate-payers, having been the means of keeping many families here who would otherwise have removed; and it has been generally found that the allotment tenants have been amongst the foremost to seek parochial relief. About 40 acres, the average rental of which is 3*l.* per acre, inclusive of tithes and taxes; whereas the rental of the land adjoining is not above 1*l.* 10*s.* per acre.*

"From this reply, other questions seemed to be necessary, and I addressed another letter to Mr. Harding, asking if more than one-quarter of an acre was allowed to one family, or if there was such a surplus of labour that families attempted to live upon the produce of their allotments, coupled with a little assistance from the parish?

"Do you think the allotment system has been judiciously managed, and, if not, why not?

"Mr. Harding has not favoured me with a reply to these questions. I wish he had, for Uley is the only place I have ever heard or read of in which the system did not work well.

"You will observe, Sir, that the poor people of Uley are charged double the farmer's rent; if the allotments of land have been too large, or let to parties who have attempted to live on the produce, without labouring some part of the week for money wages; it is very clear to me, that the system has not been fairly carried out; and that this exception, whatever may be the cause, does not affect the general happy result of the allotment system.

"If you happen to have made yourself acquainted with the villages of Bussage, Eastcombs, Brownshill, Oakridge-Lynch, France-Lynch, and Chalford-Lynch, on the borders of Bisley and Oakridge Commons, inhabited principally by hand-loom weavers, you probably observed how admirably they are situated for reaping all the advantages of the allotment system, and, by extending it towards them, it would prove the most easy and permanent relief. This might be easily effected, if the parties who may be said to own the commons could agree amongst themselves, and at once appropriate 50 or 100 acres in lots of from one-eighth to one-quarter of an acre.

"I mention so small a quantity as one-eighth of an acre, because every cottage at present has more or less of a garden: still there are but few who would not rejoice to get more. Unless substantial relief is afforded ere long, the population will be in the grave, the workhouse, or scattered over the face of the earth, and their houses in ruins. As the matter stands at present, if the mills that are now shut up were suddenly set to work, there would not be hands enough to keep them going, although, but a few years ago, there was an excess of population, and all the mills in full work.

"The first difficulty which would seem to present itself in extending the weavers' present gardens is, how they would be able to get manure for an additional quantity of land—enough to keep the soil in a healthy state of cultivation; for, unless the land is *fed* it will not *feed*.

"This objection is often made, and by some considered almost fatal to the system, particularly in villages distant from a town, and situated in a hilly district. This difficulty is raised by parties who have not seen what a cottager can do in the course of a year by having a reservoir in his garden—a mere hole—and throwing everything that goes into his house into this hole, when it comes out of the house; which, added to the leaves, stalks, and almost any other odd matter that comes in his way, will furnish a much greater quantity of manure at the end of the year than most people would imagine.

* This is probably a mistake of Mr. Harding.—*W. A. M.*

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

ALLOTMENTS.

Mr. Sevill on allotments.

"I therefore think it may be laid down as a principle, that if *everything* which is grown upon the land is consumed on the premises, whether in the house or in the pig-stye, and returned to the same land in the shape of manure, it would be sufficient to keep that land in a healthy state of cultivation. How does the farmer himself cultivate, except upon this principle?

"Besides this, cottagers who have gardens close to a common, that is regularly depastured by the farmers' cattle during the summer months, have another resource, and are in the habit of sending out their children to 'pick the common;' and last summer I constantly saw men, women, and children, with all sorts of articles to hold it, 'robbing the common,' as the farmer calls it. I could have bought waggon-loads full of sheeps' dung, at 2*d.* per wheelbarrow-full. Such was the depressed state of the stripe-cloth trade, that many families looked to the 2*d.* or 3*d.* per day that they could earn in this way as no unimportant sum towards their daily bread.

"But in speaking of one *great advantage* that a large garden is to the cottages, I ought not to forget that, with industry and economy, it gives him a chance of keeping a pig, '*the poor man's best friend.*' I have often observed that nothing contributes so much towards smiling happy countenances in a cottage family as a pig in their stye; the pig becomes their household god whilst alive, and their sheet-anchor when dead.

"I will now go into the subject of "*enclosure of waste lands.*"

"It has always struck me that there was a confusion of *terms* with regard to the words '*commons*' and 'waste lands.' Many people seem to think that '*commons*' are almost or literally waste land, good but for little or nothing, for want of cultivation.

"With a view to put this question, in some measure, on its real merits, I have taken considerable pains to ascertain the value of the commons belonging to Bisley parish, in their present condition, and whether, by enclosing them, their value would be enhanced.

"The principle laid down, and acted upon as the law on the subject, is, that the farmers of the parish, or any other person, may turn out and depasture in the summer as much stock as they can maintain in the winter. Though this rule was not rigidly adhered to with regard to the weavers, who, till within the last few years, were in the habit of keeping ponies or donkeys to fetch the yarn and carry the cloth back to the mills; but now there are not probably half a dozen kept in the parish, and perhaps not one for that specific purpose.

"The whole of these commons contain about 800 acres, and lie in four distinct parts of the parish. Their situation and quantity of acres in each is nearly as follows:—

Bisley Commons.

"*Custom-scrubs Common*,—say 40 acres.

"This common lies to the north-east of the town of Bisley, and does not contain about two or three acres that would be worth cultivating. Thorns and brushwood now grow upon it, which the parishioners have a prescriptive right of cutting whenever they like.

"*Nottingham-scrubs Common*,—say 50 acres.

"Lies more to the north-east of the town, and, though perhaps of a somewhat better soil, still it would not pay cultivating, either with the spade or the plough. Thorns and brushwood is present produce.

"It must not be imagined that these two scrub commons are valueless, because they produce comparatively nothing at present; for I should say that all the wood the poor people cut in the year is not worth 5*l.* They lie too far off the population to render an inferior fire-wood, as this is worthy of carriage at least to but a few.

"About twenty years ago my brother sold some timber that grew upon Custom-scrubs, the most barren part of the soil too, and these trees, on the average, probably contained thirty feet of timber each; and were particularly clean-grown and good timber of their kind.

"I mention this circumstance to corroborate what I am about to say, as to the value of these two scrub commons to the parish of Bisley; if they were sold, my own rough guess of their value was 5*l.* or 6*l.* per acre. I then asked a party who ought to know their value better than myself, and he put them at 8*l.* per acre. Now, in the event of the two most valuable commons being enclosed (Bisley and Oakridge), the sale of the two scrub commons would produce a sum of money to begin with.

"The following is the situation and character of the two commons that might be enclosed; the soil being pretty much of the same quality as that of the other land in the parish, which lets for about 22*s.* per acre.

"*Bisley Common*

"Contains about 400 acres of what may be called 'table-land;' and lies to the north of the town of Bisley. There is no brushwood, or other vegetable matter growing upon it, that interferes with its natural growth of grass.

"*Oakridge Common*

"Contains about 300 acres of land that will do for the plough, and is in every respect very similar to Bisley Common. It lies to the south-east of the town.

"Stroud is the nearest town whose population would be so large as to interfere with the enclosure of these commons, but the distance being four miles, there is no objection on that score.

"My first object was to ascertain the quantity of cattle that was generally depastured upon these two commons. With this view I applied to the shepherd of the common to ascertain the number of each sort; and for a better elucidation of the subject, I have made the following Dr. and Cr. statement.

"Rough estimate of the value of Bisley and Oakridge Common:—

Dr.	£	*s.*	*d.*	*Cr.*	£	*s.*	*d.*
"The run of 1000 sheep, from the 1st of May to 29th of September, 22 weeks, at 3*d.* per head, per week	253	0	0	By the extra quantity of hay and corn grown by the farmers whilst their cattle are feeding upon the commons, as shown by the other side	553	0	0
"The run of 200 horses and horned cattle for 20 weeks, at 1*s.* 6*d.* per head, per week . .	300	0	0	And if Custom and Nottingham scrubs were sold, say 100 acres, at 8*l.* per acre, 800*l.* at 4 per cent. would produce an annual income of	32	0	0
	553	0	0				

"N.B. The tenter hills of Chalford, used by the clothiers for drying their cloths, are common land, say 5 ot 6 acres, are not reckoned in the above estimate.

"N.B. In the following page it will be observed, that Mr. Hall considers that Oakridge and Bisley Commons are worth 500*l.* per annum to those who have the right of depasturage.

"Comparison is the test of truth; and, in order to ascertain how far my estimate was correct, I proposed (by letter) the following questions, to the most extensive, and, I think I may add, the most intelligent rack-renter in the parish of Bisley. Mr. Thomas Hall, of Througham.

"*1st Question.*

"Do you think the parish of Bisley, generally, would profit by enclosing the commons?

"*Mr. Hall's reply.*

"If the commons of Bisley and Oakridge could in any way be enclosed without incurring the heavy expense of going to Parliament for an Act, or calling in attorneys, land-surveyors, &c., it might and would, I think, answer; but how this is possible to be effected I am at a loss to know. Unless some new plan of enclosure can be adopted, instead of that which has been adopted in the enclosure of other commons, the expense would be nearly equal to the value of the commons.

"*2nd Question.*

"The shepherd (or hayard) of the commons, tells me that there are turned out on Bisley and Oakridge Commons, on average of seasons, 1000 sheep and 200 horses and horned cattle. Are the sheep worth 3*d.* per head, per week, and the horses, &c. 1*s.* 6*d.*?

"It is a great misfortune that our commons have always been overstocked, and, consequently, cattle depastured, do not improve so much as they would if a smaller quantity were turned out. Their value would be increased if an arrangement could be made not to overstock the commons. I think you might value 200 horses and horned cattle at something more than your calculation.

"The following is Mr. Hall's estimate of the annual value of Oakridge and Bisley Commons,—say 700 acres.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
50 horses for 15 weeks, at 2*s.* per head, per week . . .	75	0	0
150 horned cattle for 15 weeks, at 1*s.* 6*d.* per head, per week . .	168	15	0
800 (instead of 1000) sheep for 22 weeks, at 3¼*d.* per head, per week	256	13	4
	500	8	4

"*3rd Question.*

"What do you think the two commons of Custom and Nottingham scrubs would sell for per acre?

"*Mr. Hall's reply.*

"I think from 8*l.* to 10*l.* per acre.

"*4th Question.*

"Would the commons be of more value to an individual, enclosed or unenclosed, supposing that he built farm-houses, barns, stables, sheds, walls, put up gates, made roads, &c. And can you give a rough guess at the expense per acre of all these necessary expenses, independent of attorneys, land-surveyors, and other contingent expenses?

"If the commons were now the property of one or two persons, there is no doubt but it would answer well to divide them into proper sized fields, to erect one or two moderate sized farm-houses, barns, &c., and to convert the greater part of them into tillage. I cannot possibly calculate the cost of doing this; but as stones are on the spot, perhaps 2500*l.* might be a sufficient sum to expend in enclosing the commons into fields, building, barns, walls, &c.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

ALLOTMENTS.

Mr. Sevill on allotments.

Bisley Commons.

"*5th Question.*

"Suppose Bisley Common to be made into one farm of 400 acres. How many fields would you divide it into?

"If 400 acres of the commons were to be converted into an arable farm, it must of necessity be divided into seven fields. If I was the farmer I should prefer it divided into double that number.

"As a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence, the case seems to me to stand:—if the two commons of Bisley and Oakbridge contain 700 acres, their *present* annual value is 500*l.*—say 14*s.* per acre, and I should say that, if they were enclosed and let for a lease of seven years, they would be worth at least 21*s.* per acre.

"The result of my inquiries as to the propriety of enclosing these commons, leads me to view the question in two lights. The first, as to its national importance. For although the extra produce might not be so much as some people imagine,—for many amongst the '*masses*' look upon all commons as little better than waste land,—still there would be a considerable increase of produce; which, with the chances of a foreign war gathering around us, makes it a matter of importance that England should render herself as much, and as soon as possible, independent of other nations for the staple article of life—bread,—to say nothing of the increased employment that would be given to her growing population.

"My second view of the case takes off from the value of an enclosure, at least from the value which some, at first sight, might imagine would result to those who now enjoy the common rights.

"If they were enclosed, the lord of the manor and the 'great tithe' owner, would take one-tenth each. The value of these two-fifths is at present enjoyed by the landlords or tenants of the parish.* Then comes the expenses of the enclosure. (I will leave the question of an Act of Parliament out of the case at this moment. Mr. Hall probably was not aware that by recent Acts of Parliament '*an Act*' is not absolutely necessary.) A land-surveyor must be employed to map and measure; and how the conflicting interests of the different claimants are to be settled, without the expense of a commissioner, vested with almost arbitrary powers, I cannot at present imagine.

"To this must be added, the expense of the necessary buildings (though in Bisley parish, new farm-houses, would not be wanted, as there are plenty that would, perhaps, answer the purpose, in the villages on the borders of the commons). There being plenty of stone on every spot, the wall-fencing might be done; a wall 5 feet high and 15½ feet long, can now be built for 3*s.* 6*d.*; (per 'lug'), making the roads would also be a considerable expense, as well as the gates and pools to catch water.

"If the commons were enclosed, and the rents applied towards the poor-rates, the great difficulty that I foresee is, the satisfying the mill owner, who may be rated as high as 100*l.* or 200*l.* a-year, and yet not have land enough to keep more than a cow or a horse. I fear he would expect to be relieved in proportion to the amount of his rates, rather than in proportion to the quantity of land. The equitable decision seems to me to be, that the landed interest would be entitled to all the advantages they enjoy at present, and have so long enjoyed; and that the house and mill-holder cannot expect to reap a greater benefit than he does now.

"With regard to the expenses of the enclosure of the commons of Bisley parish; I should sell off all those parts which would not repay cultivation; for all these parts are very congenial soils for the growth of beech, larch, spruce, and Scotch fir-trees. I should also sell off detached lots, and odd corners, wherever parties would give an extra price, which some of the land-owners would probably do, in order to make their fields which bound the commons, more regular and compact. The money deficient after these sales might easily be raised by way of mortgage.

Hampton Commons.

I beg now to observe, that what I have said of the parish of Bisley in particular, every thing I have said about the allotment system, applies with equal force to the adjoining parish of Minching Hampton, which has a common of 542 acres, and which is nearly *fringed* all round with cottages. If both parishes were at my disposal, I should immediately enclose a belt of land between two walls, somewhat thus:

* Though probably the tithes would not be worth so much as at present—for the tithe-owner may now be said to reap some of the advantages of depasturing on the commons. If the farmer had not the right of turning his cattle upon the commons in the summer months, he would not be able to grow so much hay and corn upon his farm as he now does; consequently the tithe-owner derives some portion of the advantages, though not to the extent of one-tenth of the whole, which he would gain by an enclosure.

The inside line would then be the boundary of the common. Experience proves that it would not be necessary to have partition walls to every allotment; 'meer-stones,' as they are called here, would be sufficient as marks of separation.

Mr. Sevill on allotments.

Hampton Commons.

"I confess, that looking at the present prospects of England, both at home and abroad, I have changed my opinion as to the propriety of enclosing such common lands as those of Bisley and of Minching Hampton. On a first view of the subject, seeing that all the produce in their present state goes to support the farmer's cattle in the summer months, while he is growing more hay and corn at home, and coupled with the fact, that nearly the whole surface is healthy grass land; I was inclined to think (which may still be the case) that the enclosure would cost more than the increased produce under a regular system of farm cultivation would compensate. But when I consider the necessity of increasing the production of corn, and the necessity also of creating labour for the agriculturist—that it may be the means of making the one keep pace with the other,—I am in favour of enclosures, and, I would say, of a general enclosure bill; but not of a bill worded so as to forward the interest of a part, to the annoyance and expense of the whole.

"I observe that in the 6th and 7th Wm. IV., cap. 115, there is a clause prohibiting the enclosure of commons, or waste lands, within a certain distance of a town with a certain population. There is something to be said both for and against this clause. On the one hand it would be a most desirable thing to give the mechanics and operatives of large towns, not only the chance, but the taste for cultivating a garden. It would be a much more rational and healthy manner of spending his time, than in the beer-shop or the gin-palace. On the other hand, it is desirable to have something more than turnpike-roads for people occasionally to walk on—a space that Nature has carpeted with grass,—instead of narrow lines that man has covered with dust or dirt. But if the common be large, perhaps the difficulty may be reconciled by splitting it.

Allotment system of great importance to the labouring man.

"I am unwilling to conclude my remarks without again alluding to what I conceive to be of the *greatest importance*—the allotment system.

"I do not, however, see how the government could interfere to advantage, except by introducing a general enclosure bill, but not a bill that by a single clause or expression, left it open to an individual, or even a minority in a parish, to indulge in a factious or litigious disposition.

"The carrying out of the allotment system to its fullest extent, must be left to private inclination and exertion; and I would press the subject upon, not only what is called the landed interest of the country, but upon every master; who though he may have but a few fields, still to let every labouring man that wishes it have an interest in the land of his birth. It will make him a better husband, a better father, a better subject, and a better man. Let him have as much land as will occupy his waste hours. Every moment engaged in this manner will not only be property to himself, but capital added to the wealth of the country. Idleness is the reservoir of mischief. Opportunity is the source. Look at the recorded facts,—that those who have enjoyed the benefit of the allotment system, have not only *not* joined the incendiary of his own neighbourhood (and those who know how difficult it is for one labouring man to stand apart from his neighbour under such circumstances, can alone appreciate the fact,) but have been amongst the foremost to extinguish the flames.

"If any man is in doubt, let him go into those parts of the country where the allotment has been longest tried. Let him ask the Bishop of Bath and Wells, who has seen the effect of 40 years; let him appeal to Captain Scobell and others, who have tried the thing for 20 years and more. It has, or rather is being tried in the borough of Stroud. Mr. Ricardo, in the parish of Minching Hampton, has appropriated about 8 acres; Mr. Watts, of Stroud, about 40; Mr. Hyett and the Rev. Mr. Srong, of Painswick, about 30; Colonel Daubeney, of Bisley, 5 or 6. The latter gentleman regrets that his residence in Bath, and the distance of his land from the weavers' cottages, operate against his wish to appropriate a considerable quantity more land for the same purpose.

"It appears to me that the principles of democracy are rapidly spreading in this country. That the aristocracy and large landed proprietors, are viewed, particularly by the mechanics and operatives of the towns, as men who monopolise more of the soil than they ought to possess. Mr. Elliott, the Sheffield 'corn law rhymer,' is doing, in degree, for England, what Moore, by his 'Melodies,' did for Ireland, by declamatory assertions; and, decking them off in the charms of poetry, he is enlisting the passions against the tardy convictions of reason. At the Westminster 'demonstration,' he talked of the 'glorious three days,' and held up France as a pattern to England, 'a nation of freeholders.' But if that question had been put fairly, it could have been shown that by this perpetual sub-division of land, which is going on in France every succeeding generation, the consequence, in the end, must be another revolution, or a pauper population.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"Samuel Sevill.

"*William Augustus Miles, Esq.*"

Nailsworth.

Anthony Fewster, of Nailsworth, observes, that—

"The allotment system (as recommended by the labourers' friend society) was introduced into this neighbourhood to some extent about four years ago, and here, as elsewhere, with almost uniformly good results. Sound policy, patriotism, and benevolence, all unite to recommend a much more enlarged extension of the system in agricultural as well as in those manufacturing districts where the population is scattered (as it is here) over a large extent of

surface, and where consequently allotments may be obtained tolerably contiguous to the dwellings of the working people. If, in enclosing waste lands, a certain portion could be allotted for the use of well-conducted working men who had never applied for parochial relief when advanced in years (say 50) and divided into portions of, say quarter of an acre, such persons to enjoy it for the remainder of their lives free of rent, or any other charge,—such a provision, small as it is, would, I think, prove an incentive to good conduct, and be of invaluable service to the poor."

Coaley.

Captain Thompson, of Coaley, also recommends that "the waste land in his parish should be enclosed, and given to the poor, according to the number of the family."

The waste land at Coaley is principally at Coaley Peake, at the Ham's Hill, and Fir Green, amounting to about 30 acres, and of good quality.

Coaley is a very distressed and ignorant district. It is remote, and scarcely accessible on account of the badness of the roads. I refer to the lamentable picture given of the population by the minister, p. 468, and also the remarks in the district observations, concerning this parish, p. 430; and I fear the result of Captain Thompson's plan would, under present circumstances, tend almost to brutalize the people, unless they could be more occupied and better educated.

Allotments to be given as rewards for good conduct.

The principle of giving a small portion of land is best met by Anthony Fewster, of Nailsworth, who purposes that it should be given to persons advanced in life who had never received parochial relief; a plan of that kind would greatly tend to elevate the conduct of the poor, who under present systems of management, are more surrounded by punishments than stimulated by rewards.

Randwick.

The Rev. J. Elliott, minister of Randwick, informs me that—

In his parish the allotment system is adopted to a limited extent. He observes that the labouring classes are usually desirous of renting a bit of land: to be beneficial, the plot of ground should be near their cottages; but sufficient gardens apportioned to the size of the family, will generally be found most convenient, as well as conducive to industry and cottage comfort.

Mr. Charles Stanton thinks—

The allotment system to be very advantageous to the labouring classes; it is not equally temporary in its relief with emigration, and it produces a moral benefit by keeping men from beer-shops.

Mr. Hone, late Governor of the Stroud Union workhouse, states, that—

The allotment system would be beneficial in breaking up the injurious effects of the beer-shops; he is not aware that it is carried on to any extent in this district, but knows the beneficial result of it in the county of Sussex.

Mr. Hubbard, of Nailsworth, thinks—

The allotment system would be very beneficial to the weavers and other workpeople, if more generally adopted. The widow of the late Admiral Young, in the neighbourhood, has let out some allotments near Nailsworth, and it has proved of great service to the poor: men who had been in public-houses sotting away their time, may now be seen with their children at honest work.

Mr. Hubbard states, that—

Beet-root a nutritious esculent.

He has tried to introduce the beet-root instead of the potatoe; it is a rich esculent, full of saccharine matter, full of nutrition, and better than the potatoe. He states that a beet-root baked and ate with vinegar is a good dish. In Wilts they brew with beet, and many prefer it; has tasted some at Mr. Loyd's at Malmesbury, and it is very good; it requires a little practice, but it is excellent; considers its introduction would be advantageous; the leaves are as good as spinage; and a succession of leaves continue from spring till winter.

Uley.

Captain Slade, R.N., residing at Uley, observes, concerning the allotment system in his parish, that—

About 60 acres are let in small allotments to the poor.

20 acres of the land were bad land, but are now rendered productive, carrying double the crops, and are as good as any of the other land.

The quantity of land allotted is regulated by the abilities and facilities of the man and his family who apply, varying from quarter, half, to three quarters of an acre.

Informant superintends the allotments. The rents are punctually paid, although last year great distress prevailed.

The land is let including poor's rates at farmers' prices; some is let at 28*s*. an acre, some at 4*l*.; and the higher priced land is cheaper than the 28*s*. per acre land.

The allotment system is of great use to the poor man; for instance, James Smith has a wife and five children; he rents about three quarters of an acre; is a prudent and hard-working man; is now using his potatoes of last year's growth; can keep a pig; has a sow in the stye big with young; killed a pig some time ago; cured it for himself, and sold none;

is a weaver, and has casual work; told Captain Slade, that if he had not had this piece of land he should have been starved.

Previous to the allotment system drunkenness was very prevalent, men used to go by the chapel-house roaring in gangs. If a man who has an allotment proves a drunkard, he is dismissed; and the moral condition of the working man is much improved.

—— Stevens, a weaver at Uley, states, that—

Diminution of poor-rates attributed to the allotment system.

The allotment is an excellent thing; if a man has plenty of work, he would not need the land; it takes up his time when he is at play for work; he has half an acre; himself, wife, and one child at home, who quills for him; he grows potatoes, wheat, vegetables; works about two hours a-day when he has chain, and the whole of the day when he has no work.

Considers that the allotment system refreshens and invigorates a weaver, whose employment is in the house; and that it keeps the labouring classes generally from the beer-shops.

Had the allotment system not been adopted at Uley, more than half the people must have been upon the parish; the rates have been so high, that no person will rent land in the parish; the clergyman even has paid 15*l.* more than his tithes.

About eight years ago, although Mr. Sheppard's factory was at full work, the rates have been 17 and 18 in a year; now that there is no weaving in the district, the rates are about five in a year.*

Considers the above-named number of rates about eight years ago to have originated from a bad administration of the Poor Law.

He further states, that he was never on the parish; and he is convinced, that the present Poor Law Bill is a good and excellent bill for the really honest and industrious man.

Nathaniel Clissold, a weaver at Stroud, states, that— Stroud.

He rents quarter of an acre of some allotment-ground belonging to Mr. Watts, of Stroud; that he pays 10*s.* per annum for the land; he spends his leisure time upon it; he produces cabbages and other vegetables, which he sells, and purchases other provisions for his family with the money; last year, after paying all expenses, and providing for the house, he was 20*s.* in pocket from his "bit of ground."

Peter Gay, a weaver at Stroud,—

Also rents quarter of an acre under Mr. Watts, and pays 10*s.* a year for it; he finds it very useful when he has nothing to do; but when other work is plenty, it is of no particular advantage.

—— Hitchins, a weaver at Stroud,—

Likewise rented under Mr. Watts; he has quarter of an acre, and pays the same rent as Clissold and Gay; but the land is now taken from him, as the poor-house garden is upon the site; he found this land very useful, and he has produced his 10 and 12 sacks of potatoes, which were of great help to him.

Horsley.

Horsley

There are 26 acres and 3 roods, 2 perch, allotted in this parish:

	A.	R.	P.
Allotment of Colonel Kingscote and Mr. Wilbraham .	15	3	2
„ Mrs. Young	6	0	0
„ Mr. Stephens	5	0	0

This allotment system has been established about four years; the quantity to each person is about 40 perch; the land lies in three parts of the parish; potatoes and corn are grown; the regulation is, that the crops shall be varied, and that from 12 to 16 loads of manure shall be annually laid on per acre; the manure to purchase is worth from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a-load; if the holder does not manure the land, he is liable to be dismissed; the crops are grown for their own use, selling is prevented; many of the men keep pigs; the allotment system keeps men from the beer-houses, which are, without exception, the greatest nuisances in the district.

If after six months' possession a man applies for relief, he is liable to forfeit the land; about 12 of the persons now holding land used to be very frequently upon the parish; there are more applicants than can be supplied with land; the poor consider it an unqualified benefit; they say that it keeps them from starving, especially in winter.

The agricultural labourer was not so much out of work last year and the year before, as in some previous years; has known as many as 70 able-bodied men on

* In reference to the present improving condition of Uley, compared with its condition when the factories were flourishing, I beg to state that it is not entirely owing to the allotment system, but partly to a very considerable migration and emigration, when trade failed and work was scarce.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

ALLOTMENTS.

the parish; the reason why labourers have been employed is, that farmers have been doing better; produce and prices were better.

Since the union, the rates have been raised in this parish from 1100*l.* to 1500*l.*; there are more persons now relieved; but the relieving officer has too much to do.

The rent of the land is 37*s.* per acre, including taxes and tithes; the land is very good; the people work it well, it is their interest so to do; and it produces remarkable crops.

20 perch will produce 12 sacks of potatoes, and the remaining 20 perch will yield from 4 to 5 bushels of wheat.

ACCOUNT of EXPENDITURE and PROFIT of 20 Perch of Land.

To	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
12 sacks potatoes, at 5*s.*	3	0	0	Rent	0	4	9
4 bushels of wheat at 7*s.*	1	8	0	Grubbing land	0	5	0
Straw	0	10	0	Seed for potatoes	0	5	0
				„ wheat	0	1	7
				Hoeing and earthing	0	1	4
				Digging	0	4	0
				Reaping	0	0	9
				Thrashing	0	1	6
				Wear and tear of implements	0	0	6
	4	18	0		1	4	5
	1	4	5				
Net profit	3	13	6½				

In this calculation is included work which the labourer himself, or his family, could do, amounting to 12*s.* 7*d.*, which, in fact, would then leave a profit of 4*l.* 6*s.* 1½*d.*

On first allotting the land it was thought that the weaver would not work it so well as the agricultural labourer, but they do it as well.

Of the 66 persons who hold allotments under Mr. Harvey's settings,

Agricultural labourers	31	Shoemakers	2
Weavers	16	Blacksmith	1
Widows	6	Shopkeeper	1
Plasterers	4	Carpenter	1
Cloth-workers	3	Mason	1

MIGRATION AND EMIGRATION.

MIGRATION AND EMIGRATION.

David Ricardo, Esq., of Gatcombe Park, in a small pamphlet upon the subject of emigration, in reference to the poorer districts in his neighbourhood, says,

> I anticipate the greatest advantage from a well-conducted system of emigration. If we saw a man with a large family, and struggling with difficulties in finding the means for their support, let us take away half his children, and half his difficulties would be removed. Such is the case here: this neighbourhood is but one vast family, and if we were to take away a portion of the more active, and put them in a situation to provide for themselves, the bread that supported them is still left behind, and will be divided among those who remain, and will be given to them in the shape of an increase of wages; the demand for all the necessaries of life will continue just the same, only that they will be divided more abundantly among a set of people who, from being too numerous, have hitherto enjoyed but a scanty portion of them."

The humane and benevolent exertions of Mr. Ricardo, the anxious and zealous care with which he endeavours to benefit the state and condition of the poor, is not surpassed in the neighbourhood; while, at the same time, he firmly upholds those principles in the new Poor Law Bill which tend to give a tone of energy to the labouring classes.

Owing to the active exertions of Mr. Ricardo, emigration has been carried on to some extent in this district.

Migration has also taken place. A parish once full of factory people, is now an agricultural district, and happier than ever it was—I mean Uley.

Many favourable accounts have been received from persons who have emigrated.

Extract of a Letter from James Macey, late of Kingswood, to the Rev. D. Jones, Perpetual Curate of Kingswood.

"*Paramatta, June* — 1838.

"I have 40*l.* a year, with house, food, and firing. Provisions are much cheaper than at home: clothing rather dearer. The privileges held out to emigrants are extremely good. We was free the moment we landed, and was provided with a comfortable house and victuals at no expense, until we got situations; but the greatest number was engaged the first day. A mechanic can earn from 1*l.* 15*s.* a week to 2*l.* 10*s.*; a labouring man 1*l.* 5*s.* a week.

"If any persons are desirous of emigrating to New South Wales, I would recommend them to come immediately, for, with industry, people can do extremely well, and maintain their families respectably."

Extract of a Letter from the same to his Mother.

"Tell M. and his family to come out; they will find employ directly, and good wages for their labour; they will soon be master of many pounds. If we choose to return to England again, we can save money enough in two years to free our passage back."

There is a great desire for emigration at this time among the working classes in Gloucestershire; but, unfortunately for the weavers, they are not a class of persons in request, yet there are many of them who are fully capable of following rural occupations, and would be useful members in a colony.

The Rev. W. Cockin, jun., of Hampton, in reference to the impoverished state of the working classes in his parish, observes,

The distress of the entire district is beyond the conception of any one who has not witnessed it. It was not mere want, but actual starvation, which was endured throughout last winter. He then continues to remark, that emigration seems to be the natural remedy, and, indeed, the only one which will fully meet the exigencies of the case; and even emigration must be conducted on a very extended scale to be productive of any real good; and from the favourable reports which have been received from those already gone out, he does not think there would be found any indisposition amongst the poor to avail themselves of this means of relief.

Mr. Harvey, of Horsley, says,

Within twelve months 200 persons have been sent to Australia from the following places: Horsley, Kingscote, Stanley, Uley, Avening, Hampton, Owlpen, and Kingswood; that the demand for the colony was agricultural labour, but about twelve of the above number were weavers. This draught did not, in any way, affect wages.

Last year thirteen families from the parish of Bisley, consisting of 68 persons, emigrated to Australia and America; they were taken to Clifton Hot-wells, and placed on board a steam-vessel on the 31st August, 1837, to join the ship lying at Kingroad; 42 of the children were above seven years of age, and 26 under seven.

The parish borrowed 200*l.* for the purpose of emigrating these families, of which the following are the items, viz.;

To clothing 68 persons at 1*l.* 10*s.* 8¾*d.* per head, including Bibles, Prayer Books, &c.	104	9	7
Cash paid for two waggons and a cart, to take the 68 persons to Bristol, their victuals on leaving and on the road, and breakfast at Bristol	24	13	6
Cash for one day's victuals, the first day put on board the steam-packet	2	0	0
Cash paid Dr. Rogers, the emigrant Surgeon, for two men and their wives that were above the age allowed to go *passage free*, 15*l.* each	60	0	0
	£ 191	3	1

Of these emigrants no account has, as yet, been received; and of the thirteen families, eight were weavers, as will be seen by the following enumeration:

No. 1. Mason's labourer
2. Rower.
3. Weaver.
4. Weaver.
5. Weaver.
6. Weaver.
7. Shoemaker.
8. Weaver, but turned carpenter.
9. Baker and Sawyer.
10. Sawyer.
11. Weaver.
12. Weaver.
13. Weaver.

The above statement was given in by the Churchwarden of the parish of Bisley.

Gloucestershire.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

MIGRATION AND EMIGRATION.

The following information has been given to me concerning the migration from Bisley of families to the north:—

Persons migrated from Bisley, at the cost of the parish, as follows:—

March 1837.	Robert Mason and wife, weavers, with 4 children, into Yorkshire	6
,,	Two girls of the name of Damsell, cloth-workers (as a part of Mason family)	2
,,	Mary Gardner (widow) weaver, with 4 children, into Yorkshire	5
,,	Sarah Faukes, deserted by her husband, she a clothworker, 4 children, into Yorkshire	5
		18

The above three families had situations of employ found them by the migration agents.

Persons migrated to Shrewsbury (employed in Messrs. Marshall's flax manufactory), at the cost of the parish.

In the spring of 1837:—	
Isaac Hunt and wife, weaver, with 6 children	8
Maria Berriman, widow, cloth-worker, and 5 children	6
Phœbe Franklin, widow, with one child	2
Martha Rowles, single woman (Minchin Hampton parish)	1
— Smart, deserted by her husband	1
About 19 others went to Shrewsbury, but have since returned	19
In the fall of 1837, to Shrewsbury:—	
William Clift and wife, cloth-workers, with 6 children	8
Charles Gardner and wife, weavers, with 4 children	6
Keziah Poulson, widow, cloth-worker, with 4 children	5
Mary Gardner, widow, weaver, with 3 children	4
Eliza and Phœbe Workman, single, cloth-workers	2
Rebecca Gardner, weaver, and illegitimate son	2
Two girls of the names of Trotman and Pearce, single	2
	66
Number emigrated to Australia were	68
Into Yorkshire	18
To Shrewsbury	66
Total	152

In addition to the number before stated, many families have migrated into different parts of the country, where they could find employ.

WILLIAM LONG,
Overseer for the Parish of Bisley for 1837-8.

A weaver at Uley stated that many families had left that place lately, especially since the failure of Mr. Sheppard; some have gone as navigators on the Bath and Bristol railroad, some into other manufacturing districts, and others to Australia and America. Letters have been received of a favourable description from America.

In consequence of migration and emigration about 200 houses are vacant in the parish of Uley.

Mr. N. Jones considers that—

Emigration would be a good thing for the Chalford district, for they are too thickly populated.

Mr. Harris, a manufacturer from Dursley, states that—

Emigration would be beneficial to the men; would emigrate them to Australia, or some other of our own colonies, whence we could get produce in return.

Mr. Hubbard, chemist and druggist, of Nailsworth, states, that

Many tradesmen in the district have serious thoughts of emigrating, as they cannot support their families by their trade here.

Captain S., of Uley, states,

That emigration and migration took place when Mr. Sheppard failed.

The Overseer of Uley states,

That five heads of families, and their families, containing 78 souls, went to Canada about five years ago; emigrated at the cost of the parish.

33 persons, 20 of whom were weavers, went to the United States about 18 months ago.

17 wives of men who had gone to the United States at their own cost, went to Boston last April, at request of their husbands; two of the men sent money, one 10*l.* and the other 12*l.*, saved in six months.

20 persons went last year to Australia, but only one was a weaver, and she was the wife of a labourer.

Thinks about 500 persons have left the parish; many at their own cost.

Emigration is a great relief, as the people would have remained paupers, and would have generated paupers.

Mr. Peter Playne observes, that

Emigration would certainly be beneficial to the working classes, and would not make it worse for the manufacturer. Many have gone from this neighbourhood, but labourers are so plentiful that they are not missed. If (says he) we have a vacancy, we have ten applications in the course of the day. States that he is not aware of any manufacturer being opposed to emigration, nor never heard of any manufacturer threatening to turn off hands if any relatives of his workpeople emigrated; would not object to emigration to a limited extent.

Anthony Fewster, of Nailsworth,

Considers migration and emigration to be both serviceable, especially where there is a redundancy of working people. He adds that, in his district, they promote both in some respects; but the large payers of rates, particularly farmers, are, as a body, opposed to granting sums from the rates, even by borrowing, for the purpose of emigration.

Joseph Lewis, butcher, at Minchin Hampton, states, that about 40 or 50 persons left the above place for Australia, in November, 1838.

The Rev. J. Elliott, of Randwick, says,

That emigration, as a remedial measure, is considered beneficial to all parties, and, as such, ought to be encouraged; but does not contemplate much relief from this source to parishes.

Mr. Charles Stanton states, with reference to emigration as a source of relief to the weaver,

That, locally, it might be beneficial; as a general principle it is like bleeding a person—only a temporary expedient.

Concluding Remarks on the Gloucestershire Trade in Woollen Cloths.

I have considered it my duty to lay before you the foregoing mass of evidence, and the various tables, in consequence of the various contradictions which occurred at every step of the inquiry. The evidence I have collected leads me to conclude that the wages of weaving have been materially injured by the introduction of female and juvenile labour to the loom under the name of "colts" or "half-taught" weavers; that the system of making cloth upon commission for the London houses forced the contracting manufacturers of this county to seek a profit from the only source from which a profit under that system *could* be procured, namely, wages of labour; that, in consequence of the many persons who, in better times, were brought up to the loom, the labour market became overstocked, and consequently the commission houses obtained labour at the cheapest rate, as the weavers were the first to undersell each other; that wages thus had a tendency to reduction, and other better paying manufacturers were compelled to have recourse to the lowest rate of wages, in order to meet the goods of the commission houses in the market.

The distress exists amongst the out-door weavers and their journeymen, in consequence of the scarcity of work among them since the establishment of the shop-loom factories, where the weaving is performed upon the premises.

It is evident that the distressed condition of the out-door weavers is in a great measure attributable to the fact of a surplus number of hands, who are glad to receive work at any price and on any conditions, rather than leave their precarious trade, or seek for other labour, whereby they drag their fellow-workmen to their own level by constantly underselling them in wages.

With regard to the capital which employs labour, the manufacturers are in keen competition in the market; and though the same quantities of cloth may be produced, yet the profits are considerably diminished.

Labour, on the one hand, is overstocked; and capital, on the other hand, has become less productive.

Worcestershire.

CARPET-WEAVING.

Kidderminster.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Carpet Weaving.

Kidderminster.

The fabrics here are carpets, finger rugs, bombazeens, and coverings for buttons, either of silk or linen cloth, and waistcoat pieces.

There are no power-looms.

The carpet trade is the principal trade, though many finger rugs are manufactured here. The bombazeen trade has greatly decreased, and the trade of button coverings is a recent introduction. The carpet fabrics are of three sorts, namely Brussels, Scotch, and Venetian.

Brussels carpets are made in comber looms and in point looms, looms indicative of the pattern. The "comber work" is when the pattern is not repeated in the breadth. This requires nearly double the quantity of cordage and gearing, and is more laborious for the weaver and his draw boy; the wages are consequently higher. There are two other sorts of patterns made in the point loom. The "point work" implies a repetition of the pattern from the centre to the sides; the cross point means that the pattern is repeated from the side towards the centre.

As far as I could ascertain, there are 1965 looms in Kidderminster, besides 80 looms for bombazeens. At the time of my inquiry about 400 looms were unemployed.

The bombazeen trade is almost extinct at Kidderminster. The Norwich-make of this fabric is more "showy," but less durable, and is produced at a cheaper cost.

The bombazeen weavers in Kidderminster work at their own houses; there are not above 70 in the town, and the wages do not average more than 7*s*. per week; women and aged persons can perform this work, which is comparatively light.

When the trade, which was once of importance in this town, decreased, the men sought and obtained other work.

The following tables relate to the carpet trade:—

Number.	Names of Manufacturers.	Looms.				Labour.			
		Number of Brussels Looms.	Number of Scotch Looms.	Number of Venetian Looms.	Total number of Carpet Looms.	Number of Men.	Number of Women.	Number of Children.	Total number of persons employed.
1	Hooman, and Co.	172	70	..	242	160	30	170	360
2	Lea	171	38	..	209	203	68	169	440
3	Talbots	107	36	14	157	171	30	122	323
4	Woodward	104	8	11	123	80	14	104	198
5	Morton, J.	100	12	4	116	110	23	94	227
6	Humphries, Thomas and James	98	4	8	110	100	14	100	214
7	Butcher, Worth, and Holmes	82	26	..	108	116	16	82	214
8	Hopkins, Thomas	93	..	..	93	89	11	83	183
9	Watson and Son	90	..	..	90	90	18	90	198
10	Newcomb, Joseph, and Son	70	5	1	76	76	12	70	158
11	Barber and Cole	71	4	..	75	76	12	71	159
12	Bowyer and Dixon	75	..	..	75	80	12	75	167
13	Brinton, Henry	60	4	3	67	67	9	57	133
14	Wright and Crump	63	..	4	67	67	10	63	140
15	Gough and Sons	64	..	..	64	64	10	64	138
16	Stoddart and Woodward	60	..	..	60	70	12	70	152
17	Dobson and Son	51	4	...	55	53	9	50	112
18	Kitely and Fawcett	46	..	..	46	49	9	47	105
19	Cooper, William	42	..	..	42	44	4	42	90
20	Potter and Duckham	36	..	..	36	36	7	36	79
21	Hiles, Joseph	34	..	..	34	37	7	35	79
22	Bough	24	..	..	24	24	5	24	53
23	Robinson, J. H.	22	..	..	22	23	5	22	50
24	Silk, William	20	..	..	20	20	4	20	44
	Totals	1765	210	45	2021	1905	351	1760	4016

Kidderminster.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CARPET WEAVING.

PRESENT PRICES of CARPET and RUG WEAVING.

Brussels Weaving, per Yard.

	4-4ths wide.	7-8ths.	3-4ths.	5-8ths.	2-4ths.
	d.	*d.*	*d.*	*d.*	*d.*
Comber	16¼	14	11½	9¾	8¼
Point	13½	11¾	10	8½	7¼

Additions per Yard for 3-4*ths wide.*
Other widths in proportion.

1*d.* for Medium Pile, No. 11 or 12 wire.
2*d.* for High Pile. 9 or 10 ditto.
½*d.* for a three-thread frame, or where more than half the frame is three-thread.
½*d.* more for all fine yarn.
1½*d.* if ten wires to the inch.
½*d.* for an extra Linen Chain of 260 ends, and
½*d.* more if a full Chain, 520 ends.
4*d.* for a double Shuttle.

Deductions per Yard for 3-4*ths wide*
Other widths in proportion.

½*d.* for two on a Lash.
½*d.* for every Frame not worked.
2*d.* for common Brussels, viz., 110 point cords, and 100 lashes in 3-8ths work.
2*d.* for cottage Brussels, viz., with two fine Frames, nine wires to the inch.
Knots to be woven in withoutcharge

Rugs, per Yard.

	Comber. 3-4ths.		Comber. 5-8ths.		Point. 3-4ths.		Point. 5-8ths.		
	s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	
Imperial	1	10	1	7	1	7	1	5	These Prices for Imperial Work include a 3-thread frame where it is woven with a wire instead of wadding.
Best Brussels	1	5	1	3	1	3	1	1	
Mock Imperial	1	8	1	6	1	5	1	3	
Wilton	0	12½	0	10½	0	11	0	9½	

For Piece-work of these qualities, 1*d.* per yard less.

Finger-Rug Weaving, per square Foot.

	90 Pitch.	80 Pitch.	Opening, Shearing, and Finishing, per square Foot.
	d.	*d.*	*d.*
Figured Worsted	5½	5	1½
Ditto Woollen	4½	4	1
Stormant Worsted	2¾	2½	0¾
Ditto Woollen	2¼	2	

Altering.

For every Frame, 1*s.*
For piecing back, 1*s.*
If more than 4½ yards, 1*s.* 6*d.*
Comber Lashes, 6*d.* per score.
Point ditto, 4½ ditto.

Simples, Comber, 2*s.* Points, 1*s.*
Winding out Thread, 6*d.* per lb.
Day-work, 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* per day.
Winding Linen, ¼*d.* per lb.

Winding Worsted, common, 6*d.* per score.
Ditto ditto fine, 7*d.* ditto.
3*d.* for Warping Linen Chains, 5-8ths and 3-4ths wide.
4*d.* ditto, 4-4ths.

Kidderminster Weaving.

	4-4ths.	7-8ths.	3-4ths.	5-8ths.	2-4ths.
	d.	*d.*	*d.*	*d.*	*d.*
Super, all Points or Comber	5	4½	4	3½	3
Common	3½	3¼	3	2¾	2½

¾*d.* for every Lash put on a Barrel Engine.

Venetian Weaving.

	4-4ths.	7-8ths.	3-4ths.	5-8ths.	2-4ths.
	d.	*d.*	*d.*	*d.*	*d.*
Common and plaid	3	2¾	2½	2¼	2
Super	3¼	3	2¾	2½	2¼
Twilled	3¾	3½	3¼	2¾	2½
Super super Venetian, 14 shoots to the inch, plain or twilled	5	4½	4¼	3¾	3¼
Ditto ditto 16 shoots to the inch	6	5½	5	4½	4
British or Damask, usual pitch	5	4½	4	3½	3
Ditto high pitch	5½	5	4½	4	3½

		Double.		Single.	
		s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
Warping Super Kidderminster Chains	4-4ths	1	8	0	10
Ditto Common ditto	4-4ths	1	4	0	8
Ditto Venetian of all kinds	4-4ths	2	2	1	1
	7-8ths	1	11	0	11½
	3-4ths	1	8	0	10
	5-8ths	1	6	0	9
	2-4ths	1	4	0	8

Kidderminster.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CARPET WEAVING.

METHOD showing how to ascertain the TOTAL NUMBER of PERSONS employed in HAND-LOOM CARPET WEAVING.

Say 100 employed Brussels Looms—

	Men.	Boys.	Total.
1 weaver to each, say	80	20	100
1 drawer to each			100
Dyers and foremen (men)			7
Winders at warehouse (women)			10
Extra hands assisting (chiefly children, some women)			8
			225

Or an average of $2\frac{1}{4}$ to each loom.

For 20 employed Scotch and Venetian looms—

	Men.	Boys.	Total.
1 weaver to each, say	15	5	20
Quill-winders (women) about			6
Warpers and winders (women) about			6
Dyers and foreman, about			3
Extra hands (say children and women)			3
			38

Or an average of nearly 2 to each loom.

On reference to the masters' books, in order to ascertain the earnings of the weavers, including "work and play time," I find that, during the last three years, 87 looms have each averaged 19*s.* 9*d.* per week, net 13*s.* 11*d.* per week, after paying draw boy and other deductions.

The deductions for carpet weaving are 5*s.* 10*d.* per week for draw boys and shop expenses. The draw boy is frequently a child or relative of the weaver, and his occupation is the introductory step to the loom. Girls also draw and ultimately become weavers.

The weavers stated to me that, on the average, they cannot make more than 21 yards per week, at 10*d.* per yard, 17*s.* 6*d.*; deduct 5*s.* 10*d.*; net, 11*s.* 8*d.* per week. In some of the minor houses foreman and dyers take weavers on half the produce of a carpet-loom to make up their wages, but it is considered a disreputable practice, and tends to the depression of wages.

The books of the manufacturers I consider my best guide, as in one case I have a proof, and in the other I have merely assertions and no proof.

I have been careful to select inferior workmen as well as good workmen from the masters' books, and I consider 13*s.* 11*d.* to be the correct average. Upon the statement, however, of the weavers, concerning the amount of earnings, namely, 11*s.* 8*d.* per week, I consider them to be "in a condition similar to that of other labouring classes in the country."

Upon the closest inquiry I ascertain that the average quantity produced is two pieces of 36 yards long in three weeks. More, however, can be made, but not usually.

I saw two lads bring in their pieces. One, aged 18, had completed 45 yards at $8\frac{1}{2}$*d.* per yard, in ten days; the other, aged 19, had woven 46 yards in the same time. They had both been draw boys, and had been in the loom about three years; but they were not able to gear the loom, to tie on, or remedy the work if it became out of order; they could only weave.

The wages earned by button-covering and waistcoat-piece weavers (for figured silks are used for both purposes) are rather under carpet-weaving—say about 1*s.* less per week.

A skilful carpet weaver of industrious habits can earn good wages. I have seen the wages of men who, for three years, have earned every week 1*l.* 6*s.* 9*d.*; but it must be remembered that these cases are exceptions, inasmuch as these men have been supplied with constant work, and are superior hands.

The working time is from 12 to 13 hours per diem.

The amount of factory wages paid to women and children vary from 3*s.* to 6*s.* weekly.

AVERAGES of WORKERS employed by G. B. Lea and Co., in the SPINNING MILLS, Kidderminster.

		£.	*s.*	*d.*	
6 Mechanics	each per week	1	5	0	
5 Sorters	,,	1	5	4	
15 Combers	,,	0	13	1	
125 Preparers and Piercers	,,	0	5	6	Average of ages from 13 to 20
50 Doffers	,,	0	3	0	,, 13 to 15
22 Doublers	,,	0	6	6	,, 18 to 30
15 Reelers	,,	0	6	0	,, 18 to 30

There are many beer-shops in the town, and the weavers are not more exempt from drunkenness than other classes of workpeople.

Statement of the Number of Public-Houses and Beer-Shops in Kidderminster, May, 1838.

	In Kidderminster.	In Foreign.
Public-Houses and Taverns .	58	7
Beer-Shops	74	13

In 1828 a severe struggle occurred here between masters and men, in consequence of a strike of the masters to lower wages, from 1*s.* to 10*d.* per yard, which the men resisted: the strike lasted from March till August. The masters won the day, but lost much of their trade, for the orders as well as many Kidderminster weavers went into Scotland. During the strike, sums of money were subscribed for the support of the Kidderminster weavers.

The moral condition of the weavers has been gradually deteriorating ever since this struggle. Rents in the town have become lower, and the effects of the strike are severely felt. Many weavers, who had saved money, and possessed cottages and furniture, sold, pawned, and consumed their property; and they returned to work penniless and heartless. Nor have they rallied.

The following extract of a communication, from one of the principal manufacturers, is a narrative of the strike:—

"The price of weaving point Brussels carpet varied from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 2*d.* per yard up to the year 1827. In 1804, it was 1*s.*; in 1805, raised to 1*s.* 1*d.*; in 1810, a further rise of 1*s.* 2*d.*; and, in 1816, it was lowered again to 1*s.* At different times there were turns-out of short duration; but the strongest feeling was exhibited in 1818 or 1819, when the weavers attempted unsuccessfully to obtain an advance upon 1*s.* per yard, the price then paid. After the close of the war the attention of many was directed to the carpet trade. Kidderminster or Ingrain carpets had already been manufactured in large quantities in Scotland and Yorkshire, where labour was cheaper, and Brussels seemed to be gradually introducing. These were woven at all prices from 7*d.* to 11*d.*, and the Kidderminster manufacturers began to feel the effects of an unequal competition, arising in a great measure from the lower wages paid elsewhere. They had several secret meetings, and perhaps injudiciously, without giving any previous notice, or consulting the weavers in the least; they simultaneously informed their weavers that, after the 25th of March, 1828, they should only pay 10*d.* per yard for point Brussels and for others, a proportionately reduced price agreeably to a scale they then published. The men were thunderstruck; aggregate meetings were summoned and the greatest determination evinced. Those few who were unwilling to turn-out were under the influence of fear; and for twenty-one weeks, with the exception of one small manufacturer, whose necessities compelled him, scarcely a piece of carpet was woven in the town. Towards the close of this period, supplies which, at first, came abundantly from other manufacturing districts, began to fail. The funds of sick clubs were consumed; the harvest which had employed many was nearly all got in. Strangers, whom their masters had imported, were (under the protection of the military) filling the deserted looms, and the men, seeing their case was hopeless, at length gave way. This was not, however, before the masters had given up some minor points.

"During this time the trade had taken root in other places, and considerably extended in more, so that the ill effects of the turn-out were long severely felt, and have not yet, nor perhaps will they ever subside. The trade has not, however, of late years been subject to more than its usual fluctuations till the commencement of 1837, when the cessation of all exports to the United States produced a stagnation of trade under which both masters and men are still labouring."

Previous to the strike there were many benefit clubs, but since that period they have been dissolved.

There is a feeling of discontent among the men, inimical alike to provident and saving habits. They use their wages to place themselves above immediate want, but do not strive to place themselves in actual comfort.

During the war weavers were scarce, and manufacturers to obtain labour would pay the public-house scores of the weavers, or advance money to the weaver of another manufacturer to engage him in their factories.

Kidderminster.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CARPET WEAVING.

STATEMENT from the BOOKS of a MANUFACTURER at Kidderminster, of the Amount of MONIES LENT by him to his Weavers.

Year.	Weavers' Debts, and Number of Carpet Looms.				Weavers' Debts, and Number of Bombazeen Looms.				Number of Tenants.
	Looms.	£.	s.	d.	Looms.	£.	s.	d.	
1810	77 .	788	17	0	140	567	11	0	12
1811	77 .	578	15	0	140	1135	15	0	36
1837	209 .	50	0	0	50 .	21	4	0	59

In the year 1816 the weavers suffered a reduction of 17 per cent. on their wages.

The Scotch trade has become formidable to the Kidderminster manufacturers, and there is a keen competition among them.

In your instructions it is stated, that the Committee of the House of Commons in 1835, reported that the general fall of wages and consequent distress of the hand-loom weavers have been rapidly progressive ever since the termination of the late war.

In corroboration of this report, I find that, in 1816, wages were reduced 17 per cent.; and, in 1828, a further reduction was made of 17 per cent., and even 20 per cent., on comber work; say 34 per cent. total reduction since the termination of the war.

Trade has suffered not in the quantity produced, but in the decrease of profits.

Evidence of *William Charlton*, a delegate.

What description of fabric do you weave?—Brussels carpeting.

How long have you been engaged in such employment?—Twenty-one years.

How many looms do you possess, and how many are now in use?—My employer finds looms; he has 100 Brussels looms; 80 are now in use.

Are you married, and at what age did you marry?—I am married; I married in my 25th year; I have no children, but maintain two nephews and a niece.

How many support themselves?—Two labour, and when employed can earn on the average about 4*s*. each; they are draw-boys; their wages, however, depend on the state of trade. A comber-drawer in brisk times will average about 5*s*. 9*d*.; a point-drawer averages 4*s*. 9*d*.; a boy generally leaves the simple about 14, and go to it about 10.

How many assist you in weaving?—A niece assists me, she is my draw-girl.

How many hours per day do they work to earn such amount?—The regular hours are from 14 to 15 a day, deducting two hours for meals.

How many hours do you and the weaving portion of your family work per week when work is plentiful?—My regular hours are from 14 to 15 hours per diem.

Do you work more hours when work is brisk, or when it is scarce?—I work by a statement of wages, and in bad times we are restricted.

When trade is dull, does the manufacturer give out less work, or does he reduce wages?—Gives out less work.

What is the amount of the earnings of the weaving portion of your family?—I refer to the average already given in.

What has been the average gross weekly earnings of weaving for the last five years, distinguishing each year, and what deductions, and what is the expenditure of nett earnings?—I cannot precisely answer your question owing to the situation in which trade has been during the period of the last five years; from 1830 to 1834 trade was very bad, owing, as we conceived, to the operation of the American tariff, which stopped in some degree the exportation of our carpets; it continued fluctuating to 1835, when it gradually recovered, and so continued for a year and a half. The intercourse with America was better, the operation of the tariff was easier, and hence the cause of a better trade, as it continued for a year and a half. A general stagnation took place at the close of 1836 and beginning of 1837, which has, with very few exceptions, continued up to the present time; this happened from the confusion which arose in the money-market in England and America, which we do not consider would have been the case, had the corn-laws been better adjusted. I also consider that our trade has been in some measure liable to these fluctuations in consequence of the preponderating influence given to the agricultural interests, and which operates against the commercial trade and our exports.

Did high wages induce strangers to the district or low wages cause resident weavers to migrate?—When wages are high strangers are sometimes induced to migrate here for the purpose of having their children engaged as assistants to the hand-loom workers; this town is peculiarly favourable to the employment of youthful labour; when these children come they generally remain; it is well enough to have this labour in a brisk period, but not so in a dull time, as

they abstract from the labour of a resident weaver's family. The males also frequently get into the loom in the course of a few years.

During periods of distress were subscriptions raised for your relief?—Yes, during the last winter, about 300*l.*

Did strangers come to the district to share such relief, and did they remain?—No strangers could obtain relief owing to the regulation that no person could be relieved, unless he could produce a note from a manufacturer or gentleman resident of the town. Many, however, obtained relief who were not proper objects, while the really poor, with a proud and honest heart, kept away rather than seek relief. It was lamentable to observe that persons who did not stand in need, but who were rather better off in the world, applied for relief before the regulations concerning distributions were made, applied to the committee, and actually received a portion of that relief which was designed for the destitute poor.

Are you subject to abatements?—We are not subject to abatements generally; they are slight, and not of that nature to be injurious, or cause any annoyance of feeling among the general body of weavers.

How long, on an average, are you kept without work in each year?—This is a very difficult question to answer with precision, because the time is lost at different periods, and no account is taken. I consider, however, that the bad state of trade, &c., being considered, I lost about two months of my time.

What is the usual period of waiting, and the cause?—Want of orders, and waiting for colouring of yarns.

During these periods of waiting do you follow any other employment; and what is the weekly amount of your earnings in such occupation?—No, I do not.

Have you frequently changed masters during the last three years?—I have worked for one master during the last three years, and out of the twenty-one years of my labour I have worked for him fourteen years.

Do weavers frequently change masters?—In some instances a man of steady character keeps to steady work; there are, however, some men who frequently change, sometimes owing to want of ingenuity, sometimes to bad habits; the better the trade the more frequent the changes. In brisk times the demand for labour will give men the choice of an employer, whereas in dull times they are glad to remain where they are.

Have you ever been tempted by hopes of more regular employ to leave one master for another?—Yes, I have, but only twice.

Are the higher paying masters the first to discharge their men when trade is dull?—High and low masters are both alike in this.

Have many weavers turned to other occupations and remained in such employments?—Yes, some have turned to labouring men; many have turned and remained at that work, some few have gone to other districts, and some went to the north as carpet weavers. Three went in one week to Durham and found work in Mr. Henderson's factory; others are engaged in various parts of the north.

What is the nature of such employment, weekly earnings, and period of labour?—I cannot say.

Do you decline to take in work if unaccustomed to the fabric?—That question is not applicable to our trade.

Might you not occasionally have had different work, if you had possessed skill to work it?—As I confine myself to Brussels weaving I am competent to every part or nature of that fabric.

Are not wages higher in proportion to the skill required to produce the fabric?—They are higher in proportion to the quantity produced, but on the average equal in the gross amount, owing to the greater length of time required in producing the same quantity.

Is there a general scarcity of work, in fancy or figured fabrics, requiring skilful and steady workmen?—There is sufficient labour to work that article, which in our manufacture is the dearest, viz., the Royal Pile; the highest price of this fabric is owing to its great superiority in material and labour, and it is in proportion about one-eighth to the rest of the Brussels trade.

Are there any means of employment in your district of which weavers, if so disposed, could avail themselves, and of what nature?—No, there is not. We want that opportunity.

Is it from incapacity produced by weaving, from disinclination, or what other cause, that weavers have not turned to other occupations?—There is no opportunity generally, as I have already stated.

Have many families in your district migrated in search of work?—Yes, during bad times in trade a few go, but generally return when trade revives.

Were they long unemployed?—I cannot answer.

What were their resourses for travelling?—None from the weavers as a trade; probably by the assistance of friends, or selling some of their furniture. I am not willing to allow that it was from savings. I speak this latter remark from personal experience of my trade.

To what districts, and in what proportions did they migrate?—Generally to the north.

Would weavers in general prefer low wages at home rather than seek better wages elsewhere?—There is no place where they can obtain better wages, as Kidderminster is the place which regulates the labour price in the carpet trade, not only in England but in Scotland.

How much can the least skilful man earn, though he is industrious?—I should say that a slow man, without any impediment to his work, would make about 18 yards a-week; this is putting aside all extraordinary delays or casualties, and his profits are less on account of the extra money for the draw-boy. I know of one man, however, who seldom, if ever, produces

Kidderminster.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CARPET WEAVING.

a piece under a fortnight and two days, sometimes a month. He is a drunken man, and lives a good deal on his friends; he moreover makes the ale-bench ring again, and sips of everybody's pot.

How much could a man earn if both skilful and industrious?—About 24 yards per week, at 10*d.* per yard; that is to say, provided there are no impediments (making six yards difference between the least skilful but most industrious man). A man, supposing that the draw-boy is attentive, and by managing his work skilfully, and being well supplied with materials, may weave his half-yard in an hour; but this is not the general quantity of labour.

How much can a skilful child of 15 or 16 earn?—If about 16 he may accomplish as much as the slow workman, that is to say about 18 yards. Since the strike in 1828, we have not been in the habit of taking legal apprentices in consequence of the uncertainty of the trade, but we employ youths to weave upon our second loom by allowing them a clear half of their labour, and out of the remaining half we furnish the lad with a draw-boy and also other shop expenses, such as oil, about 2*d.*, fire about 3*d.*, candle about 3*d.* per week, besides other implements of trade, such as shuttle, &c. &c. &c.

How long will it take a person or child to learn weaving, and how long will it be before he can earn his maintenance?—In about three years he might obtain a maintenance, that is to say, about 18 yards, but he would not be an adept at his work under six years, or going on seven. One great difficulty is the judicious preparing the loom for work, tying up the work, &c.; and I have known many men who, though they have been long in the trade, could not produce good fabrics in consequence of an incorrect knowledge of the loom.

Is it usual to apprentice children to weavers by parish or by friends. What is the price of stamp or amount paid?—Not since 1828. Previous to that time trade was more steady, and it was usual to take apprentices. Many surrounding parishes sent apprentices; Kidderminster was the market for labour; large premiums were given and required; but since the date above named,—a period from which we date not only our present reduced condition, but also the poorer condition of this town, and the consequent depreciation of houses and rents, few apprentices have been received. When I consider the reduction of rent from those who *can pay*, and the losses to landlords by those who *cannot* pay, I should consider that a rent-roll has diminished about 25 per cent. The amount of rent due in this town is enormous, and is by no means likely to decrease.

How many of your children attend school, and how much do you pay per week?—I have no children, but my two nephews attend the Independent Sunday School; My neice, who is my draw-girl, and about 17, has left school about four months.

Do your children attend places of worship and Sunday schools?—Yes, regularly, in company with me. I here observe that I find great difficulty in preserving them from the vicious example that is around them, owing to the loose habits of boys and girls who walk about the streets, gambling in the fields and the environs of the town on Sundays;—these characters do not attend either schools or places of worship on the Sabbath, owing, in some cases, to the neglect of parents, and in other cases to want of decent apparel.

Do you cause your children to attend regularly weekly schools?—They attend one hour per week, to learn writing.

During periods when work is scarce, are you partly supported by the parish?—I have never been in that situation: there were many weavers last year out of employment in consequence of slack times, and their families stood in need of parochial relief; but their applications were refused unless they laboured at stone-breaking. A considerable number, varying according to circumstances, were obliged to accept the terms: many were not able to perform the work on account of the severity of the weather, being winter time; and the weaver is of more delicate habit, owing to confinement in the shop.

Do they not always consider Monday an idle day, and also the half of Saturday, and frequently the early part of Tuesday?—Certainly not in my case, nor generally among the weavers; the day when we take piece in is called a "falling day;" the work is taken in in the morning; these days occur about once in ten days, and the rest of the day is generally past without labour; there are some whose habits are drunken and bad, but they are exceptions to the general habits of the weavers; tailors, however, and shoemakers generally keep St. Monday. These classes, together with combers, are more addicted to drinking than the generality of weavers.

Have you had any arrangements with masters concerning a fixed price of wages?—We have a regular printed and published statement, the last, 1836, being a slight alteration in the royal pile; the previous one was in 1828, the list was published, and by the trade sent to every district where carpets are made.

How long did such arrangements continue in operation?—The same rate is still upheld

Do you consider that any regulation to fix wages would be ultimately beneficial to the weavers?—I, personally, consider it would not. I consider it would be injurious to the manufacturer and workman,—that it would ultimately engender strife between the two interests; I refer most particularly to Mr. Fielden's Bill: I consider that his Bill would leave the labourer at the mercy of the needy speculator in cheap labour,—that it would be his constant aim to keep wages low. It would also injure the manufacturer when there might be a necessity for a reduction, if, through the state of the market there should be a necessity for a reduction, the manufacturer could not effect the necessary reduction owing to the enactment. On the other hand, should a rise be just and reasonable, the enactment would likewise prevent the men attaining their object; thus both parties would be injured. I consider that the consequences would be ruinous to capital, and injurious to trade.

Have you any resources for ordinary casualties, such as sickness, or during periods of waiting for work?—None in the trade.

Are you a member of any benefit or friendly society?—I am in two benefit societies, but regret to say that these societies have greatly declined since 1828.

Do you attend any place of worship?—Yes, regularly.

Are you in debt at shops, or for rent, or to your employer?—No, I am not. I have struggled through hard times, without involving myself, while others, with large families and through want of work, are much in debt.

Do you consider that undue advantage is taken by masters in the admeasurement of the work?—Not so as to hurt or injure the general interest of the weaver.

In reference to the subject of the late strike in 1828, I shall wish to put to you various questions. Are you prepared to answer them?—I decline to enter into the subject of the strike; the manufacturers and many of the men would consider that I was unnecessarily entering upon a most painful subject without any prospect of rendering the situation of the latter any better. Indeed, in giving you the information relative to the town and trade of Kidderminster, my friend Coates and myself have experienced great opposition, owing to the ignorant party-feeling which exists among a great many of the men. Many of them consider your object was only to expose their rate of wages, and if we were higher than the other hand-loom weavers in the nation, to bring us to their level, whilst we acknowledge some few weavers have supported us, by procuring the intelligence, which, through their means, we have laid before you as Her Majesty's Commissioner. We had intended not to have seen you again here, owing to this opposition; but, perceiving the nature of your business and the objects you have in view, we are induced to use every exertion to forward your business; believing that, though you could not aid us, as hand-loom weavers, you may be of service to the rising generation of this town, and thereby be the means of dispelling the mists of ignorance in which the minds of our men are enveloped. Relative to the opposition to your present inquiries, it has been carried in language and deportment so passionate towards us as a deputation, that we expected personal violence would be offered us by our fellow-workmen.

I mention this circumstances, showing the disposition of the men, as reasons why I consider it prudent to decline entering into the circumstances of the strike.

I should further wish to say why I decline giving any information, and that is in reference to the manufacturers. I am a poor man, and though I have no reason to think that my present employers would injure me for reciting the facts attendant upon the strike, yet should circumstances occur that I should leave their employ, I apprehend that I should not get work in the town of Kidderminster; if the manufacturers knew that I had afforded full information on the subject of the strike, myself and family would, of course, be ruined, and placed in similar circumstances to an aged man, who has walked our streets for eighteen years a pauper during the whole time, merely because he offered some slight but justifiable opposition to some oppressive measures that were proposed by the manufacturers, and which were subsequently carried, but the man was sacrificed. Since the period of his opposition he was a marked man, and not one employer would give him work or assistance. This man was not the only one marked, for others suffered; but they left the town and set the Brussels trade on elsewhere, more especially in Scotland, and this was the first time to my knowledge that Brussels was ever manufactured there.

I have also another reason, namely, as I was acting a conspicuous part in 1828, the manufacturers might, perhaps, consider that my evidence would be dictated by a violent spirit of opposition to them, an imputation which I should be sorry to have on my character as a man and a Christian; for the past is gone.

It is not from any feeling of disrespect to you that I must therefore decline entering upon the subject. I trust that the reasons I have given will show to you that prudence requires the course I have adopted. This much I must observe, that the masters asserted the necessity of a reduction on account of the underselling competition in the Scotch markets; but this fact has never been fully corroborated by evidence satisfactory to me and the rest of my fellow-workmen.

(Signed) William Charlton.

The following is the Statement of Receipts and Expenditure during the period of the Strike. The Prefatory Remarks are made by the Carpet Weavers' Committee, and addressed to their supporters.

"The Carpet Weavers' Committee, having balanced their accounts, consider it their duty to lay a "Statement of the Receipts and Expenditure before the public, in order that their kind friends, who "have so liberally assisted them, may be satisfied that their donations have been properly accounted for; "and they take this opportunity of returning thanks, in the name of the body of Carpet Weavers, for "the same; and to assure their friends, should any of them ever be placed in similar distressing "circumstances, the Kidderminster Carpet Weavers will be ever ready cheerfully to divide with them "the small pittance left them by the late reduction in their wages.

"The Committee cannot but lament that more general and efficient aid was not afforded them; and "the public will learn with surprise, that they were enabled to keep their ground so firmly and "peaceably for 21 weeks with assistance so trifling, when it is recollected that the number who received "support amounted to 7000.

Kidderminster.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CARPET WEAVING.

Receipts.

	£.	s.	d.
From Aberdeen Carpet Weavers	25	0	0
Atherstone Hatters	5	0	0
Bridgenorth Carpet Weavers	287	6	4
Bannocburn	58	10	0
Barnard Castle	4	0	0
Bolton Spinners	35	0	0
Bolton Bed Quilt Weavers	5	0	0
Birmingham	12	4	0
Coventry Ribbon Weavers	100	6	0¼
Coventry first Society, Watch-makers	2	0	0
Coventry second	8	2	6
Coventry third	1	3	0
Cirencester Carpet Weavers	18	0	0
Dewsbury	123	0	0
Glasgow	56	0	0
Kendal	53	14	0
Kenilworth	6	2	10
Kidderminster and vicinity	366	5	6½
Mr. Daughtrey's Weavers	61	4	4
Mr. Isles	43	0	4
Mr. Humphries	11	19	0
Trades Union	50	1	9½
First Society Wool-combers	20	0	0
Second ,,	7	0	0
Third ,,	4	0	0
Fourth ,,	2	10	0
Wool-sorters	10	0	0
Sawyers	8	0	0
Kilmarnock Carpet Weavers	107	12	4½
Leeds	45	0	0
London, by Mr. Walford	140	15	0
Spitalfields Weavers	22	0	0
Morocco Leather-dressers	1	15	0
Macclesfield Weavers and Hatters	32	0	0
Manchester, Princes Tavern	127	0	0
Joiners	10	0	0
Skin-dyers	5	0	0
Piece-dyers	10	0	0
Cheshire Cheese Trades Union	15	0	0
Maidstone Paper-makers	55	0	0
Norwich and Wymondham	53	0	0
Nottingham	10	0	0
Rochdale Woollen Weavers	20	0	0
Shrewsbury Hatters	2	0	0
Stockport	4	6	0
Stourport Carpet Weavers	3	2	9
Wellingborough Cordwainers	1	10	0
Wilton Carpet Weavers	46	9	0
Winterbourn	10	0	0
Worcester	25	14	0
	2131	13	9¾

Disbursements.

	£.	s.	d.
14 Weekly Payments to the body of Carpet Weavers	1482	0	0
Extreme cases of distress and delegation	152	5	5
Potatoes distributed	309	6	4
Incidental expenses	65	7	6
Printing letters, and parcels	55	10	9
Cash in the hands of the Treasurer, against which is a bill for advertising in the Trades' Free Press, not yet delivered	72	13	9¾
	2137	3	9¾

STATEMENT of CASH received by the LONDON COMMITTEE in trust for the KIDDERMINSTER CARPET WEAVERS.

Receipts.

By Cash from	£.	s.	d.
The Society of Guilders	50	0	0
Rug Weavers	30	9	0
Coopers	26	14	3
Silk Weavers (Spitalfields)	23	6	6
Calico Printers, West Ham	10	0	0
Tailors	5	16	9
Curriers	4	10	0
Rolling Cloth Weavers, Wandsworth	4	1	6
Cabinet-makers	3	14	0
Copper-smiths	3	0	0
Bookbinders	2	10	0
Hatters	2	2	3
Printers	2	0	0
Compositors	1	4	0
Upholsterers	1	0	0
Braziers	0	15	8
Carried forward	171	3	11

Disbursements.

	£.	s.	d.
By Cash remitted to Carpet Weavers' Committee at Kidderminster	140	15	0
Sundry Acts Parliament	0	13	0
Relief to Carpet Weavers	0	9	9
Incidental expenses in visiting Societies, and support to Kidderminster delegates	11	11	4
The Trades' Free Press	9	16	2
Stationery	0	10	10
Parcels and Letters	5	18	5
Newspapers and Pamphlets	4	15	7
Carriage of Carpet Loom from Kidderminster	1	3	11
Expenses attending fixing Loom	0	6	2
Printing Mr. Price's Pamphlets	14	8	6
Ditto Addresses, Placards, &c.	7	2	0
Carried forward	197	10	6

Receipts.

	£.	s.	d.
Brought forward . . .	171	3	11
Clockmakers	0	15	0
Bury St. Edmunds, by Mr. Lang, Trades' Free Press	4	0	0
8 individuals at Reading, by Mr. Lang	1	0	0
Brighton, by Mr. Bryant . . .	1	3	2
Individual Subscriptions . . .	13	8	7
Exhibition of Carpet Loom . .	2	0	9
Sale of Mr. Price's Pamphlets .	2	8	6
An individual, to be paid by Committee at Kidderminster . .	0	6	0
Balance due from Kidderminster Committee	9	10	3
	205	16	2

Disbursements.

	£.	s.	d.
Brought forward . . .	197	10	6
Cash to Kidderminster delegates and coach-hire	8	5	6
	205	16	2

Statement of the Weekly Wages of various Mechanics in Kidderminster, in each Year, from 1836 to 1838.

Description.	1836.	1837.	1838.
	s. s.	s. s.	s. s.
Bargemen . . .	..	..	..
Blacksmiths . . .	16 to 20	16 to 20	16 to 20
Bleachers . . .	..	..	..
Boot-closers . . .	27 30	27 30	27 30
Brick-layers . . .	18 and 20	18 and 21	18 and 21
,, labourers . .	10	10	10
,, makers . .	..	..	..
Carpenters . . .	18 and 20	18 and 21	18 and 24
Colliers	..	..	..
Dyers	..	13	..
Joiners	21	21	21
Masons	16 to 19	16 to 19	16 to 19
Plasterers . . .	18 21	18 21	18 21
Potters	..	..	..
Sawyers	14 18	14 18	14 18
Shoemakers . . .	18 20	18 20	18 20
Stone-cutters . . .	12 17	12 17	12 17
Tailors	19 23	19 23	19 23
Agricultural Labourers	9 and 11	9 and 11	9 and 11

Statement of Retail Prices of various articles of Provision and Household Stores, in the Years 1836, 1837, and 1838.

Provisions of Ordinary Qualities.	1836.	1837.	1838.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Oatmeal at per peck	4 0	4 0	4 0
Barley ditto	1 2	1 2	1 2
Potatoes per peck of 40 lbs. sold before washed	0 5	0 5	0 6
Beef, good boiling pieces, per lb.	0 6	0 6	0 6
Ditto coarse pieces	0 5	0 5	0 6
Pork, per lb.	0 6	0 6	0 6
Bacon, per lb.	0 9	0 9	0 9
Bread (Wheaten), per lb.	0 2	0 $1\frac{1}{2}$	0 2
Ditto Household or Brown	0 $1\frac{1}{2}$	0 $1\frac{1}{4}$	0 $1\frac{1}{2}$
Milk, per gallon	0 9	0 10	0 10
Cheese, per lb.	0 8	0 9	0 9
Butter ditto	1 $1\frac{1}{2}$	1 2	1 $2\frac{1}{2}$
Candles, common wick, per lb.	0 6	0 $6\frac{1}{2}$	0 $6\frac{1}{2}$
Soap, per lb.	0 6	0 $6\frac{1}{2}$	0 $6\frac{1}{2}$
Coals, per cwt.	0 7	0 7	0 8
Tea, per lb.	5 0	4 6	4 6
Sugar ditto	0 7	0 $7\frac{1}{2}$	0 $7\frac{1}{2}$
Average Weekly Amount paid for each child's education	..	..	..
House-rent of Two Apartments, per annum	..	..	..

Kidderminster.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CARPET WEAVING.

Schools.

STATEMENT relative to the PUBLIC DAY SCHOOLS in KIDDERMINSTER.—

	Number of weavers' children.	Other trades.	Total
1. Old Church School	254	127	381
2. Branch of ditto, Park Place	37	13	50
3. Branch of ditto, Mill School	26	8	34
4. St. George's School	189	69	258
5. Old Meeting School	125	62	187
6. Ebenezer School	62	64	126
7. Unitarian School	(say) 62	15	77
	755	358	
Total receiving daily instruction			1113

Relative to the Sunday-schools it appears from the returns supplied to me that of the above-named schools,

Numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4, have Sunday-schools, wherein are taught	1169 children.
There are 16 Dissenting Sunday-schools „ „ „	1243 „
In the Methodist Sunday-schools are taught	355 „
In the Unitarian School „ „ „	185 „
Total receiving Sunday instruction	2952

I am informed that the Unitarian school is extremely well conducted, and that the applications for admission are numerous, but the school-room will not accommodate more than its present number.

BRIDGENORTH.

BRIDGENORTH.

There are two carpet factories at Bridgenorth; there was only one when the strike occurred at Kidderminster; a second factory then started, and has since continued.

It is worthy of observation that, at the time of the strike at Kidderminster, the subscriptions from the Bridgenorth carpet weavers amounted to 287*l.* 6*s.* 4*d.*; and, by the trade during that time going to Bridgenorth, the result has been the establishment of another factory: so that the money subscribed for the ostensible purpose of aiding, has been to promote a decline, at Kidderminster. This is an instance of the mischief attendant upon strikes, where there is an overplus of hands.

The wages are regulated by the Kidderminster Table of Wages.

The weavers are mostly from Kidderminster, but their condition, their habits, and their houses, are better than those at Kidderminster. The cause of this desirable improvement is, that the masters require their men to be steady and well conducted in their general behaviour, as well as in the factories. They encourage provident habits, and reject or punish drunkards; so that upon the same wages, I perceive a great and striking contrast in an ameliorated condition.

RETURN of FACTORY WAGES at Messrs. M'MICHAEL and GRIERSON, Bridgenorth.

	£.	*s.*	*d.*				
Mechanics	0	18	0				
Sorters	1	10	0				
Combers	1	5	0				
	s.	*d.*		*s.*	*d.*		
Piercers and preparers (day-work)	6	0	to	7	0	Women about 18 years	
Doffers	2	6	to	3	0	„	11 to 13 „
Spinners	4	0	to	6	6	„	13 to 18 „
Reelers	6	6	to	7	0	„	18 to 30 „

Bridgenorth.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CARPET WEAVING.

STATEMENT of the WEEKLY WAGES of various Mechanics at Bridgenorth, together with the average Number of WORKING HOURS in each Trade per diem, in the Years 1836, 1837, 1838.

Name of Trade or Calling.	Number of Working Hours per Week.	1836. £. s. d.	1837. £. s. d.	1838. £. s. d.
Bargemen	14	1 7 11	1 7 11	1 7 11
Blacksmiths	14	0 18 0	0 18 0	0 18 0
Bleachers	..	..	..	..
Boot-closers	..	..	..	..
Brick-layers	12	0 18 0	0 18 0	0 18 0
,, labourers	12	0 12 0	0 12 0	0 12 0
,, makers	14	0 18 0	0 18 0	0 18 0
Carpenters	12	0 18 0	0 18 0	0 18 0
Colliers	..	..	..	..
Dyers	12	1 5 0	1 5 0	1 5 0
Joiners	12	1 1 0	1 1 0	1 1 0
Masons	12	1 1 0	1 1 0	1 1 0
Plasterers	12	1 1 0	1 1 0	1 1 0
Potters	..	..	..	..
Sawyers	12	1 1 0	1 1 0	1 1 0
Shoemakers	12	0 15 0	0 15 0	0 15 0
Stone-cutters	12	1 4 0	1 4 0	1 4 0
Tailors	14	0 18 0	0 18 0	0 18 0
Watchmakers	12	1 1 0	1 1 0	0 1 0
Agricultural Labourers	12	0 10 0	0 10 0	0 10 0

EDUCATION.

SCHOOLS.

Parish of Saint Leonards and Saint Mary Magdalen, Bridgenorth.

Population, census, 1821, number 4785.

Infant Schools.—For children under seven years of age.

Number of 1

Average number of scholars, Male . 30, Female . 12

Total number of scholars . . 52

Number of children whose parents are hand-loom weavers . . . . . Male . , Female . ,

Total number 30

Daily Schools.

Number of 11

Average number of scholars, Male . 56, Female . 91

Total 147

Number of children whose parents are hand-loom weavers . . . . Male . 14, Female . 13

Total 27

Sunday Schools.

Number supported by Dissenters . . 3

Average number of scholars Male . . . . . 125, Female 136

Total 261

Number supported by Church of England 2

Average number of scholars Male . . . . . 105, Female 94

Total 199

Number of children whose parents are hand-loom weavers. . . . Dissenters . . . 100, Church of England 15

Total 115

Bridgenorth.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Schools.

Maintenance of Schools.

The National School, which is supported by endowment, contains—

Males . .	72	of whom 10 are hand-loom weavers.
Females . .	52	„ 20 „ „
Total .	124	30

The Blue Coat School, which is supported from legacies and subscriptions, contains—
Males . . 26, of whom 1 is a hand-loom weaver's son.

There are no additional means required of education, that I am aware of; many of the hand-loom weavers' children are instructed for an hour at night under the direction of their masters, but the number is not regular, such instruction being given at the factories. The working-class are instructed on Sabbath-days by the clergyman of the Established Church and other religions; for the population I conceive there are more of the lower class of society attend to religious instructions than many of the neighbouring towns.

Stourport.

STOURPORT.

There is one carpet factory in this town.

The wages are regulated by the Kidderminster prices.

The weavers, like those at Bridgenorth, are from Kidderminster; and the manufacturer, by attending to their moral conduct, has greatly improved their actual condition.

I inspected many of their houses, which were remarkably clean, and most of them were comfortably, and even respectably furnished.

This is another proof that the happiness and comfort of the working classes may be increased by the humane and kind (though not officious) interference of their employers.

The children of the weavers in this factory are required to attend Sunday-schools as well as day-schools.

The parents are required to attend some place of worship every Sabbath day. The manufacturer discountenances their running in debt. Upon application, he deducts the amounts by installments, and he sternly rejects a drunkard. The consequence is, that instead of rags and broken furniture, I observed neat corner cupboards, long clock cases, chimney ornaments, and in some cases, sides of bacon in the ceiling racks. Most of the weavers, moreover, have pieces of land in the vicinity of their houses, and their gardens were well cropped.

Schools of design for the carpet trade.

In concluding this portion of my report relative to the carpet trade, I beg to submit to your consideration the advantages likely to arise by encouraging schools of design, whereby commerce would be increased, and the weaving benefitted.

Ludlow.

LUDLOW.

There is one small woollen factory in this town, employing 5 hand-looms. The mill is worked by water-power, and the fabrics are flannel, linseys, blankets, table-covers, and house cloths.

The market for these goods is in the surrounding districts.

The average earnings of the weavers are about 12*s*. They could easily earn 15*s*. if they would work steadily, but they lose about 14 hours a week. The prices have not been altered for 28 years.

The profits of trade some years ago were 10 per cent. more than now, and to meet the difference between the loss of profit and the unaltered price of wages, the manufacturer is obliged to produce a greater quantity.

Glove Trade.

Glove Trade.

The glove trade in this town once occupied 1000 persons, but owing to change of fashion, namely, the introduction of cotton, woollen, silk, and thread as a material, the leather glove trade decreased, and about 2 years ago became extinct.

The principal export trade was to America and the Canadas.

The earnings of the glove cutters about 20 years ago amounted to 30*s*. a week,

Ludlow.

6 years ago they had diminished to about 15*s.*; and 2 years ago, when the masters ceased to make, earnings did not exceed 10*s.* or 11*s.* a week.

These men have crept away into other employments; some have earned 10*s.* per week stone-breaking.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Glove Trade.

When the glove trade was in full prosperity, and men were earning high wages, no manufacturer could undertake a contract order for the time in which he knew the work might be done, because the men were so unsteady and arbitrary, that he was obliged to calculate, or make allowance, for that loss of time. The men trifled with their master's work as it suited their caprice, for they knew that if they were dismissed another master would employ them.

Schools.

Schools.

There is a National School for girls. There is also a Blue Coat School for children whose parents are not rate-payers, and a charity endowed school, called the Free-School for the children of rate-payers and tradesmen.

The benefits of the Blue Coat School are extended to all sects.

There are two Sunday Schools. All the schools are well attended, and the poor are anxious that their children should be instructed.

The earnings of artificers in this town are about 15*s.* a week.

The agricultural labourers earn in money about 7*s.* a week, to which, add a cottage and bit of garden, at a very moderate rent; the gross amount, to a superior labourer, might be about 11*s.* or 12*s.* a week.

LEOMINSTER.

Leominster.

Edward Banister, dyer,

Has a small spinning factory, in which four children and five men are employed; he also manufactures coarse linseys and check horse collaring. Employs one man regularly; sometimes an extra hand.

Linseys.

The weaver is not in distress; he is paid 4*d.* a yard for the linseys, and can regularly weave 52 yards in nine working days, or 11*s.* 6½*d.* per week; his boy, aged ten years, winds or quills for him. Boys of the same age earn 2*s.* a week in the factory. The employer finds loom, hay, and harness. Looms are very cheap now; formerly, say twenty years ago, weaving was the common trade of the town: farmers and different persons spun their own flax, and took it to the weaver. The home-made fabric was preferred, but the Yorkshire fabrics are now used; they are finer and more acceptable to the eye; so the trade declined, and the last weaver died a week ago at the workhouse.

When trade began to decline, no young persons were apprenticed, so the stock wore out.

Witness states that his father and grandfather were both dyers, and constantly employed five or six to dye the materials for the neighbouring customers. Little is now done in that line; there is one solitary weaver who occasionally obtains a piece to weave for some farmer, but his employment is very precarious; in fact, the trade has gone.

HEREFORD.

Hereford.

William George, manufacturer of woollens and linsey fabrics, states,

Woollens and Linseys.

That in former days, the master weaver was paid for 30 linens 6*d.* a yard, and for harden, or waste, 4*d.* a yard. The master paid his journeyman about a third, and his keep and lodging.

A journeyman weaver, about thirty years ago, would earn to the amount of 16*s.* to 18*s.* per week.

Informant states the earnings of weavers in the factories, in those days, were from 16*s.* to 18*s.* per week; for instance,

14	beers, per piece 54 yards		7*s.*
		Easy work for a skilful lad, after 4 or 5 months' practice.	
16	„ „	Learners and women	8*s.*
		About same time.	
18	„ „		9*s.*
		Lads and women could make from 6*s.* to 10*s.*	
20	„ „		10*s.*
22	„ „		12*s.*
24	„ „		15*s.*
26	„ „		21*s.*
29	„ „		28*s.*

Witness further states, that he now employs about three weavers.

The amount of wages is less by about a third than was heretofore paid. It was customary,

Hereford.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Woollens and Linseys.

and is now, for the employer to pay 1*s.* on each piece for winding, which is frequently done by the children of the weaver; the employer also finds looms, slay, and harness; the weaver finds candles. The weaver commences at seven and works till eight, out of which there are two hours, sometimes more, for meals.

Witness goes on to say that, when weaving was good, the men were upon a par, with regard to carefulness and steadiness, with their fellow-workmen. Has a man now, who, though he earns a pound a week, is not better off in appearance than a labourer who only earns 8*s.* a week.

That within his recollection, say 40 years, there were many hand-loom weavers in this city and neighbourhood, chiefly employed in weaving fabrics, say linens and woollens, out of the material brought to them by farmers and other persons resident in the vicinities.

The spinning was then done at home, at the farmers' houses, by the servant, at the spinning-wheel, during spare leisure hours; poorer persons, such as labourers' wives, and tradesmen's wives in the villages, and farmers' wives and daughters, used to employ themselves at this work. The poorer persons, after supplying themselves with linen, used to bring their surplus pieces of linen to the fair, in order to meet their rent or other payments; the richer persons, say better classed farmers, made and used their own linens. It was, moreover, customary to bring up the younger hands to spinning; and at the marriages it was customary that the bride should be supplied from their parents' houses with linen, and it was their emulation to be well supplied, as a large stock bespoke greater industry.

In those days there was in every village not only a master blacksmith, carpenter, &c., as there is now, but there was also a master weaver. In Hereford there were five master weavers, each employing three or five men, in order to make into fabric what the neighbouring population had spun; but now the whole country scarcely supports a score of weavers. No young hands are brought up to it; the old ones have nearly all died off; a great many have turned to husbandry (cannot say if they make good men at the work), can hardly suppose they would be as good as those who are regularly brought up to it.

Witness states that, in 1802, a flannel factory was established by a firm in this city; they made all sorts of flannel, and employed about fifty persons; they spun by the jenny, carded, &c. by power, but wove by hand.

This continued for about twelve years, but it ultimately dwindled away, and the establishment was broken up in consequence of the superior facilities in the north.

Witness states that the Yorkshire and northern market threw goods into Hereford of a cheaper and more "showy" nature, which was the cause of the weaving declining here. The Scotch market was the most prejudicial, as they supplied the linens which were generally used in this county.

Glove Trade.

Glove Trade.

John Hatton, glover, used to make formerly from 50 to 100 dozen weekly; has given up the trade within the last 12 months; it has been gradually declining ever since the importation of French gloves; their colours are more tasty, their workmanship is neater, but not so substantial as the English; they are not cheaper, but the preference is given to their quality.

When the importation was allowed, the French leather-dressers sent agents through Spain and Italy to purchase the best slaughters for their own monopoly, by which means they secured the market; the French trade has injured the kid glove trade.

There was also an expensive glove made from the slaughter sheep-skins of the neighbourhood, and also from skins purchased of the Welsh leather-dressers; the gloves were in general sale, but began to decline in consequence of the introduction of Berlin gloves, made of cotton and woollen materials; these gloves are made at Leicester, and Nottingham, and Loughborough, and all the manufacturing towns in that district.

In good times, *i. e.* in 1830, before the importation, a journeyman glover of kid gloves could earn, if he chose to work, from 30*s.* to 35*s.* a week; and at the second class, requiring secondary labour, from 20*s.* to 25*s.* per week.

Glovers, generally speaking, were not a dissipated set, though improvident; if drunken, they could not use the shears; at that time many parts were done by the hand, which is now done by machinery.

The men were in great distress; three-fourths have sought other employment, some broke stones upon the road, many came to the parish; all this distress happened in a period of four years; at the time of the importation being allowed, there were 300 adults supporting themselves by the manufacture of gloves.

About 50 years ago, about one-third of the trading population were engaged in hand-loom weaving, or in glove-making, and both trades are now nearly extinct.

There was undoubtedly considerable distress when the mass of glovers lost employment; many threw themselves and their families on the parish.

They had been improvident; knows of no instance of their having saved any money; indeed those labourers who earned high wages seldom worked more than four days in the week; they are now obliged to be more industrious, in consequence of wages in every department being lowered.

Police is good and effective; better since the new force, better regulations, more peace, and less prosecutions.

Education is well attended to, both by endowed charities and other means; every person's child decently clad may be educated in the ordinary routine.

BRISTOL.

Sackings, Tarpauline, &c.

There are a few manufactures here of bed-sacking, sacks, wool bagging, tarpaulins, and horse-hair seatings.

Many of the weavers are Irishmen, and addicted to drinking.

Statement of the Earnings for Two Years of Sixteen Weavers, employed in the manufacture of Sacking and Tarpauling, at Messrs. H. and F. Gwyer's, at Bristol, with the Average Amount of Weekly Earnings per head.

Names.	Earnings in 1836.			Earnings in 1837.		
	£.	*s.*	*d.*	£.	*s.*	*d.*
George Lucas	38	0	0	40	0	0
Adam Welsh	39	0	0	31	0	0
Daniel Harrington	30	0	0	36	0	0
Charles M'Carthy	39	0	0	30	0	0
John M'Carthy	33	0	0	35	0	0
Daniel M'Carthy	34	0	0	33	0	0
John Croker	39	0	0	34	0	0
John Camble	30	0	0	38	0	0
James Warr	37	0	0	31	0	0
James Warr, junior	30	0	0	29	4	1
John Donovan	32	0	0	27	0	0
John Gribble	33	0	0	31	2	2
Daniel Crowley	27	19	2	26	0	0
Henry Evans	31	0	0	33	7	0
William Peat	30	0	0	29	17	3
John Oram	29	0	0	30	9	0
	531	19	2	514	19	6

Equal to 1046*l.* 18*s.* 8*d.*, or 12*s.* 7*d.* per week per man.

John Hare and Co.

Floor-cloth manufacturers. Weave canvass chiefly for their own purposes.

The firm employs about 19 men, weavers, who work in a factory.

The canvass is woven of different widths, requiring looms of the same widths.

The following is a schedule of the number of looms on the premises, and the number employed at the time of inspection :—

1 loom,	1 yard wide,	1 employed,		
2 „	4 „	1 „	1 unemployed	
1 „	6 „		1 „	
7 „	7 „	6 „	1 „	
2 „	9 „	2 „		
Total 13		Employed 10	Unemployed 3	

The payment for weaving is by the piece, which contains 60 yards in length, and breadth according to the width of the loom ; thus—

1 piece of canvass cloth, 7 yards wide, 420 yards	£3 10
1 piece of canvass cloth, 9 yards wide, 540 yards	5 2

Two men work in a loom of seven and nine yards wide, and finish a piece in about a fortnight, some in 10 days.

There has been a recent reduction of 7*s.* in the seven yard canvass, which was 3*l.* 17*s.*

Floor-cloth printers can earn 3*l.*, and are steady men, industrious, and living in neat houses.

Edwards and Baker.

Hemp and Flax Works.

The following is a list of the prices of wages for weaving, per piece :—

Bed sacking,	46 yards,	7*s.* per piece,	2½ can be woven in a week,	17*s.*	6*d.*
Sacking for sacks,	42 „	4 „	4 „	16	0
Wool bagging,	72 „	7 „	2½ „	17	6
Poldavey					
Hemp carpeting,	52 „ / 1 „ wide	8 „	2½ „	20	0

Bristol.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Sackings, &c. &c.

Tarpauling, 41 yards in a piece—

2 feet wide,	5*s.* 9*d.*	per piece,	3	in a week,	17*s.* 3*d.*
2 feet 3 inches,	6 3	„	3	„	18 9
2 „ 6 „	7 0	„	2	„	14 0

The firm employs about 26 weavers, who are in constant work in a factory.

There is a sick-club in the factory for the benefit of the sick members.

About a year or two ago the men were very drunken; but are now more steady, in consequence of their masters dismissing the bad characters, and encouraging the good.

There are other manufactories which I did not visit, as I was given to understand that the above rate of earnings was the average in the trade; and I did not consider the few weavers here to be in a state requiring the attention of your Board.

District Observations.

There are many manufactories in Bristol. Iron cables are here manufactured. There are also glass-manufactories: some glass-blowers can earn 5*l.* a week, but they seldom have a shilling in their pockets. They purchase the dearest delicacies of the season, and are also drunken. The nature of their work requires stimulants, and in time they are taken to excess.

At the time I was in Bristol, a large cotton manufactory was about to be established, but it had not commenced operations.

Witney.

WITNEY.

Trade, &c.

Trade, &c.

The principal trade of Witney consists in the manufacture of blankets, duffells, waggon-tilts, &c. &c.

The trade is now brisk. It is subject to occasional fluctuations, but to no great extent.

The weaving is performed in factories, and there is an amicable feeling existing between master and man.

The wool used in these factories is partly foreign and partly English, about equal proportions. The foreign wools are from Russia and the Mediterranean, the English wools are the growth of the neighbourhood.

When trade was dull about two or three years ago, the men were unemployed for a few weeks. They are a prudent saving class, and nearly 50 per cent. of them had saved money, upon which they were enabled to support themselves, and the less prudent among them found partial work and obtained credit.

The manufacturers at Witney exercise a greater moral influence over their men than I met with in any other district. They dismiss drunkards, or punish a man if he leaves his loom to drink by taking away his shuttle during his absence, and retain it for one or two days. The effect of this is ridicule from his fellow-workmen, and few men will subject themselves to this simple but effectual punishment.

Mr. Earley, sen., states the manufacturers of Witney to be—

	Above.
John Early and Co.	70 weavers.
Richard Earley	25 „
John Earley	30 „
Edward Earley	35 „
Samuel Collier	10 „
Robert Collier	4 „
Horatio Collier	20 „
Thomas Collier	6 „

There are a few more manufacturers who employ a very small number of men each.

Mr. John Earley says—

By charter from Queen Anne the blanket weavers were incorporated, but the charter is now obsolete by custom.

One of the privileges is, that no person can establish himself within 20 miles of Witney, unless he had served seven years apprenticeship and received his freedom from the company.

There were many rules and by-laws of the company to which he was bound to submit.

These laws are not enforced, some persons, not members, having established themselves within the prescribed limits.

There is a Blanket Hall in the High Street, built 1721, for the use of the company. Meetings are still held, and a master and two wardens are annully elected. Witness is master this year, but cannot say what are the duties.

There is no blanket mart, all is sold by private contract; the average annual number s about 10,000 pieces, each piece containing about half a pack of 120 lbs. of wool. The length of the piece varies according to the width of the blanket.

The average value of a piece is 9*l.*, but some are double this amount, some much below it. The pilot cloth is included in the above number.

The pilot cloth is an old fabric in Witney, but fashion has caused a more general demand for it.

For the last 25 years the average has been the same.

Mr. John Earley thinks the Yorkshire trade has been in some degree injurious to the Witney manufacturers, especially during the last year. The Witney masters are obliged to meet Yorkshire goods at sacrifices of 5 per cent., but he cannot say whether the advantages of the Yorkshire masters are in cheaper labour, or access to some cheaper wool market.

Wages, Labour, and Earnings.

Mr. John Earley, a manufacturer, states, that

The woven fabrics of Witney are blankets and duffells, such as pilot cloth, &c.; the presumed number of weavers in the town is rather under 300. They are paid by the piece, and have always worked in factories; the master finding looms, &c., the men paying for the quilling. No deductions are made, and the rate is as follows:—

The length of the pieces vary according to the description of fabric.

A pilot cloth, 48 yards from the loom, 10*s.* to 11*s.*; a good, industrious working man can do it in three days; some, however, are a week doing it, and yet possessing the same ability, but less industrious. The chain must be good to do it in three days, and of this description of work the chain is generally good.

The next description is the blanket. A piece or stockful of nine-quarter blankets (a nine quarter is ten quarters long, and eight quarters wide each blanket, making it a nine-quarter square, and 28 of these blankets are woven in one chain); a piece of this description is 70 yards long: the cost for weaving is 12*s.* The average time for a good workman, and average chain, would be four days.

The quill winding for both blankets and pilot cloth is 4*d.* per diem, or 2*s.*; generally done by some of the children, or the wife.

Enoch Talboys was a Gloucestershire weaver, working at Wootton-under-Edge; left about eight years ago when trade was dull; many others migrated about the same time, say a dozen families; four or five are yet remaining, though others are gone back, not entirely from want of work, but from misconduct; considers that he is better off by the change; work is more constant, but prefers the broad cloth to blanket weaving, as he was first brought up to that work.

(The manufacturers here proposed to retire in case the witness felt under restraint, which he denied, and did not wish them to retire.)

Considers the wages in Gloucestershire preferable to the wages here; that is, by working the same number of hours upon cloth the earnings will be more than on blankets; but the earnings are less in consequence of the uncertainty of work. Is now working pilot cloth, the length of the piece is 64 yards; it will take him four days; receives 10*s.* for it, and out of that he has to pay 1*s.* 6*d.* to his child for quilling. His wife does not earn money; has six children, but only four at home, two are at service; receives no portion of their wages. Out of the four at home one is a quillwinder, the other weaves occasionally; he is turned 14; does his work as well as an adult, but he is slower at it; the weavers have to play chiefly in the winter for want of dry chain; do not play much for want of work, and considers employment to be regular.

The weekly average amount of his earnings is about 12*s.*, from which deduct 2*s.* for quilling, his net sum is 10*s.*; his lad earns 8*s.*; his sister quills for him. There is only one out-door weaver. The work is all done in the factory.

Mr. Earley further observes, that

The weavers are not so good economists of their time as spinners and fullers, consequently their earnings are proportionably less. Weavers have a dislike to be under restriction as to time, more so than the spinners and fullers, and are less under control.

A spinner averages from 18*s.* to 21*s.* per week; the fuller is paid in wages 15*s.* per week; the weaver averages, *i. e.*, a good industrious workman, 16*s.* a week; we have men who earn and average 18*s.* per week; but I put the general average from 12*s.* to 13*s.* The men who earn the 18*s.* per week do not excel in any peculiar rapidity of weaving, or in knowledge of their trade, but they work regularly and systematically all their time, say twelve to thirteen hours, without any let, while the others play and slack their time.

The same wages have been paid for upwards of twenty years. There is a good understanding among the masters and among the men relative to wages. The men do not undersell one another in labour, and the masters do not exact lower priced labour from them. The wages are considered to be stationary.

Richard Osborne says—

The working hours are twelve per diem all the year round: is now weaving blankets 14 quarters 32 yards long, 8 blankets, 15 quarters and 6 inches long; can weave a stack full in three days—about three hours and a half to a blanket. Wages 10*s.* 6*d.* for the stack full.

Osborne further observes, that

It would be better if the weavers were like other classes of workmen, such as spinners, &c., restricted to regular working hours, because they would then earn more regular wages, and it would be better for their families.

Some of them come sauntering in on Monday towards the middle of the day, some get to work on Tuesday, and some do not work the latter end of Saturday. Considers it would be therefore better if they worked regularly: the hardest work is on Thursday and Friday. This loss of time frequently induces the weavers to overwork themselves, which is injurious to their constitutions.

Mr. John Earley says—

Richard Osborne earns 1*l.* a week, out of which 2*s.* 9*d.* for quilling. He is a teetotaller, and has been so twelve months—was never addicted to drinking. Osborne is married, and child quills.

Mr. Edward Earley observes, in reference to the different amount of earnings of Osborne and Talboys, that

There are different kinds of work, and on the super blankets 5*s.* a week can be earned more than on the inferior blankets. To weave the better work requires a skilled hand.

John Cook, a weaver, aged 20, earns about 18*s.* at fine tens, or superior blankets; has to pay 2*s.* a week for quilling. Has been married since last September.

Thomas Jefferies, a weaver of fine blankets, says, that

If he works twelve hours a day, he can earn 2*s.* 6*d.*, out of which he has 4*d.* to pay the quiller, and about 1*d.* a day for warping. He has other employment, and his whole time is not taken up in weaving.

Thomas Brown, a weaver of super and other blankets, considers that he earns 14*s.* to 15*s.* a week *net*.

Richard Stiff, a weaver, says, that

He nets about 11*s.* a week.

Joseph Williams, tilt-weaver, says—

Work is uncertain—can weave blankets (blanket and tilt looms are different); is occasionally turned to blanket weaving, but has been most used to tilting.

Mr. Edward Earley, tilt-maker, says—

Tilt is woven by the piece, 69 yards, price 13*s.*

Williams states 1*s.* 5*d.* deduction, and that it is about four days' work, about ten hours a day, some days not so much. Considers that he averages a tilt a week. Workmen are too thick upon the ground, every one wants a little.

Mr. Earley, his employer, says, that the average is a tilt a week all the year round, and the weaver has two days to spare to follow other work.

Edward Simms, a tilt-weaver, earns about 14*s.* a week, pays 1*s.* 5*d.* out of it for quilling and warping; he jobs about, and generally earns the above-named sum. Can earn 14*s.* a week at weaving only, but he does not give up the whole of his time to weaving; but he makes 14*s.* every week with weaving, and other jobs.

Mr. Edward Earley states, that

About February trade was dull, yet the manufacturers did not dismiss the men, but continued making in order to employ labour. This dullness continued to the end of July. The men were aware of the depression of trade, and feeling a common interest with their masters, took what work could be given them thankfully and quietly. They saw the warehouses loaded with goods, they evinced a good sense, joined with good feelings, towards the masters.

At Newland factory. Witney, thirty-six able-bodied weavers receive individually to the average amount of 13*s.* 9½*d.* weekly, from which deduct 2*s.*, if he pays a quiller. The following is the proportionate number who receive various amounts:—

			s.	*s.*
12 per cent.	. .	5 earn from	.	17 to 18
16	,,	6	,,	16 to 17
20	,,	7	,,	15 to 16
6	,,	2	,,	14 to 15
6	,,	2	,,	13 to 14
20	,,	7	,,	12 to 13
20	,,	7	,,	11 to 12
Total . . .	36			

Boys and aged men in the same establishment earn 9*s.* 7*d.* per week, from which deduct 2*s.* for the quilling.

Witney.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Wages, Labour, and Earnings.

Hand-Loom Weavers employed at Newland Factory, Witney.

The following is the Average of the Weekly Earnings of Fifty-two Weavers, at Witney:—

	s.	d.		s.	d.
Joseph Clack	11	0	James Baker	16	0
George Bratherton	17	6	Simon Talboys (idle)	11	0
W. Harewood (old)	10	0	John Reeves	11	6
Joseph Fowler (boy)	10	0	Edward Mumford, sen.	13	6
A. Loyd	17	6	Thomas Smart	11	0
J. Harewood	12	0	John Mansell	11	6
D. Rowles	15	0	George Thomas, sen.	14	0
W. Mansell	11	6	George Thomas, jun.	15	6
S. Williams	12	0	W. Lindsey	16	0
Thomas Bratherton	17	0	Joseph Aldridge (old)	10	0
Richard Farden (lad)	10	0	Richard Akers	16	0
W. Basson (lad)	9	0	R. Fidler	15	6
M. Talboys (boy)	8	0	Thomas Lindsey	14	6
G. Clements	11	0	W. Fidler	16	0
Joseph Clements	14	0	James Bull	15	0
Thomas Smith	15	6	Thomas Empson	13	0
Henry Farden (lad)	10	0	William Spining	16	0
S. Hawkins (very old)	9	0	Joseph Rowles	16	0
Edward Mumford, jun.	12	0	Joseph Purser	17	0
Pratley	12	0	Thomas French	12	0
French (old)	10	0	R. Williams	12	6
G. Ayris (old)	13	6	Joseph Lindsey	15	0
W. Farden, sen. (old)	10	0	R. Wright	12	0
C. Townsend (boy)	7	0	Thomas Colliner	18	0
John Collis	15	0	William Bratherton (boy)	10	0
W. Farden	11	0			

Average wages say 13*s.* each, less 2*s.* each for quill-winder.

During the weeks this average was taken there was much hindrance for want of water at the mill, at least one day in the week.

J. Earley.

Richard Stiff

Has heard old weavers say that the present race of weavers do not work half the number of hours they did formerly. It was an established rule to work from four in the morning till eight at night, with two hours meal time: at this time two persons worked in a loom, but since the spring shuttles have been introduced, say 40 years ago, the men have altered the time.

Mr. John Earley says—

He was the first who introduced the spring-loom at Witney; that there was great opposition among the men, as they said it would be the means of fewer men doing the work, and that, with the assistant or partner, say half of the weavers would lose their bread; but soon after the spring-looms were introduced the men preferred them, and the double looms were dispensed with. It did not turn any men out of employment, because they exerted themselves to find a market. Our mode of fabric was altered, in order to compete with the Yorkshire market, and our trade increased nearly double. The weavers came jealously and looked at it "as sly as a cow at a bastard calf."

Witness does not consider the body of weavers to be so industrious as they were. When in the double loom, one man was stimulated or compelled to work for the sake of his partner. When the master wished to have his work quickly done, he placed an idler hand with an industrious one.

Condition of the Weavers.

Condition of the Weavers.

Mr. John Earley, manufacturer at Witney, states, that

The major part of the weavers are not distressed; his wages show that they ought not to be.

Under the head of Beer-Shops will be seen the beneficial effects of tee-totalism.

Some of the houses are neat and comfortable, but it is not a general term to be applied to them. The rent averages about 2*s.* weekly. Fuel is dear; provisions moderate.

There is a good understanding among the masters and men relative to wages; the men do not undersell one another in labour, and the masters do not exact low-priced labour from them. The wages are considered to be stationary. The same wages have been paid for upwards of 20 years.

Enoch Talboys states, that

The manufacturers do not allow the men to play on Monday; if they, however, chose to leave the loom, the shuttle is taken from them for two or three days by way of punishment.

Mr. Earley, jun., states, that

He has now five men under punishment, and he employs 25 or 26 weavers; has his factory open from four in the morning to eight at night, but requires the constant attendance every day in the week from six to six, with two hours for meal time. Has not adopted the rule concerning the shuttle more than a year, but it has been productive of good order. Has only had to take shuttles once or twice. It is considered a disgrace among the men.

Talboys here stated that he should be ashamed to have his shuttle taken away from him.

Witney.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

CONDITION OF THE WEAVETS.

Mr. Edward Earley states, that

He has never had any trouble or irregularity for the last two years with the factory weavers; considers that opening shop at four o'clock is opening the door to improvident habits, inasmuch as they have the means of making up for lost time; whereas they ought to open their factories at six and close at regular hours.

Stiff and Talboys both agree, that

Kindness on the part of the masters beneficial to labourers.

The masters here are more attentive to the moral and domestic condition of their working men than in Gloucestershire, where the manufacturers care not how drunken a man may be provided his work is done; considers this attention on the part of the masters to be extremely beneficial to the interest of the working men, as it restrains them from many vices and evils into which they would otherwise fall, and it adds to their personal and domestic comforts; they are enabled to provide better for their families by earning more money, and they are more attentive to their master's commands, as well as to his interests.

This attention on the part of the masters tends to check drinking, and by inducing their workmen to abstain from the public-house and beer-shop, the amount saved may be considered as an increase to the income.

It does not appear to witness that any particular change has taken place in the condition of the weavers since he has been here.

Richard Stiff, a weaver, says, that

The masters here show the kindest feeling to their men, and the men show the same to their masters; they make it their interest to study the interest of their masters. This was never the case in Gloucestershire. They cannot have that feeling when the masters are so careless about the working-man; there is no affection between them, but there is in Witney.

The masters here come to the factories and look after business, they do not give authority to any foreman to usurp power over the labouring man. Witness has been here eight years; came from Dursley, and considers his condition improved; his mind is much more contented, because he has not a proud austere master to control him. When a weaver goes before a master in Gloucestershire it is as bad as if he was going before a judge. The servant or foreman there is a snake in his master's side.

Work is more regular here, and he prefers this district. Some time ago when trade was slack here he had an offer from Mr. Derrett, of Wootton-under-Edge, in Gloucestershire, to work for him; he offered to employ him and his family, and it was calculated that their earnings would be 30*s.* a-week, besides paying all the expenses of moving; but witness considered the cloth trade to be so unsettled, and the masters to be so very different here to what they are in Gloucestershire with regard to kindness, that he preferred remaining in Witney, though at lower earnings, rather than be subject to a Gloucestershire master.

BEER SHOPS.

BEER SHOPS.—TOTAL ABSTINENCE SYSTEM.

Mr. John Earley, a manufacturer, states,

That there are many beer-shops in Witney, but that they are not so injurious as heretofore to the working classes, since within the last three years there has been a moral improvement among the men, partly resulting from tee-totalism, partly from moral principle, owing to the exertions of some of the masters to discourage drinking among their workmen, and from a close system of Sabbath instruction, which has, in the opinion of the town, had a great influence on the rising generation.

Enoch Talboys, a weaver, states,

That the manufacturers do not allow the men to play on Mondays; if they, however, choose to leave the loom, the shuttle is taken from them for two or three days by way of punishment.

Mr. John Earley observes,

That the allotment system is one of the best preventives to drinking, and that it empties the beer-shops. Beer-shops are injurious at all times, but not so much now as formerly, public opinion being against them: states that he had a workman who was a great drunkard; he threatened to dismiss him twenty times, but he turned tee-totaller about a year and a half since, and he now has every confidence in him. When he was a drunkard, witness never would advance him money, now he has no objections; tells all his men that when they are tee-totallers he will lend them money to do them good, and follows up his assertion practically.

To WILLIAM AUGUSTUS MILES, ESQ.

"*Wood Green, near Witney, 23d November*, 1838.

"SIR,

"I TRUST you will pardon my troubling you with a few remarks; but as I so much admire the spirit of this inquiry, and also the very gentlemanly manner in which it has been conducted by you, I feel no hesitation in thus trespassing on your valuable time for a few moments. I employ Richard Osborne, whose examination you have taken; he is a most industrious man, and dared not tell you quite the whole truth, or he well knows that, in a great deal of my work, he can earn from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* a day; but there is that jealousy among others of the men, that on no account can any of them exceed their 20*s.* or 21*s.* per week. But this is not the topic I wish to write upon. Our family of the Earleys have been blanket manufacturers in Witney, from father to son, for nearly 180 years, and, as you might have perceived, we have a deep interest in the welfare of the parish; not as we have a great

property here (which is not the case, although, thank God, we have the means of carrying on business in a very respectable manner), but there is that desire on the part of the whole family to see every family in the town happy, contented, and comfortable. This happy state of things can never be effected by the earnings of the labouring classes, be it what it may, but must be by virtue, morality, and religion. The lower class of society are soon led by the example of their superiors, and more particularly into evil habits than by a good example.

It is therefore most certain, that when influential men step in the least aside from the true and right way, it is surely followed by a disorderly neighbourhood. Such was the case in Witney. In the reign of Queen Anne, a charter was granted to the town, and a company was formed, consisting of master, assistants, wardens and commonalty. In course of years the hall we met in was built for feasting as well as business, and if you could have had time, you might have there witnessed every convenience for the destruction of the bodies and souls of men. Extraordinary ale was brewed, and young men, as well as old, were enticed by this fascinating glass to indulge in the practice of drinking, and to such an extent, that nearly all the old tradesmen and families are extinct. Ours has escaped the ravages of time, and my late father, who was Mr. John Earley's elder brother, these two men were raised up by Providence, about thirty years ago, to save this town from utter ruin. I was bred up in a respectable manner, fond of society, but when young was shy at the glass; but from fashion and custom, and not then knowing but wine and ale was wholesome, I, like others, indulged in the same; and, although I was continually admonishing my men as to their evil propensity, frequently forgot to look into my own breast. The welfare and happiness of my workpeople, with most of whom I was bred up, as it were, in companionship, was dear to my wishes. I set them an example of early rising; and one morning in the depth of winter, at six in the morning, I went down to my spinning factory; and, in conversation with a young man about my own age (37), as to the conduct of the weavers in comparison of the spinners, &c. &c., he accosted me at once in a very respectable and unassuming manner: 'I think, sir, if you were to be a tee-totaller, it would be a good thing for your health, and also for your men.' 'Why, John,' I says, 'you would kill me quite; can you do your hard work without beer?' "I have tried it, sir, two months, and would not take any more whatever.' This, sir, confounded me, and opened my eyes at once to the real cause of all the misery, wretchedness, and poverty in my native town. I came home to breakfast in the dark, and told my wife my intention to abstain from all fermented and spirituous liquor, and that is now two years on the 11th of January. I am also happy to inform you that my spinner, John Clare, has been a consistent member ever since, and has not had occasion to be absent from his work one hour during the two years. I am the father of eleven living, and of two children who are dead. Though I am young, my family have come on extremely fast. My wife has been a member a year and a half, and has now the 13th child at her breast, and has not enjoyed such good health these ten years. We have not had occasion (and blessed be God for it) for any medical aid for thirteen in family now for two years. I have also increased in health and strength, and have the great satisfaction in living to see a most wonderful change in the habits of my townsmen. From a drunken, loose, profligate place, it is, through this, as also the great attention to the different schools (and no party takes a deeper interest in the education of children than do the masters), it is changed to, I may almost say, a little paradise. Oh! when I see my uncle take that jug (who is a religious, good man), and offer that accursed thing in so friendly a manner, and at that hall where so many youths have been corrupted by the example of those who ought to know better, it is a great grief to my mind. My dear sir, it is quite time the fashions were changed, and every approach (as, for instance, through yourself) to the throne. I am more particularly desirous to give my ample testimony to the real cause of all misery in this highly favoured isle.

"If my little influence among 5000 inhabitants has been the humble instrument in effecting such a wonderful change in two years, what may be expected from our legislators and statesmen, our Queen, Lords, and Commons, our ministers of religion, who are bowing down to this idol? Let us away with this powerful enemy to man (alcohol), and all other blessings will follow.

"If I thought these remarks would be the means of rescuing only one individual from the paths of drinking, it would be satisfactory: 40,000 Englishmen die every year through drinking. It takes a million acres to brew the stuff, which land might produce such a quantity of mutton, which is a much more wholesome food than pig-meat, that every family may have a greater quantity, and no distress in our land.

"John Earley."

Education and Moral Condition.

It was asserted by masters and men at Witney, that the weavers are anxious for the education of their children.

Mr. Sims, the chief constable, observes, that

Education is more attended to at Witney than in other towns with which he is acquainted, and that it is carefully promoted by the manufacturers.

The moral condition of the people within these few years has been much improved, and he has little to do, in his official capacity, compared to what it was a few years ago, when it was very disorderly, fighting, &c.; found he was enabled to quell it, and never had any occasion to call in assistance. There are not many depredations committed; some are going

Witney.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Education and Moral Instruction.

on of a private nature, which it is hoped may be soon detected; the people are more quiet and orderly than formerly. Their wages have not been reduced, and the change arises from the moral feeling, not from necessity.

The Churches and places of worship are better attended to than formerly.

The weavers generally appear well and respectably dressed on the Sunday, and it is gratifying to witness to see their orderly attendance at places of worship. Their children go to various Sunday-schools, and are particularly neat in their appearance.

Many strangers have remarked the respectable condition of the weavers, and the working population of this town, compared with other manufacturing towns.

Witness, without the slightest hesitation, attributes this happy condition of the working people to the attention of the manufacturers in promoting education, and cherishing the improvements of the adult population, both by example and by precept.

In proof of the good and moral condition of the weavers in the town of Witney, he observed, that

For the last two years has been no nightly police or a watchman in the town, and that property and the peace are safely kept without such aid—a circumstance which he considers creditable to the town, and dissimilar to any other manufacturing district.

Mr. Edward Earley states, that

He superintends every Sunday the education of between 400 and 500 children, and that upwards of 1000 children are taught reading every Sunday in the schools, and writing on Saturday evenings.

Allotment System.

Allotment System.

Mr. John Earley, a manufacturer, observes, that

The allotment system is very beneficial; he first started it in a parish adjoining Witney, but found opposition from the farmers; all their ground of opposition was, that it would not do. The fact, in his opinion, was, that they were jealous of the poor man doing too well, as they obstinately refused his repeated endeavours. He took two paupers of large families from the parish; employed one as a fuller, and the other he found service for as a farmer's man with his brother-in-law. Witness gave a little more than 2 acres and 20 poles to each man of good land, at 3*l.* per acre, including taxes, tithes, and every outgoing. This occurred eight or nine years since, and neither they nor any of their families have ever been since then upon the parish. His regulation was, that they should sell no grain or produce without his leave, and none has ever been sold; told them, in reference to the surplus, concerning which they spoke to him, that they should eat all they could, and give the rest to the pigs, as the stipulation was, that one or more pigs should be in the stye; deemed it would be a bad system to the men if they were allowed to sell their produce; they might dispose of it for ready money after harvest, and then be too impoverished to continue holding the land.

At the end of two years after these men took to the land, one of them had three pigs in his stye, four quarters of wheat, four quarters of barley, one small stack of beans, and ninety-five sacks of potatoes.

	£.	*s.*	*d.*
Wheat was then 50*s.* a quarter, 4 quarters . .	10	0	0
Barley „ 24*s.* „ „ . .	4	16	0
Stack of beans, about 2 quarters, at 30*s.* each . .	3	0	0
Potatoes, 95 sacks, at 5*s.* per sack	14	5	0
Pigs, 1 of 10 score, 4*l.* 10*s.* and 2 at 50*s.* each (3 in all)	7	10	0
	39	11	0

This man has 12 children.

The produce of the other man was equal to the same amount; the entire part of the labour was done by the man and his family; witness lent them his horse and cart to draw the grain.

The pigs may be accounted as stock from last year.

The men take great pride in the cultivation of their land, and the plan is now become more generally adopted.

Mr. Earley further observed, that

Most of the men have small allotments; it is one of the best means of emptying the beer-shops; firmly believes that the allotment system is a great blessing to the poor man; it saves many evils, and brings up the children to industry by the example set by the parents; it gives the poor man a feeling of respectful independence—will explain his meaning of the word independence—he means independence of the poor's rates.

The allotment system will not only give a man bread, but also cheese with it; knows an instance of a man who was a pauper with a large family, but who had rented a piece of and, and witness never goes into his house but he sees a flitch of bacon on the rack.

Wales.

Trade of Wales, North and South.

North Wales.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Trade.

The trade of flannel has been long established in Wales. The chief and ancient mart in North Wales for the sale of webs or flannels, was at Blanc Minster (now Oswestry); and the principal purchasers were a company of drapers from Shrewsbury, chartered by Edward IV. in 1461.

The members of this company attended the markets on stated days, each purchasing on his own account; but being a chartered company, they had the sole command of the market.

Blanc Minster, or Oswestry, was probably fixed upon as the mart, because it was then a walled town; and the buyers and sellers availed themselves of that protection, as the district was much infested by lawless bandits. The Shrewsbury drapers had a bye-law, whereby any member of their company was prohibited from starting for Oswestry market before a certain named hour in the morning, in order that by travelling in a body, they might afford mutual protection; they were also required to travel armed.

In 1585, one market was held at Knockin, situate 6 miles from Oswestry and 12 from Shrewsbury, but it was not continued. The reason of this attempt to remove the market probably originated with Lord Grey, the owner of Knockin Castle, who had just returned from Ireland, having been superseded by Sir John Parrot as Lord Lieutenant of that country, and in order to improve his property by enticing commerce, he offered the same protection to the dealers as they received at Oswestry. The plan did not succeed, and the markets, with this one exception, were held at Oswestry till 1621, when the drapers removed the market to Shrewsbury, by refusing to attend at Oswestry.

As soon as this chartered company established the market in their own town, and made the Welshmen pass the borders with their webs, so soon as this was effected, the most arbitrary conduct was adopted by the company, who not only named the price, but defrauded the sellers in the measures; nor had the Welshman any remedy, for being a chartered body, the company kept the trade as a close monopoly.

After many ineffectual struggles, a flannel-market was established at Welshpool in 1782. The Welsh manufacturers invited buyers from all parts of the kingdom, as well as their old customers from Shrewsbury; but this body had so completely the command of the English market, that they were still the principal buyers, and continued to regulate the prices, and also the admeasurement of the goods, frequently insisting upon two, three, and even five yards in every twenty over and above the actual measure, as a bonus for their custom.

Two buyers within these few years were comparing notes as to how much they had exceeded by full measurements from the manufacturers:—"Well," said one, "I did take so much in my time as would reach, you see, from Welshpool to Shrewsbury" (18 miles however); "Indeed to goodness," said the other, "I was take so much as would go from Shrewsbury to London—aye, to Paris for what I know." They both acknowledged that they cheated as much as they could, and till lately it was a usual practice.

Joseph Thomas, of Llanbrynmair, a manufacturer, states, that—

> Formerly the buyers cheated in the measurement, and to such an extent as that two yards were allowed in every 20, and, besides that, they would cheat five yards out of a piece, frequently 10 yards; witness now allows one yard in a piece, and the buyers take his measurement.

The following manufacturers of Machynlleth, namely, John Lewis, Edward Williams, Richard Richards, David Jones, state, that—

North Wales.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

TRADE.

There was formerly much cheating by the buyers in the measurement, say as much as 10 or 15 yards in a piece; "they had no conscience in the world;" but within the last two years a measuring machine has been invented, and is now used at Newtown, and an official measurer is appointed; about four yards in each piece is allowed for over measurement.

In consequence of a personal dispute between a Welsh and a Shrewsbury buyer in the market-hall at Welshpool, the Shrewsbury man succeeded in removing the chief mart to Newtown; this was in 1834. The removal of the mart was injurious to the general trade at Welshpool, because the farmers' carts which brought the flannel to the market, returned with groceries and goods purchased at the shops in the town. Another mart has since been established at Llanidloes. Formerly the English houses bought through the agency of the Shrewsbury drapers; but persons from London, Manchester, and other places, now attend at these marts, so that the monopoly is nearly extinct.

Formerly, the seller was often obliged to part with his goods one market-day and depend on the honesty of the buyer for an account of the measurement at the next market-day, after the webs or flannels had been removed to the Shrewsbury warehouses. To check the system of false measurement, an ingenious mechanic in Newtown invented a machine, by which the webs are measured more rapidly than by hand, and quite as accurately. There are sworn measurers to this office, so that a seller can now sell his cloth by measurement before he parts with it out of his possession.

Many buyers and agents are located among the manufacturers at Newtown; and as they know the circumstances and occasional necessities of some of the less affluent manufacturers, they wait for bargains. It is, therefore, rather a doubtful point whether the mart at Newtown is an actual benefit to the manufacturers.

The flannel trade has not declined, nor has there been any particular alteration for the last 20 years in wages. The trade is subject to occasional fluctuations, owing to the varying prices of wool, and from casual oversupply. The official measurer at Newtown states that the quantity has not decreased, though occasionally the market may be overstocked.

It appears that the hand-loom is considered preferable for the production of the finer Welsh flannel: the power has been attempted, but unsuccessfully.

A spinner, named William Bray, of Welshpool, states, that—

Two attempts have been made, but unsuccessfully, to establish power-looms in the weaving of flannel: one attempt was made at Newtown, the other at Welshpool.

T. Jones, a manufacturer at Newtown, observed, that—

It was from the fear that the Yorkshire trade would injure the Welsh district, that eight power-looms were intended to be tried at Newtown in 1836. Mr. William Pugh, of Kerry, a gentleman of an active and speculative character, fitted up a steam-power, driving wheels and connexions; the rent was to be 100*l.* per annum; but before all the arrangements were completed, he was, in consequence of pecuniary circumstances, obliged to leave England; and owing to subsequent disagreements concerning rents, the project was abandoned without a piece being woven, and the machinery was sold and put up at Welshpool. Witness tried it there for nine months, and fully satisfied himself that steam-power was not calculated for very fine work, although he is of opinion that steady water-power may be applicable to the fabrication of coarser flannel: the introduction of machinery caused no excitement among the men.

The objections to steam-power are, *first*, that the power is irregular, and fuel too expensive; second, the power-loom does not work with the tenderness of a skilful human hand: damage may be instantly done which will take the weaver two hours to repair. Although the advantages from steam appear to be enormous, it is *not* in reality the case: practice is far different from the theory.

Relative to the competition of the north county manufacturers of flannel, T. Jones, of Newtown, states, that

Very little of the Welsh flannel is exported to foreign parts, it is chiefly for home consumption; the Welsh flannel trade is more steady than the Lancashire trade; the northern manufacturers export coarse goods to America, Norway, Sweden, Holland, and Germany, but when the foreign trade is dull, they are forced into the home market and compete with the Welsh trade; the Lancashire men are larger capitalists than the Welsh manufacturers, and they prefer the foreign trade, the *risks* are larger, but the *profits* greater.

Morris Jones, of Welshpool, states, that

The same quantities of flannel are made as formerly, but the factors find a competition in the Lancashire market in coarse goods and the middling goods. The Rochdale flannel has less of material than the Welsh, the material is a longer wool, which can be spun and made

up in less bulk than the Welsh; there is not substance or weight equal to the Welsh, but the pieces look fine and good to the eye, and *take* in the market.

The prices vary in the market, and one cause is, that the Welsh manufacturers cannot hold stock the factors buy; at times the losses of the manufacturers are heavy, especially the smaller ones who must have money.

The Lancashire trade has been against the Welsh trade for seven years; they send in an imitation flannel.

Richard Evans, weaver, of Newtown, states that

The Lancashire flannel cannot compete with the Welsh, though the buyer is often imposed upon by Lancashire instead of Welsh.

The chief consumption of Welsh flannel is in England.

The country factors buy in February, March, April, and June, and keep stock in hopes of a profit when they sell to the London buyers, who come into the market in the summer. Trade was dull last year, 1837.

The native Welsh wool has improved in quality; it is much stronger. The Radnorshire wool, or the South Down wool, is of a short quality, and is the best adapted for the manufacture of flannel.

The following is a good assortment of wools for a superior flannel:

20 per cent. foreign wool, Saxony lamb, or Australian.
20 ditto South Down.
60 ditto Radnorshire.

The prices are about

2*s.* 8*d.* for Saxony.
2*s.* 0*d.* for Australian.
1*s.* 6*d.* for British.

The following is the process of preparing wool and manufacturing flannel, together with the weekly earnings of the various classes of workpeople.

1. Sorted, by master or foreman, 18*s.* a week.
2. Picked, by women at home, ½*d.* per lb.
3. Oiled, by an oiler, 9*s.* per week.
4. Willowed, by the devil-boy, 3*s.* per week.
5. Scribbled, by an engine-boy, 3*s.* per week.
6. Carded by an engine-boy, 3*s.* per week.
7. Slubbed, by a jack, man, 12*s.* per week.
8. Spun, by a jenny, paid per lb.
9. Wound, by woman, 6*d.* to 8*d.* per lb., but this lb. weighs 5 lb. 20 ozs.; the facility of this work depends upon the well-formed cob of the spinner: an industrious woman may wind about 2 lb. a-day.
10. Warped: irregular work; when full work, 3*s.* per day.
11. Sized, by the weavers.
12. Weaving: nett average, after all deductions, 11*s.* per week.
13. Dressing, in the fulling mill, paid by the piece, from 4*s.* to 12*s.*; earnings from 14 to 16*s.* a-week.

The principal marts for the sale of flannel are at Newtown, Llanidloes, Machynlleth, and Dolgelly. There are various factories scattered over the county of Montgomery, and much flannel is made at farm-houses.

Joseph Thomas, a manufacturer at Llanbrynmair, states, that—

The farmers make their pieces in their own houses from their own wool, and then bring hem to Newtown market about once a-year. A farmer averages about 12 pieces a-year, and the number of the make is 15. Agricultural labourers about Llanbrynmair are hired by he year; they can all weave or spin; the farmer employs them at out-door work in the summer, and at the loom or jenny in the winter.

Newtown.

Newtown.

The finer flannels are made at Newtown. The markets are held alternate Thursdays. The quantity in that mart averages 400 pieces every market-day, at 10*l.* per piece. The market is supplied from every part of the country except Llanidloes. The flannel is sent in the rough from many districts, and finished or dressed at Newtown, where there are greater facilities of machinery and water.

As far as I could ascertain there were at the time of my inquiry about 700 looms in the town, of which number only 36 were unemployed

North Wales.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Newtown.

Wages.

The labour of weaving is performed in the following proportions:—

Male weavers	62 per cent.
Women weavers . . .	33 per cent.
Children	5 per cent.

The following is a statement of the prices paid for weaving flannel at Newtown, and a calculation of the time requisite to weave each piece.

The following Table shows the price paid per wall to each respective number of beers; the number of walls in a piece; the total price per piece; the number of days required to weave each respective quality, and the weavers' weekly nett earnings.

No. of Beers.	Price paid per Wall.	No. of Walls in the Piece.	Price per Piece.	No. of Days required to weave a Piece.	Nett weekly earnings, after deducting 1*s.* 3*d.* for winding, candles, &c.
	s. *d.*		£. *s.* *d.*		*s.* *d.*
26	0 8	36	1 4 0	12	10 9
27	0 9	36	1 7 0	13	11 3
28	0 10	36	1 10 0	15	10 9
29	0 11½	36	1 14 6	16	11 9
30	1 1	39	2 2 3	21	10 9
31	1 2½	39	2 7 1½	23	11 0
32	1 4	48	3 4 0	32	10 9
33	1 9	54	4 14 6	47	10 9
34	2 0	60	6 0 0	60	10 9

Average, 11*s.* per week.

There is a fabric of 35 and 36 beers, but they are seldom made.

In corroboration of the computed average of earnings, namely, 11*s.* per week, Mr. John Williams, the official measurer at Newtown, says,

Wages and earnings.

A fair-working weaver earns about 12*s.* 6*d.* weekly; a middling weaver 9*s.*; and women, children, or learners, about 6*s.*; subject, however, to a deduction of 1*s.* a week for winding, and 6*d.* a week for candle. He says there are many weavers who earn 15*s.* a week, and many men could earn more than they do, but they do not make the best use of their time.

Mr. John Jones, a manufacturer at Newtown, says,

A good weaver is never out of work, but he thinks the men do not work with the same spirit as formerly. "For instance," said he, "I gave work to a man, who complained that he could not earn more than 1*s.* 3*d.* a day on it. He worked four days at it, and on the fifth went to his potato ground. Now I did know that his warp was good," continued Mr. Jones, "and as my weaver was so grumbling, I did put myself into his loom for a whole day. I began with the men and left off with them. The work I did was as much as earned me 5*s.* 5*d.* I told this to the weaver, who went on with his work, and daily earned, till he completed it, 2*s.* 6*d.* per day. So much for *bad heart*, when you set to work at any labour.

Mr. Jones further says, women can weave as well as men.

A Newtown weaver, named Harris, who works for Mr. Nicholls, states, however, that he averages full 10*s.* a week, and that in some weeks he has made his pound.

William Bray, a spinner and weaver at Welshpool, says,

That a weaver of moderate skill and steady habits might easily earn, at 32 beer work, 14*s.* a week, from which deduct 1*s.* for winding, and 3*d.* a week for candles, and his amount per week is 12*s.* 9*d.*

John Thomas, a weaver at Welshpool, states,

That a flannel-weaver, after all deductions, will readily earn, on the average, 10*s.* 6*d.* a week.

The weavers at Newtown frequently have to "play" for work, and the slightest depression in trade throws many out of employment. The weavers met about 1100 in number when I was at Newtown, and they considered that their earnings did not on the annual average exceed 8*s.* 6*d.* per week. A weaver, however, who works for Mr. Nicholls, says he averages, work and play, 10*s.* a-week, and has frequently earned 1*l.*

At Newtown, as in other towns, I found masters and men at variance.

The following letter was addressed to me upon the subject of the trade and the alleged impositions of the masters. I must beg to observe that the long warping wall is a decided fraud of the master upon his labourer.

North Wales.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Newtown.

The weavers are paid by the wall, an arbitrary measure, which ought not to exceed or be less than four yards eight inches. The price per wall differs according to the number of the beer, and the longer pieces contain the greater number of beers, or the proportionate finer threads.

Copy of a Petition from the Weavers of Newtown.

To William Augustus Miles, Esq., Commissioner of Inquiry into the state of the Hand-Loom Weavers.

The humble petition of the hand-loom weavers of Newtown, Montgomeryshire,

Petition of weavers.

Sheweth, That your petitioners do suffer much loss in their earnings by the different impositions practised by the masters in the Welsh flannel trade in this town, for the removal of which the legislature hath power, and would cause a regularity in the trade, equally beneficial to master and workman.

First, The great irregularity in the length of warping walls, which are now from four yards eight inches to four yards fourteen inches; four yards eight inches being the length generally agreed on between masters and men for the length of the wall to be; your petitioners humbly pray the length of the warping wall to be established at four yards and eight inches only.

Secondly, The breadth of the reed, which originally was by agreement between masters and men three feet two inches and a-half, is now reduced in many factories to three feet only, which causeth great injury to the weaver, in respect of his earnings, in some work as much as sixpence per wall; therefore your petitioners humbly pray the breadth to be established at three feet two inches and half an inch; but any flannel made to order otherwise than the common Welsh flannel breadth, or for coarse flannels not exceeding twenty beears, or forty threads to each beear, we do not wish for any alteration, or meddle with the make thereof, as we consider any alteration in the same would injure the master and the trade of such goods.

Thirdly, Your petitioners humbly pray that the number of threads in the warpt shall be duly regulated: that there shall be no additional threads warped over and above the number of beears, there shall be the number of beears only and no more, according to the original custom, which is not the present practice. The original of our reeds; suppose a twenty-eight reed of three feet two inches and half an inch contains twenty-five beears, or one thousand threads, list and white included in every reed of less number than twenty-eight, there is a reduction of forty threads for every beear under that number, and for every reed above twenty-eight there is an addition of forty threads for every additional beear to any number of beears. Likewise, your petitioners would wish to recommend to your consideration a simple plan which would protect the Welsh flannel against any imitation of the same by the Lancashire manufacturer, and the consumer would be equally protected against imposition, and will be no expense to either Welsh or Lancashire manufacture, namely, that the Lancashire manufacturer shall put two red threads next to next in the middle of his broad list all through the length of the piece, and the Welsh manufacturer shall put two white threads in his broad list, next to next all the length of his piece. If that distinction will be made a law then all the country will know it, and understand it; and, consequently, guard themselves against imposition.

Honoured Sir, if you will please to recommend this, our petition, to Her Majesty's Government, that the prayer of our petition may be granted us, we, the hand-loom weavers of Newtown, in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.

Approved of by the Rev. G. A. Evans, magistrate of the county, and signed by 394 weavers.

Newtown, 1st December, 1838.

Probable causes of deterioration of wages.

The condition is likely to be deteriorated by the introduction of female and juvenile labour to the loom. Male adult weavers are now only in the proportion of 62 per cent. There is also another evil of threatening aspect, namely, the growth of the truck system, and, as the population of the town increases, so will the male adult be rivalled by other labour of a cheaper kind, and truck will be more openly adopted.

Richard Evans, weaver at Newtown, in reply to my question—

Can women and girls weave as well as men, and do they receive the same rate of wages?—answered, Yes.

In how long a time would an apt person be enabled to earn per week, a given sum for subsistence?—Some would learn in a year or two; some in three years; a lad could weave, but he would require an experienced hand to size and fettle the loom.

The Rev. Morgan Davies, of Machynlleth, observes, that

The weavers' terms of apprenticeship are neither long nor expensive; the time for which they are bound varies considerably in duration, depending of couse upon the pecuniary consideration; and I am informed, by a very intelligent operative, that a child of 13 years of age can learn the weaving trade in three-quarters of a year, so as to be able to work under the eye of a master.

North Wales.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Newtown.

Richard Evans, a weaver at Newtown, states,

That the chief work for the weaver is four months in the year; that the weaver's is the most depressed of all trades. Children get into the loom, and take the weaver's work from him at under price. Wages are nominally stationary, but few work at these prices; the men are underselling one another. There are too many on the ground, and young persons, boys and girls, are working and underselling male and older weavers. He further states that the condition of the weavers is worse than it was some years ago, owing to the fineness of the yarn, and waiting for work sometimes two days between each chain, owing to the badness of trade.

The same witness also states, a few manufacturers deal in truck and force their men to deal with them, but that wages are never paid by tickets on the shops. He considers the goods at these shops to be about 5 per cent. dearer than at other shops.

Strike. There was a riot at Newtown about 25 years ago, in consequence of the masters attempting to lower wages.

Co-operation society failed. A co-operative society was established in 1832 at Newtown ("in order," said an operative, "to amass capital to employ *ourselves*"): this society broke in 1838; the means were weekly subscriptions among the members; the highest number was 52, chiefly operatives; amount of subscriptions was laid out in articles of general consumption, such as butter, flour, groceries, &c., and sold, at the usual prices of other shops, to the members and the public; the profit was not large; about 30*l*. a-week was taken in cash over the counter, besides a few book-debts; this shop was broken up by the dishonesty of the storekeeper, who ran away to America with the money.

A field was rented by this society near the town, 3½ acres at 4*l*. per acre, and divided into 42 gardens, being the number of our members at the time; each member paid a rent in proportion to the size and situation of his garden, and the amount covered expenses of rates, tithes, fences, &c., together with the original rent, but no profit was sought, the object being only to better the condition of the members, which it actually did; one of the members, with a wife and four children, who were out of work during the winter were enabled to live upon the produce of the bit of land.

Embezzlement. Embezzlement of yarn is not usual. The resident magistrate of the town, the Rev. G. A. Evans, states he has not had a case brought before him for the last five years.

Benefit-clubs. There are five permanent clubs at Newtown; nearly all the weavers subscribe to them. In one club, namely, the Cambrian Union Society, there are 250 weavers.

Allotment system. The poor in this neighbourhood avail themselves of the allotment system.

John Williams, official measurer, states, that

Almost all the poor people set potatoes in the fallow of the neighbouring farmers, paying a ground-rent of 10*s*. for every strike of potatoes which they may set; the *strike* is 8 *bowls*, each bowl weighing 24 lbs.; the farmer manures and prepares the ground.

They also rent small allotment gardens, at the rent of 12*l*. per acre, including all tithes and taxes; these allotments are very useful to the poor families, nearly all keep pigs; they are good paymasters and frequently get two crops a-year, such as ox cabbages or turnips after early potatoes; they do not supply the market but keep the produce for their own families, the cultivation of these grounds employ much of their time, and when waiting for work, they employ themselves in their gardens.

Boards of Trade. Relative to Boards of Trade and the system of apprentices, I subjoin the following evidence of Richard Evans, a weaver at Newtown, whose remarks I consider to be clear and judicious.

Question.—Do you consider that local Boards of Trade would benefit, or injure trade, or affect the weaver? *Answer.*—Cannot say. If a General Board, the make of Welsh flannel is not the same as Lancashire, their work is stronger, ours is finer; a Board to regulate our wages to theirs would be injurious to us, unless there was a local act confined to the Welsh flannel in this district. All legislative enactments I consider to be injurious to labour, at the same time I should like to see the removal of those obnoxious restrictions imposed upon trade; and I am of opinion that labour ought to be as free as the air we breathe. I think we shall never regain our commercial prosperity until there is a free trade with the whole world. I have read Dr. Bowring's speech, and he says, that he has seen in every place a willingness to receive English goods, provided England would consume their corn; the system we are now under is unfair. Commerce is depressed; the agricultural interest is protected by not taking the produce of other nations, and as they require fabrics such as we manufacture, they are compelled to make for their own supplies.

Apprentices. Are there many apprentices brought up to the trade, and what is the premium?—There are none apprenticed by indenture, and none gain a settlement; it is by word of mouth from one year to three; a woman now works for 2*s*. a-week.

Migration and emigration. During the depressed state of trade about ten years ago, many weavers went at their own cost to the United States. When trade becomes dull the weavers migrate to other districts, and frequently into Lancashire.

North Wales.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Newtown.

There have been many recent failures in Newtown, which Mr. Jones, a manufacturer of that town, says were in consequence of many persons starting as manufacturers owing to the facilities afforded by the Branch Manchester Bank in discounting their bills, but when the restriction came they were ruined. During this period, Mr. Jones says the little manufacturers were "awkward customers" in the market, as they always undersold; but trade, he now observes, has returned to a wholesome channel. He further states that many of these small manufacturers, who sprung up at the time, could not even write, and they paid sixpence as a usual sum for a person to draw a bill for them. William Bray, a spinner at Welshpool, said about two years ago he started as a manufacturer because wools were lower, but when wools rose he was sunk: he says it frequently happens that when wool falls men of no capital endeavour to rise from servants to masters; but buyers generally deal with one seller, and it is difficult to obtain a connexion.

Recent condition of the trade.

The effect of this sudden speculation in the flannel-trade was to induce an influx of labour, but it lasted too short a time to induce the extra weavers to remain and finally locate themselves. They dispersed themselves over the country, going to other work. About twenty persons started as manufacturers, and the influx is supposed to have amounted to 300 working persons, including all description of labour.

Fifty tenements are now unoccupied in Newtown.

The failure of these minor manufacturers caused great distress last winter.

Richard Davies, of Newton, observes trade is reviving: comparing his town with other various towns, he says Newtown is like a hive of bees; "we are all busy," said he, "but at Welshpool people lose their time by looking at each other idling." He observes that the pride of Newtown is trade, and the trade of Welshpool is pride."

Contracts were seldom taken by the manufacturers in Wales. They cannot afford to hold stock or execute large orders.

Since the establishment of factories, the Welsh flannel has much improved in appearance, though not in durability.

Owing to the division of labour and facility of production, it does not pay a farmer near Newtown to make flannel, as he obtains more by selling his wool and making his purchases at once at the shops.

Education.

Relative to education, I subjoin the following letter of a weaver, wherein he laments there is no daily school for the children of the poor. I applied to the clergyman of the parish, named Williams, for information on the subject, but he neither returned the forms I forwarded or gave me any reply.

The rising importance of Newtown might seriously claim your attention upon this point, and it would be a benefit of great importance if a school could be established in that town.

The remarks of John Owen, a weaver of Newtown, are so well put and so correct, that I insert them verbatim :—

"The intellectual improvement of the operative class has been greatly neglected by our legislators, especially in the manufacturing districts. This town presents a lamentable spectacle on that subject. *There is not a day-school in the town where the rising poor can receive gratuitous instruction.* By the introduction of the Factory Act numbers of the children were deprived of employment, their parents being poor and unable to give them education; consequently they are left to roam the streets, where they are exposed to all the avenues of temptation and vice, form connexions with dissolute companions, and contract habits that are injurious to themselves and society in general. Thus the children of the poor are nurtured in ignorance, and would have remained, had it not been for that God-like institution, the Sunday-school; where hundreds are taught to read, and where a spirit of inquiry has been infused into the minds of our young men and women, that numbers of them are thirsting for knowledge. We have six Sunday-schools containing above 2000 scholars; three of them have circulating libraries connected with them, to which the scholars have free access. Excellent as the Sunday-school institution is in itself, there are many branches of useful knowledge essential to the happiness of man and the well-being of society that are not taught there. In Sunday-schools the instruction imparted is chiefly of a religious nature; they are taught the system of reading, and receive explanatory lessons on what they read in catechetical form; but the useful art of writing (excepting one school), arithmetic, and other branches of knowledge are not taught, being considered of a secular nature. Thus our rising poor are deprived of a liberal education, that would fit them for useful stations in society; consequently they remain under the roof of their parents, are brought up in the manufacturing business, overstock the trade with hands, the supply is greater than the demand, trade becomes dull, and all its evils follow in the train: *thus the want of a school in this town where the rising poor may receive a liberal education is decidedly against the interest of the hand-loom weaver.*

North Wales.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Newtown.

Inebriety, and recent progress of the "total abstinence system."

The chief bane among the working classes in Wales, as well as other classes, has been intemperance. It was a habit so frequent and so general, that sobriety, not inebriety, was almost, at one time, considered an exception.

I have received much information upon this subject; and, although teetotalism may have been at first embraced with the zeal so common to the ardent temperament of the Welsh character, yet do I consider that its effects will be lasting and durable, because the men themselves have found the advantages of the system they embraced. I met a man notorious for his drunken habits, and asked him if he had turned teetotaler, as he happened to be sober: "No, indeed truth, sir," said he, "I have not signed, but all my friends are teetotallers, and I am ashamed to get drunk, you see, for they laugh at me; but when we did all get drunk together, no one could laugh at another, could they?"

The condition of the working classes is evidently improving; and, in confirmation of this fact, I quote a passage from the leading man among the weavers at Newtown, named John Owens. He remarks as follows:—

"It gives me great pleasure to inform you, respecting the hand-loom weavers, although they are impoverished, that they have become more sober in their habits, moral in their conduct, and rapidly increasing in intelligence. Their sobriety may, in some measure, be attributed to their poverty; but I think the primary cause is the temperance society. This society was established at Newtown, April 2nd, 1836. At its first appearing, it was treated with scorn and derision, and many prophesied that it would soon sink to the shades; but its progress proves quite the reverse: onward it is going, regardless of the prejudices, interests, and appetites of its opponents, so that, at the present time, the number of members that have signed the temperance pledge is upwards of 1100, among whom are 90 reformed drunkards, persons who were once a pest to the neighbourhood, and a disgrace to the nation, are now become sober and industrious; though poor, yet respected. This society acts as a check on many that have not signed its pledge; consequently, its benefits are very extensive on the habits of the people; and I am persuaded, if the principles of the temperance society were acted upon in a general manner, it would benefit *trade in general.* If the enormous sum of money that is expended for intoxicating drinks was laid out for food and clothing, &c., it would increase the home consumption, so that the demand would keep pace with the supply; thus all hands would find employ, and wages would find their proper level. *Thus sobriety, blended with intelligence, is the basis of national prosperity.*"

Richard Evans, a weaver of Newtown, states,

That teetotalism has worked great changes in the habits and moral condition of the weavers. There are many beer-shops in this town, some of ill fame, and others well conducted; it is in these houses young persons congregate, and become vicious in infancy. Dancing and gambling are practised in them. Considers them to be highly injurious.

Mr. T. Jones, a manufacturer at Newtown, states,

That the weavers, as compared with agricultural labourers, marry young, and die young. Formerly the weavers drank very hard, but many, very many, are now *teetotallers.* Formerly, a weaver had scarcely a rag to cover him, owing to drunkenness; but since the introduction of teetotalism many of them are as well dressed as their masters. The working classes are a much more thinking set of people than formerly, but cannot account for the reason. He further observes, that, when he commenced business, he observed the dissolute and idle habits of the men. He recommenced *music* as an amusement, and now it is very common to hear, in the cottages in his neighbourhood, various voices taking their different parts; is convinced that the practice of music would be beneficial. It certainly benefits the disposition, and would, at all times, give the means of enjoyment and amusement. With respect to the Newtown weavers' habits of sobriety, he was present at a club of spinners containing 250 persons, and he stopped till twelve at night; there was not a quarrel or noisy word spoken during the whole of the evening. Has seen many much smaller parties, with more drunkenness, at Welshpool.

Mr. Joseph Thomas, manufacturer at Llanbrynmair, says,

That all the factory-men and weavers have been teetotalers for two years, and their condition is greatly improved.

William Bray, a spinner at Welshpool, states,

That neither weavers or spinners are regular in their work, and Monday is generally a play-day at Welchpool, but Tuesday is the idle day at Newtown, being the market-day.

The Sunday dinner of a Newtown weaver is generally the poorest in the week, because by that time the money is exhausted.

Weavers and spinners were formerly much addicted to drunkenness. Witness states, that the men, after receiving wages on Saturday night, would begin, and continue tippling, till turned out of the public-houses. They met again on Sunday, to renew their good fellowship, and in fact, as long as money lasted, or credit continued, they never thought of returning to

labour. Witness *was* a confirmed drunkard; makes about 15*s.* a-week by spinning; is *now* a teetotaler; considers himself 3*s.* a-week in pocket the richer, and certainly better in health, since his reformation.

Witness laments the waste of time, health, and money occasioned by the improvident habits of weavers, spinners, and the working classes generally.

"Drunkenness," said the witness, "is the cause of poverty and cruelty to families, as well as of differences between master and man. When I was a drunkard, I could never keep three halfpence in my pocket, nor my furniture whole in the house, for in drunken fits tables and chairs were thrown about and broken by me. I was always as much in debt as credit would let me; but now I am never without a sovereign in my pocket, my house is comfortable, I am happy in my mind, and I do not owe a farthing in the world."

Statement of Retail Prices of various Articles of Provisions and Household Stores in the years 1836, 1837, 1838. Prices of provisions.

Of Ordinary Qualities.	1836.		1837.		1838.	
	s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
Oatmeal, per peck	1	8	2	0	2	4
Barley, ditto	1	0	1	0	1	3
Peas, per lb.	0	2½	0	2½	0	3
Potatoes, 240lb. per sack, before washed	14	0	13	0	22	6
Beef, good boiling, per lb.	0	5	0	5	0	6½
Beef, coarse pieces, per lb.	0	4	0	4	0	5
Pork, per lb.	0	5	0	5	0	6
Bacon, per lb.	0	8	0	9	0	10
Bread, wheaten, per lb.	0	1¾	0	2	0	3
Bread, household brown, per lb.	0	1½	0	1¾	0	2½
Milk, per gallon	0	8	0	8	0	8
Cheese, per lb.	0	7	0	7	0	9
Butter, per lb.	1	0	1	0	1	2
Candles, per lb.	0	6	0	6½	0	7
Soap, per lb.	0	5	0	5	0	6
Coals, per cwt.	1	3	1	6	1	8
Tea, per lb.	5	0	5	0	5	0
Sugar	0	7½	0	7½	0	7½

Return of the Number of Beer-shops in Newtown—the Number kept by Persons engaged in Factories, not Weavers—the Number to which Chandlers'-shops are attached—and the Increase or Decrease within the last Five Years. Number of beer-shops.

Name of Parish.	Number of Beer-shops.	Number kept by Persons engaged in Factories, not Weavers.	Number to which Chandlers'-shops are attached.	Proportional Decrease during the last five Years.	General Remarks on Beer-shops—their good or evil tendency—and observations upon the progress or effect of Teetotalism.
Newtown	17	3	2	About 1 in 5.	I know no good resulting from beer-shops; and, as I am led to believe they are better conducted here than in some other places, I cannot well calculate the evil. Teetotalism has been rapidly progressing, but at present it appears to be stationary. I cannot perceive that it has materially affected the consumption of Excisable commodities.

(Signed) W. Jones.

North Wales.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

NEWTOWN.

Names of the principal manufacturers.

RETURN of the NAMES of the Principal MANUFACTURERS in NEWTOWN, MONTGOMERYSHIRE; the Description and Number of their Flannel; the Number of Looms, Employed and Unemployed; and the Average Number of Weavers Employed by each Manufacturer.

Names of Manufacturers.	Number of Looms this day.		Total No. of Hand Looms.	Average Number of Weavers Employed.		
	Employed.	Not Employed.		Men.	Women.	Children
Mr. John Evans	15	..	15	9	5	1
Edward Bumford	5	..	5	4	1	
Thomas Owen	6	..	6	6		
Evan Lewis	4	..	4	2	2	
Edward Williams	5	..	5	4	1	
William Davis	6	..	6	2	4	
Richard Davis	5	..	5	2	3	
William Williams	6	..	6	4	2	
Edward Williams	3	..	3	1	1	1
Richard Meddins	5	..	5	2	3	
Jeremiah Williams	26	..	26	16	5	5
William Jones	9	..	9	4	5	
Edward Chapman	13	..	13	10	2	1
Thomas Thomas	2	..	2	2		
Richard Jones	6*	..	6	5	1	
Richard Hughes	18	..	18*	12	6	
John Humphreys	13	..	13	6	4	1
Samuel Morgans	11	1	12	5	5	1
Edward Williams	7	7	16	3	3	1
George Green	19	..	19	16	3	
Thomas Davies	12	..	12	9	3	
William Jones	2	..	2	1	1	
Joseph Davies	8	1	9	5	3	
David Evans	7	..	7	4	1	2
Matthew Lewis	3	2	5	1	2	
John Jones	3	..	3	1	2	
Edward Stephens	3	..	3	1	2	
John Davies	4	..	4	2	2	
John Morris	5	..	5	3	2	
John Humphreys	2	..	2	..	2	
Richard Jones	2	..	2	..	2	
Edward Powell	6	..	6	3	2	1
Mary Powell	16	..	16	8	7	1
Evan Humphreys	5	..	5	3	2	
Charles Nichols	8	..	8	1	7	
Thomas Lloyd	3	..	3	3		
John Matthews	2	..	3	7	2	
Samuel Evans	22	3	25	12	10	
John Matthews	26	1	27	16	9	1
Thomas Jones	31	3	34	21	7	3
David Owen	13	..	13	6	7	
Edward Owen	12	..	12	7	2	3
Nichols	25	..	25	19	6	
Edward Gittens	12	..	12	10	2	
Thomas Rowlands						
Thomas Morgans						
Matthew Mason	14	..	14	13	1	
John Williams	11	..	11	6	4	1
John Owen	11	..	11	3	5	3
David Thomas & Co.	7	..	7	3	3	1
John Humphreys	7	..	..	..		
Richard Wood	5	..	5	3	1	1
Thomas Evans	9	..	9	4	3	2
Thomas Jones	16	..	16	13	3	
Richard Spoonley	7	..	7	6	1	
Thomas Syars	18	..	18	3	15	
Evan Ashton	9	..	9	6	3	
David Hughes	8	..	8	5	3	
Richard Frances	4	..	4	2	2	
John Edwards	18	4	12	5	5	
Edward Corbett	13	2	13	6		
John Pugh	8	..	8	8		
John Jones	13	..	13	10	3	..
Thomas Soley	2	..	4	2	2	
Richard Williams	4	..	4	3	1	
Solomon Jones	22	1	23	12	7	3
Thomas Williams	10	2	12	5	5	
John Jones	9	..	9	9		
Edward Owen	2	9	11	2		
David Davies	17	..	17	10	7	
George Griffiths	10	..	10	10		
George Meddins	4	..	4	4		
Hugh Morgans.	8	..	8	6	1	1
Edward Trow	4	..	4	1	2	1
John Humphreys	2	..	2	1	1	

North Wales.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

LLANIDLOES.

LLANIDLOES.

Next in importance to Newtown is the flannel-mart at Llanidloes. It is for a warmer and coarser flannel, though some finer sorts are sold. It is the first town through which the Severn passes, and where its waters are made available to human industry.

The Rev. E. Pugh, of Llanidloes, observes that

Trade.

"Flannel (the old Welsh make) has been made in this place before the memory of man; and the parishes of Llanidloes and Trefeglwys are acknowledged by all as the original seat of the Welsh flannel trade. The population supplies its own mart, and all flannel sold in the market is made in the parish. The average quantity sold every market is about 240 pieces. The official measurer states that the quantity has increased at the rate of about 40 pieces in the mart of last year. For the last 12 months the market is held once a fortnight. The Rev. E. Pugh continues to say, that the market has increased in this place within the last seven years at least one-third. The principal causes are these:—An increased demand (particularly from London) for that peculiar make; the make has improved also in quality of late years."

Wages.

The following are the prices paid at Llanidloes for weaving. It will be seen that in 34 beer work the wages are 4*d.* per wall, and on the 26 beer work 1*d.*, under the Newtown prices.

No. of Beers.	Price per Wall. s.	d.
34	1	8
32	1	4
30	1	1
28	0	10
26	0	7
24	0	5
20	0	4½
18	0	4
14	0	4

The Rev. E. Pugh, Vicar of Llanidloes, remarks, on the pecuniary condition of the weavers, that

Condition of weavers.

"The best weavers, under the best masters, average about 9*s.* or 10*s.* per week. The average wages of all taken together are about 7*s.* Spinners earn, on an average, about 12*s.* Children are taken to the factories at about from 9 to 12. The inference, therefore, to be deduced from the foregoing statements is, that the weavers (who constitute the bulk of our population), are generally poor and unable to pay for the education of their children, even though the trade, as regards this place, is somewhat brisker than it used to be.

"The weavers are given to drink; they are improvident; their houses are dirty, and their families are trained in ignorance, which he, however, attributes to the occupation of females in factories."

He says that, "between poverty on one hand, and want of education on the other, the condition of Llanidloes presents a picture darker by many shades than any town of its size in the principality, except Merthyr Tidvil."

With regard to the poverty of Llanidloes, I am induced to consider that pauperism and drunkenness have been much fostered by former abuses in the old poor-law system. I have heard that at Trefeglwys, a village near Llanidloes, it was deemed expedient to purchase a game-licence for a pauper in order to keep him from asking the parish for bread to eat with his game.

The minister continues to state that—

Insubordination of the population.

"Insubordination, defiance of all authority, dishonesty, and nightly depredations, fighting, drunkenness and profligacy are the predominant habits of the people; and that there is no police fit to be so called. He is conscientiously of opinion that unless the town is supplied with a stipendiary magistrate and an efficient police, it may become necessary to have recourse to extreme measures, and that he is only echoing the opinions and sentiments of the influential and better thinking part of the inhabitants; and that if there was any chance of success, he should immediately, with them, petition Government on the subject. The mass of the population may be said to have been cradled in ignorance, and inured by habit and example to vice."

There are no power-looms, all the flannel is made with the hand-loom.

Strikes.

In consequence of the different prices paid by various masters, the weavers at Llanidloes struck in 1830. They stood out for nearly five weeks, and were sup-

North Wales.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Llanidloes.

ported by the Newtown masters and men who wished the prices to be regulated by their scale. One night in the fifth week, when the subscription-money was exhausted, some of the manufacturers' windows were broken. Next day the masters came to terms, and the men went to work. The result has been that masters are more equal in their prices.

A weaver informed me that the object of the strike, and the motives of the Newtown masters in subscribing, was to equalize wages so that they should not be undersold in the market by the Llanidloes makers. This weaver also observed, "I am opposed to strikes generally; partial strikes against a particular master wishing to encroach upon labour are good, but not when the whole body strike."

Truck.

Since the strike the truck system has been on the decline, though it still exists with some masters.

Benefit-clubs.

There are four friendly societies in Llanidloes, and most part of the weavers (especially those under 40 years of age) have availed themselves of them. The friendly societies in this town are not established or conducted on the latest and most approved principles and calculations, securing annuities and provisions for old age, &c., but on the old plan of providing only for sickness and death; and some of them I apprehend carry with them the seeds of their own dissolution.

Education.

The Reverend E. Pugh, vicar of Llanidloes, says—

"The population of the *borough alone* is at present at least 4000, and it is *very rapidly* increasing, which fact, coupled with the above statements, leads me to think, that the immoral and insubordinate habits of the town must *first be corrected by means of the civil power*, before any moral or religious instruction can fairly be brought to bear upon the welfare of the rising generation. The mass of our population here may be said to be cradled in ignorance, and inured by habit and example to vice. I know no town, however, that from its resources and locality is capable of greater improvement. And I trust sincerely that something will ere long be done to improve the moral, by elevating the intellectual, standard of the place; an object that I can safely say is much desiderated.

"It is, in fact, to a course of sound religious education, I feel convinced, that we are to look, as the basis of all prospective improvement in this neighbourhood. And, did it not appear as the result of partiality or predilection, I should suggest that it be conducted under the auspices of the Established Church. The dissenters have been sole monopolists of the spiritual interests of this place for the last thirty years; and in an intellectual point of view, it may be said to be unadvanced,—in a moral, I fear we are retrograding.

"There is one other circumstance that I beg leave to advert to, as being intimately connected with any system of education that may be established in the principality. I should humbly recommend that it be carried on in the English tongue; for, were a statistical analysis taken of the whole of the population of Wales, and the inhabitants of its towns, and other places where English is commonly spoken, and still more generally understood, compared with the rest among whom the vernacular exclusively prevails, the aggregate number of the former would be found vastly more considerable in proportion than is usually imagined. Glamorganshire, Pembrokeshire, Breconshire, Radnorshire, parts of Caermarthenshire, Montgomery, Denbigh, and Flint, are already much anglicised, and the remaining counties, except Merioneth, may be said to be more or less subject to a similar change. It were well, therefore, that in all future religious or legislative enactments, this fact, and the advantages of assimilation should not be lost sight of."

By reference to the returns supplied to me, I find that the number receiving education is only 1 in 38 on the population.

North Wales.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

LLANIDLOES.

Names of the principal manufacturers.

RETURN of the NAMES of the Principal MANUFACTURERS in LLANIDLOES, MONTGOMERYSHIRE; Description and Number of their Flannel; Number of Looms, Employed and Unemployed: and the Average Number of Weavers Employed by each Manufacturer.

Names of Principal Manufacturers.	Number of the Flannel chiefly made by him.	No. of Looms this day.		Total Number of Hand Looms.	No. of Weavers Employed by each Manufacturer.			Presumed Number of Pieces manufactured in a Twelvemonth.
		Employed.	Not Employed.		Men.	Women.	Children.	
D. Davies, and Son	28 26 22	60	..	60	35	15	10	560
E. Jenkins	28 26	50	..	50	40	5	5	450
J. Cleaton	30 28	50	..	50	20	25	5	370
R. Pryce	26 22	50	..	50	35	15	0	500
Edmond Cleaton	30 28	50	..	50	35	15	0	350
Thomas Cleaton	30 26	50	..	50	20	15	15	350
Mrs. Lucas	32 30	40	..	40	35	5	0	300
Edward Hughes	32 30	40	..	40	35	0	5	300
Ann Lewis	30 28	40	..	40	20	10	10	340
Thomas Davies	30 28	40	..	40	25	10	5	330
D. Hamer	28 26	40	..	40	15	15	10	400
R. Hamer	28 26	30	..	30	15	10	5	350
Thomas Jones	32 30	30	..	30	28	0	2	300
R. Jervis	31 29	25	..	25	20	2	3	250
W. Pugh	32 30	30	..	30	15	10	5	290
W. Hunt	32 30	30	..	30	25	0	5	290
Jeremiah Owen	32 30	20	..	20	20	0	0	250
John Humphrey	28 ..	20	..	20	15	0	5	300
John Ashton	30 ..	20	..	20	15	5	0	280
Robert Evans	32 30	15	..	15	10	0	5	200
S. Thomas	31 29	15	..	15	15	0	0	220
E. and J. Rees	32 30	15	..	15	10	0	5	200
Owen Davies	32 30	15	..	15	13	1	1	200
Edward Ashton	30 ..	10	..	10	5	3	2	200
Daniel Davies	28 ..	10	..	10	2	5	3	230
Small manufacturers about	.. ..	20	..	20	..	..	..	500

Prices of provisions

STATEMENT of RETAIL PRICES of various Articles of PROVISIONS and Household Stores in the years 1836, 1837, 1838.

Of Ordinary Qualities.	1836.		1837.		1838.	
	s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
Oatmeal, per peck	2	10	3	4	4	8
Barley, ditto	2	0	2	6	3	9
Peas, per lb.						
Potatoes, 240lb. to the sack before washed	6	0	7	0	12	0
Beef, good boiling, per lb.	0	5	0	5	0	6
Beef, coarse pieces, ditto	0	3½	0	3½	0	4½
Pork, per lb.	0	4½	0	4½	0	5
Bacon, per lb.	0	7	0	8	0	10
Cheese, per lb.	0	4	0	5	0	6
Butter, per lb.	0	11	0	11	0	11
Candles, per lb.	0	6	0	7	0	8
Soap, per lb.	0	5	0	5	0	5
Coals, per cwt.	1	6	1	8	1	10
Tea, per lb.	6	0	5	0	5	0
Sugar, per lb.	0	6½	0	7	0	7

MACHYNLLETH.

MACHYNLLETH.

Trade.

The flannel-trade has long existed here. Much of it is made at farm-houses. The town of Machynlleth is situate on the western side of the county, and is in-

North Wales.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

MACHYNLLETH.

convenient for the attendance of buyers; the flannels are, therefore, sent to Newtown.

Machynlleth is an ancient town, and formerly possessed an excellent shipping trade, being the port of Montgomery; but since the canal was brought to Newtown, and facilities were opened direct between Wales and the commercial districts in England, the carrying trade is in the barges, and few ships now come to Machynlleth.

Weaving is carried on at Tal-y-Bont, on the Aberystwith road, where there is a small factory.

About 15 weavers live at Llanfraid; 20 weavers are at Penalt; about six may be found at Kemmes; there are a few weavers at Mallwyd and at Dinas Mowddy; and there is a factory two miles beyond Dinas, at Dolfrain, under the management of Mr. Evans.

Wages and earnings.

The Rev. Morgan Davies, of Penegos, says,—

It is quite certain that there is no difference between the condition of the operative weavers and that of the labouring classes in general, either as to their pecuniary state nor yet with reference to their moral condition; and therefore, as far as that district is concerned, it is unnecessary to offer any recommendation for remedying a distress which does not appear to exist.

As my own evidence and observations are confirmed by the Rev. M. Davies, I do not proceed further with the subject.

Relative to wages and earnings, the reverend gentleman observes, that the uniform price of wages paid for weaving is attributable to the maladministration of the poor-laws, whereby the deficiency of requisite wages has been made up by parochial relief.

Under the head "wages and labour," in the examination of masters, which you sent me, the information is, I believe, quite correct, though some parts of it appear to me rather unintelligible. It states, "the trade has generally decreased in this town within the last few years; the only trade is now flannel, which is not considered to have decreased." Several of the drapers have stated to me that the flannel trade has increased three-fold within the last 20 years, but that no increase has taken place since this time ten years, except that, a year and a half ago, it sprung up about as much as it had decreased during the few preceding years. The above remark applies to the flannel-trade alone, which your informers say has not decreased, and not to the web-trade, which was formerly carried on in the neighbourhood, but has been entirely abandoned for several years. Under the same head of "wages and labour," I find the following observations: "There is rather a scarcity of weavers at the present moment; *wages have been* lower than they are now, about a shilling in the highest sort of flannel, but there has been no recent change." The above observation appears to me very strange, and I may, perhaps, add, unnatural. Yet it certainly is quite true: while the prices obtained by the masters for the wrought flannel have fluctuated in a most extraordinary degree during the last few years, the price paid for the labour of the weaver has been nearly the same; indeed, it may almost be said to be exactly the same; for, though it has been changed, in a slight degree, by some masters, that change has taken place in consequence of an anxiety to secure to themselves as many workmen as could be got while the trade has been brisk, and prices have risen unexpectedly. I can think of no way of accounting for the all but uniform price paid for labour (as stated to you by the masters), except by attributing it, in a great degree, to the maladministration of the poor-laws. The expenses of maintaining a family must fluctuate with the rise and fall in price of the necessaries of life; and one would think that the price of weaving a piece of flannel would also rise or fall with the necessaries of life, or with the value of the flannel when weaved, if not with both, especially in a neighbourhood like that of Machynlleth, where almost every weaver can turn out of his loom and work as a day-labourer. But such is not the case, and that circumstance I attribute to the interference of the poor-laws. When the necessaries of life rise in price, the deficiency in the income of the weavers has too generally been made up from the poor-rate, and not by an advance in the price of weaving; and, as long as it can be got from the former source, it can hardly be expected that the masters will advance the wages of their workmen. Weavers, like other operatives, vary in their degrees of skill, and in their abilities to earn. While one man can earn 9*s.* a-week, another less skilful, with all his exertion, cannot earn above 7*s.*

Wages and poor's-rates.

Condition &c.

Upon the subjects of the habits, prudence, and religious duties of the weavers in the district of Machynlleth, the Rev. M. Davies observes,

"I consider the moral condition of the operatives of this neighbourhood much higher than that of operatives in general in other districts; but, at the same time, I do not consider them either more or less religious than other workmen around them. The extent of their knowledge, with reference to their trade, machinery, &c., is certainly very limited; they make very little exertion to secure the improvement of their children; too often they do not see the value of education, and I am of opinion that the nature of their occupation too often prevents them from giving their children so good an education as other labourers about them. The chil-

dren of weavers become useful at an early age; that their services in making bobbins, &c. render it difficult for their parents to spare them, while, in the case of other labourers, nothing but the expense interferes to prevent their sending them to day-schools. But I must observe, that all classes of the community, and all ages, in this district, are very punctual in their attendance at Sunday-schools and places of religious instruction.

"The result of my inquiries into the state of their providence, frugality, &c. is certainly far from satisfactory. They have never seen their parents making any provision for emergencies, and therefore consider it unnecessary. They go on in the old way, not only injuring themselves, but also neglecting to set a good example to their children, and thereby perpetuating this most injurious state of improvidence to which the manner hitherto of administering the poor laws has contributed in a very considerable degree.

"With regard to the moral condition of the weavers, it is quite true that many of them are teetotalers, and have been so for more than a year; but still, I am sorry to say that many of them are not teetotalers, and that many of them who are teetotalers forget their pledge, and break out into some of their old excesses, though it must be confessed that a very considerable effect has been produced in this neighbourhood by the spread of teetotalism." He further says, "I am bound to state distinctly that, in my opinion, the hand-loom weavers in the neighbourhood of Machynlleth do not suffer any distress peculiar to themselves; that is to say, I believe their situation to be quite as comfortable as that of other labourers; in this neighbourhood, especially, almost every weaver can turn out of his loom and work as a day-labourer. I do not mean to say that such is the practice, but I consider the observation quite correct as far as the power goes. I have made inquiries on the subject, and the result is, that about two-thirds confine themselves entirely to their looms, while the remaining third turn out on particular occasions, such as harvest-time, setting potatoes, &c.

Truck is partially practised in this vicinity, and is fostered by the improvidence of the weaver, who is eager to obtain the necessaries of life upon credit, when he has spent his ready money in a careless manner. Truck.

The Rev. Mr. Davies observes,

That under the head "truck system," the witnesses stated to you that they all paid their wages in cash. That is quite true as far as many masters in the neighbourhood are concerned; but in other instances, though it may be the case *de jure*, still I am bound to say that *de facto* it is not so; many employers keep small shops, and deal, some in one, others in many of the necessaries of life. The weavers most of them, I am sorry to say, are improvident, and the moment a flannel is put into the loom, anxious to obtain some portion of payment in advance, can seldom obtain cash, but can always get either flour, or butter, or bacon, &c., or any of the necessaries of life, which his employer may happen to sell: this, it may be observed, applies only to the improvident; but the provident are not in a much better situation, for if they decline to take any part of their wages in necessaries, the moment any check or depression takes place in the trade, they are the first to be dismissed. Though the above is a true picture of the proceedings of many employers, still, I am proud to say, that there are several honourable instances where masters invariably pay in cash, not only to the provident when the flannel is finished, but also to the improvident when the flannel is on the loom.

There is a savings'-bank at Machynlleth; but there has not been a single instance of an operative weaver having ever been a depositor in it since its establishment in 1834. Benefit-clubs.

The embezzlement, if any, is very trifling.

The prices of provisions at Machynlleth are as follows:—

	s.	*d.*
Flour, 5lb. for	1	0
Potatoes, 40 quarts for . .	2	0
Mutton, per lb.	0	5
Bacon, ditto	0	9
Butter, ditto	0	11
Oatmeal, ditto	0	2

Towin.

At Towin the manufacturing of flannel is carried on, after the custom that cloth was made many years ago in England, by house-servants, or in small factories. Trade.

Richard Price

Employs his factory men as yearly servants, paying to the slubber 10*l.* a year and his food and lodging. Four children above 13 card, and have from 30*s.* to 40*s.* per annum. Employs also three women spinners at 5*l.* per annum, and about three women sorting wool, at the rate of 4*l.* 10*s.* a-year.

North Wales.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Towin.

Witness finds a house in which they all live; he finds furniture, bedding, &c., and also provisions.

He further states the fabric to be chiefly 16, 18, and 26. The market for webs is at Dolgelly, and for flannels at Machynlleth. Witness sells them to the buyers at Machynlleth undressed, and the finest market is at Newtown.

Witness has two factories at Dolygurn for slubbing and carding; he only slubs and cards for himself. There is a factory at Rhydyronen, occupied by Mr. Rowland, who cards and slubs for the neighbouring farmers, and also manufactures a few webs and flannels for the market.

There is no demand for webs this year, but on the average witness makes about 150 pieces a year, and about 150 pieces of flannel; employs about nine weavers, of which number four are women and five men. Women do not make the flannel so well as men, especially the 26 fabric.

Hugh Thomas, a manufacturer of flannel, states,

That the wool is supplied by the neighbouring farmers, and little is bought at the markets. The trade is much better within these few years; three or four years ago it was very dull; also last year. In those periods the weavers are badly off, and many go to the parish; there are about ten weavers in this town.

Some few blankets are made in this district; they are webs, and are paid at the same rate; the quantity made is only for the supply of this neighbourhood.

Schools.

Lady Moger, in 1717, left a sum of money (about 400*l.*) to the school, which has been for some time withheld for want of trustees and a representative of the property; there is a further payment of 4*l.* from the Maen Gwyn estate (a customary payment).

John Thomas has been schoolmaster about 23 years; has received no payment of Lady Moger's bequest since 1825; takes day-scholars, the number averages about 30 daily, making about 41 including the charity scholars. The payment is 5*s.* for R. W. A., 4*s.* for R. W., and 3*s.* for R.; there are more at 3*s.* than at 5*s.* The books read are the Bible, Testament, and Reading Made Easy.

There are two private pay-schools; one kept by Edward Wallis, the other by Edward Davis; the former has about 20 scholars; the latter about 10; terms are from 12*s.* to 15*s.* a-quarter.

No weavers send their children to school.

There are four Sunday-schools; one belonging to the church, and one to each chapel; the number at the church is about 80.

Dolgelly.

Dolgelly.

Trade.

Dolgelly is known for a coarser fabric called webs, for which the principal markets are in London and Liverpool, for the American dealers. There are resident factors, who buy all that is produced, in the vicinity.

Lewis Oliver, of Dolgelly, agent and managing clerk for Philip Charlton, of Shrewsbury, states, that

He has been connected with the web trade for 15 years. The trade in webs has been long established in this town, and he has an account of sales more than 100 years old. Formerly, webs were made in different parts of Montgomeryshire, but the manufactory is now exclusively confined to this town and neighbourhood. The make consists of a coarse kind, and only of two numbers, viz. 13 and 15.

Condition.

The weavers state that they are contented with their wages and their condition. They earn about 9*s.* per week. Their habits are less expensive, and their wants are fewer, than in more populous districts. Women seldom weave; it is considered men's work, and the trade is consequently less overrun by labour.

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rices of provisions.

Prices of provisions at Dolgelly:—

	s.	*d.*
Flour, 6lb. for	1	0
Potatoes, 84lb. for . . .	2	0
Mutton, 1lb. for	0	6
Bacon, 1lb. for	0	7
Oatmeal	0	0

Rents, 2*l.* 10*s.* for three-room house.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Dolgelly.

Names of the principal manufacturers.

Dolgelly, Merionethshire.—Manufacturers' Names.

Names of Manufacturers.	Number of Men Employed.	Number of Ends made by each Manufacturer, during the last Three Years.			Average Prices per End.
		1837 and 1838.	1835 and 1836.	1834 and 1835.	
Philip Charlton . .	13	219	305	225	9
John Williams . .	10	353	219	53	8
John Parry . . .	6	156	0	0	8
John Jones . . .	10	200	180	190	8
Griffith Williams . .	7	200	190	140	9
Griffith Jones . .	2	10	15	15	8
Richard Griffiths .	3	51	21	0	8
Humphrey Davies .	6	106	109	80	8
Croxon and Evans .	8	139	124	0	8
Richard Williams .	2	10	0	0	8
Evan Evans . . .	2	19	56	50	8
Richard Piyse . .	8	106	104	130	8
Robert Pugh . . .	2	12	12	12	8
William Roberts . .	4	80	0	0	8
Evan Owen . . .	7	110	110	90	8
Elizabeth Vaughan .	2	20	23	20	8
Evan Jones . . .	8	200	180	130	8
Griffith Pugh . .	6	109	117	94	8
Lewis James . . .	6	120	30	0	8
John Evans . . .	2	16	16	16	8
Various	22	300	280	290	7

Llangollen.

Llangollen.

A trifling quantity of flannel is made at Llangollen; there are about 56 looms. The weavers, I am informed by the Rev. W. Lewis, are quite as well off as the day-labourers: indeed, he would say better, considering the casualties of work and weather. Condition.

The reverend curate, to whom I addressed several queries, complained of the unwillingness of people to give any information.

In reference to the subject of education, the dissenting minister at Llangollen complains of the same spirit of unwillingness; and the vicar, to whom I addressed the same inquiries by the same day's post, has not replied. The dissenting minister observes that Education.

"Additional means of education for the poorer sort of people are very much wanted in this place. With regard to the description, it is his opinion as well as that of all the respectable inhabitants with whom he has had opportunities for conversing upon the subject, that a school upon some general plan, confined to no party or religious denomination, and accessible to the poorest, would be most likely to prove useful. Instruction might be imparted either in the English or Welch language, or both; the latter is by far most generally spoken and understood. There is a general desire for instruction among the working classes, especially those who have any idea of its value. Many, however, on account of extreme poverty and want of decent clothing, do not avail themselves even of Sunday school privileges. So far as I can learn, the moral and pecuniary condition of the hand-loom weavers in this district is little if any worse than that of agricultural, lime rock, or other labourers. There is a day school belonging to the Church of England, in which 16 children are educated by endowment. There is also a small Sunday school. The managers declined giving me any direct information whatever, alleging that the vicar had received similar inquiries, and that he would reply to them separately."

The Rev. W. Lewis, curate, observes—

"Our principal cause of complaint, I should say, is the employment of children of very tender age, and consequently depriving them of every chance of education. The Sunday-school can avail comparatively nothing with children (of advanced age) so totally rude and undisciplined as such must necessarily be who have never submitted to the control of a master in a daily school."

Welshpool.

Welshpool.

The trade in flannels at Welshpool is chiefly by private sales. A company was established, consisting of about 16 tradesmen of the town, employing about 200 persons. It did not succeed, and about two years ago it dissolved, partly from the languid state of their sales, and partly, said Mr. Morris Jones, of Welshpool, from mismanagement. Trade.

North Wales.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Welshpool.

Wages and earnings.

William Bray, spinner and weaver, Welshpool, says—

"A weaver, of moderate skill and steady habits, can easily earn at 32 beer work 14*s.* per week, minus 1*s.* for winding and 3*d.* for candles—net amount, 12*s.* 9*d.*"

John Thomas, a weaver in the same town, says—

"After all deductions he considers that he averages 10*s.* 6*d.* per week throughout the year."

Holywell.

Holywell.

Trade.

There is a small trade carried on at Holywell by Mr. Roberts, in the manufacturing of galoons and doubles. He formerly manufactured at Spitalfields, but I was informed by his brother, a chemist and druggist, at Holywell, that in consequence of the operations of the local act he was driven to seek cheaper labour, and came to Holywell.

The present factory of Mr. Roberts contains 60 looms, of which 54 are at work. The power is water.

Result of a strike. Male labour superseded by female labour.

Formerly the weaving was performed by male adults, but it was found that women, at cheaper labour, could perform the work, and there are only five male adults now employed at the looms, the rest are women. The men who were discarded have sought and found other employment.

This alteration from male to female labour is attributable to a strike which occurred about six or seven years ago in consequence of Mr. Roberts reducing the price from 14*s.* to 12*s.* The men held out for a week, but their habits had been improvident, only two men had saved money, and necessity drove them into compliance. The wages have been again reduced from 12*s.* to 9*s.*, and women, with the exception of five males, now perform the work. At the time of the strike there was not a woman in the looms.

Work is plentiful in this district. The mines, collieries, and smelting works employ a great number of hands. The following is an average of the earnings and wages in the district:—

	s.	*s.*	*d.*
Smelting, weekly wages		13	0
Collieries, ,, ...		15	6
Mining, piece work	10 to	12	0
,, weekly wages . . .		10	0

John Jones, the relieving officer, says there is no distress in the district, and that the labouring classes will always purchase the best of provisions. He further says—

"If the weavers are careful, there is no cause for complaint; he is relieving officer; if they are otherwise, it is the same as with other improvident people. He has had no applications from weavers, except in cases of sickness."

The galloons are paid for by the cut. A cut contains 36 yards, and with breadth or shute there are from 20 to 24 pieces or warps in the loom. Each piece is woven with a separate shuttle.

Prices.

The following is the table of prices, and the length of time requisite to make a cut, as well as the average weekly earnings.

Quality,	Quantity.		Amount.	Time requisite.
2*d.* galloons	Cut 36 yards	24 pieces	6*s.*	6 days.
4*d.* doubles	,,	24 ,,	8*s.*	6 ,,
6*d.* ,,	,,	20 ,,	9*s.*	6 ,,
8*d.* ,,	,,	20 ,,	13*s.* 4*d.*	7 ,,

Deductions per cut are 1*s.* for quilling and 8*d.* for picking. The inferior number of the fabric is done by young persons.

Caspin Morris states,

That there are about 1400 teetotalers in the vicinity. The system has been, in his opinion, very beneficial. The weavers are not worse off than their fellow-labourers.

Mold.

Mold.

Trade.

Messrs. Ineman and Son have, within the last year, commenced weaving at their spinning-mills.

The fabrics are called "domestics;" it is a stout calico: the number of the reed is 44 of one sort and 52 of the other. All the looms are worked by power; they are 30 in number, requiring the attention of 16 weavers, 14 of whom are females, superintended by two male weavers from Manchester; the wages are weekly, and they are as weekly servants.

North Wales.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

Mold.

The market for this fabric is at Manchester. It had been long customary to send the waste of the spinning-mill to Manchester for sale, but now they add to it some fresh and good material, and send it as a fabric. The difference of wages here enables the manufacturer to pay the carriage, and to meet the Manchester goods in the market.

Condition.

John M'Nally, one of the Manchester weavers, says, provisions are the same in price as at Manchester, but coals are 40 per cent., and house-rent 20 per cent. cheaper than at Manchester. The weavers separately stated that they considered themselves doing as well as any class of their fellow-labourers, and I there concluded my inquiry.

Weavers weekly servants.

The weavers here are *weekly* servants, and their *weekly wages* are—

	s.		*s.*	*d.*	
Learners	2	to	3	0	a-week
Inferior hands			5	6	
Superior hands			8	0	

Two male weavers from Manchester, 14*s.* to one, 11*s.* to the other; one attends four looms, with a girl to help; the other has two looms to attend to, and no help.

The wages of the weavers are regulated by the the earnings of other departments in the spinning mill, because there is a difficulty in obtaining weavers; and when a female in this establishment is removed from some previous occupation, such as reeling or spinning, it is the policy of the owners to pay them fully as much at weaving as they had previously made, as an inducement for them to commence.

SOUTH WALES.

South Wales.

In consequence of the trifling trade employing hand-loom weavers in South Wales, I did not consider it requisite to visit that district personally.

Having made to you a communication to that effect, you confirmed my opinion, and the district was not visited by me.

I made, however, every inquiry by letter where I considered information could be obtained.

In subjoining the following communication from the Rev. T. Price, of Crickhowell, I cannot but call your notice to the valuable information and kind assistance afforded to me by the reverend gentleman, to whom I feel much indebted for enabling me to carry out your wishes to so full an extent.

Hand-Loom Weavers of South Wales, 1838.

The hand-loom weavers of South Wales may be divided into two classes, namely,

1. That of the isolated parish weaver, and
2. Of the weavers congregated in factories.

Thirty or forty years ago, the first of these occupied a very prominent station in the country, ranking in point of number and importance with the blacksmith and the miller; there being generally one or more in every parish, with fulling mills in proportion, of which the remains are still visible in many places, and evidently pointed out by the name of *pandy*,* which almost invariably attaches to them. But in consequence of the introduction of machinery and of cloth from the manufacturing districts, the number of the old parish looms has been greatly reduced; still there are several in existence and even in full employ, precisely in the same manner as before the above-mentioned change took place.

The parish hand-loom weaver of the present day.

In the immediate neighbourhood of the spinning and weaving factories the old parish weaver has nearly disappeared, but in the retired parts of the country this description of person may be found, in the proportion of perhaps one in every two or three parishes, or even more—frequently, according to the habits of the people with regard to the kind of cloth they prefer to wear.

This description of weaver is merely a *weaver*, and has nothing to do with preparing the materials, either the carding, spinning, or dyeing; that is done by the persons who bring the thread and yarn to him to be woven.

The cloth woven by this description of weaver is reckoned very superior to that sold in the shops in substance and durability, so much so, that *one* home-spun coat woven in the country will outlast *three* of shop-cloth, and will keep out cold and wet nearly in proportion: the reason of this is the superior twist given to the yarn spun by hand, inasmuch as it may be twisted to any degree required, whereas the spinning-machine gives a certain number of

* *Pandy* is the Welsh term for a "fulling-mill."

South Wales.

Report from *W. A. Miles*, Esq.

turns at each drawing out and no more, and the yarn not passing through the fingers of the spinner, the manipulation is very different, perhaps more regular but not so close.

In the next place, the loom is much heavier than that of the factories, and capable of closing the woof much more compactly. The looms are mostly very old, as new looms would scarcely answer the cost of making. Many of them are perhaps some centuries old, as they are known to have descended from father to son for several generations.

But as the home-made cloth is so superior to that of the shops in warmth and durability, qualities which always bear a premium with the country people, it may be asked, how it has fallen into disuse so much as that the weavers can no longer find the employ they formerly did? The answer is, that the superiority of this kind of cloth depended in a great measure upon its being spun by hand with a single wheel, and this is done so much more expeditiously by machinery; whenever time is an object the cheaper and more expeditiously manufactured article is preferred even though of inferior quality. But in retired districts, where time is not so highly valued, the clothing of the farmers' families is almost entirely spun at home and wove by the old-fashioned weaver. Of course, in speaking of the *superiority* of this manufacture, no reference is made to the dye or general appearance, nor will it bear a comparison in delicacy of texture with the broad cloth of the shops; its advantages consist in warmth and durability.

A weaver, when in full employ, will earn from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* per day. But when not in work, being thinly scattered about the country, the depression of their business is not attended with the same degree of distress that is found in the manufacturing districts under similar circumstances.

In moral and religious habits these persons do not differ in any particular from the peasantry of their respective districts, with whom they of course associate.

The hand-loom weavers congregated in factories.

Though there are in South Wales no great manufacturing districts like those of North Wales and England, yet there are scattered over the country a great number of small factories in which much of the weaving of the peasantry is done. These factories consist of *carding* and *spinning*, *machinery* and *hand-looms*, together with *dyeing apparatus*. They generally contain 7 or 8 persons, and are situated from 5 to 10 miles apart. The following list, which comprises all the weaving factories in the county of Monmouth, will afford some criterion of the state of the trade in the neighbouring counties of the principality, always recollecting that Monmouthshire is a comparatively populous county.

1. Rhyd-y-Llwyfain, in the parish of Llanover.

Mrs. Ann Harris, occupier.

Hand-looms	5
Spinning-jacks	2
Carding-engines	2
Tucking-mill	1
Weavers	5
Spinners	2
Carder	1
Tucker	1

The establishment consists altogether of

Men	6
Women	2
Children	6 from 10 to 14 years of age.
Total of persons employed	14

Wages.

Wages.

A weaver, if boarded, is paid a 3rd part, according to the price per yard.
„ if not boarded „ 2 parts out of 3.
Children, 6*d.* and 9*d.* a-week, lodged, fed, &c.

2. Goveilon, Llanwenarth parish.

Mr. John Lewis, occupier.

Looms	2	Weavers	2
Spinning-jack	1	Spinner	1
Double carding-engine	1	Carder	1
		Children	3

3. Mamhilad, Mamhilad parish.

Mr. Aaron Harris, occupier.

Looms	3	Weaver	1
Spinning-jack	1	Spinner	1
Carding-machines	2	Children	2

4. Ty Sawyn, Llanarth parish.

Mr. William Lewis, occupier.

Looms	3	Weavers	2
Spinning-jack	1	Spinner	1
Carding-machines	2	Children	2

5. Pontnewenydd, Trevethin parish.

Mrs. Ann Whiled, occupier.

Looms	6	Weavers	3
Spinning-jacks	2	Spinner	1
Spinning-jenny	1	Carder	1
Carding-engines	2	Children	4

6. Cwmpuan, Llanvrechva parish.

Mr. Thomas Edwards, occupier.

Looms	4	Weaver	1
Spinning-jack	1	Spinner	1
Carding-engine	1	Children	2
Tucking-mill	1		

7. Machen, Machen parish.

Mr. William Jones, occupier.

Looms	10	Weavers	10
Spinning-jacks	3	Spinners	3
Carding-engines	2	Carder	1
		Dyer	1
		Children	10

8. Croes y Ceiliog, Llanvrechva parish.

Mr. Ephraim Davies, occupier.

Looms	2	Weaver	1
Spinning-jack	1	Spinner	1
Carding-engine	1	Children	2

9. Llanvachres, Llanvachres parish.

Mr. W. Palmer, occupier.

Looms	2	Weavers	2
Spinning-jack	1	Spinner	1
Carding-engine	1	Children	3

10. Abercarne, Mynyddyslwyn parish.

Mr. Thomas Davies, occupier.

Looms	4	Weavers	3
Spinning-jacks	2	Spinner	1
Carding-engines	2	Children	4

11. Also,—Abercarne, Mynyddyslwyn parish.

Mr. Richard Humphreys, occupier.

Looms	3	Weavers	3
Spinning-jacks	2	Spinner	1
Carding-engines	2	Children	4

12. Mynyddyslwyn, Mynyddyslwyn parish.

Mr. John Howels, occupier.

Looms	4	Weavers	3
Spinning-jacks	2	Spinner	1
Carding-engines	2	Children	4

13. Argoed, Bedwelty parish.

Mr. David James, occupier.

Looms	4	Weavers	3
Spinning-jacks	2	Spinner	1
Carding-machines	2	Children	4

14. Llandilo, Llandilo Pertholey.

Mr. George Watkins, occupier.

Tucking-mill	1

Employed in the county of Monmouth.

Looms	52
Spinning-machinery	23
Carding ditto	22
Children employed	50
Total of persons employed	111

The Reverend Timothy Thomas, dissenting minister at Newcastle Emlin, says that—

"General education is very much wanted here, and the working classes are disposed for more extended instruction, as they are generally too poor to support their children in school. There are no hand-loom weavers in this district."

The Reverend John Evans, vicar of Crickhowel, states that—

"Additional means of education are not required; there appears to be, therefore, no disposition among the working classes for more extended instruction. I have made the strictest enquiry I could into the condition of the hand-loom weavers in this town, I find there are only two in that occupation, one is obliged to come to work in the town, while his wife lives in the country, and he could not get any employment in the country; he has five children, the eldest child is old enough to go to school, but is kept at home to assist the father in his trade, who, with the assistance of his child or children, can only earn 10*s*. a-week. He seemed very poor and ignorant. The other hand-loom weaver only earns 8*s*. per week: has but one child; is very poor and destitute. The reason assigned by both weavers for the low state of their trade was, that shop-goods were become so cheap."

(The same reason was assigned to me at Llanegryn, a small village at the foot of Cader Idris, in North Wales.)

The Reverend T. B. Evans, dissenting minister at Merthyr Tidvil, states that—

"The working classes are anxious for instruction; their morals are pretty good, but they are in want of pecuniary assistance and books; are in want of Welch and English Testaments, at Yngsgon chapel."

The Reverend D. Davies, dissenting minister at Hay, says—

"I might say that the town of Hay is highly favoured with the means of instruction for their children, yet it is not appreciated by the lower classes as it should be. There is not any hand-loom weavers in the town; yet there are others, flannel weavers, that are in very poor circumstances owing to the little employ they have and the very little earnings they get when they are in employ; there are about 20 of them in this town."

The Reverend Thomas Berard, minister at Caermarthen, observes that—

"There are very few hand-loom weavers in the place: such is the poverty and improvident habits of the lower classes of this place, and the insubordination of their children, that I find it next to impossible to bring them into habits of obedience and into a regular attendance upon the schools. There are other causes which throw obstacles in the way. He further observes that there is one day-school connected with the Dissenters conducted on the Lancasterian system, but it is not easy to ascertain the true amount (I believe them to be under 80). It is nearly impossible to ascertain the real number that attend the different dissenting *Sunday* schools, and for this simple reason, that the *great majority* of Sunday school scholars attend *two* and sometimes *three* different Sunday schools of the different denominations in the same day."

The Reverend Griffith Thomas, vicar of St. Mary in Cardigan, observes that—

"*More money is wanted here* to extend additional means of education. The working classes are very well disposed for more extended instruction and would be very thankful for it. There is no public body of hand-loom weavers in this town, but only a very few common weavers residing here, who work in their private and individual and respective houses, and who are quite as poor as the lowest of the working labourers. He goes on to say, I beg to make the following observation relative to the returns made generally by Dissenters respecting the number of the children attending their Sunday schools. They too frequently, in order to swell their numbers put down all the old men and old women, that is, all their members as belonging to their Sunday-schools, *and not the boys and girls only, as required.*"

Concluding Remarks.

In the last paragraph of your Instructions to the Assistant Commissioners it is stated that "it is not by compliance with prejudice, or a dishonest sanction of false propositions, that the duties imposed upon the assistant commissioner can be faithfully discharged, or the welfare of the classes whose interests are now placed as a trust under his care can be effectually promoted."

At every step of my inquiry those words have guided me. I have faithfully and disinterestedly performed my duties of inquiry; the welfare of the working classes and their interests I have looked upon as a sacred trust committed to my care,—and that trust I now resign into your hands.

I consider the main causes of the deteriorated condition of the weavers to be: 1st, the introduction of power; 2nd, the substitution of youths and female labour instead of male adult weavers.

Capital to the manufacturer has become less productive, and wages are lower in proportion. In many cases the weaver is entirely superseded by steam,—in others he is undersold by cheaper labour.

I cannot recommend any restrictive measures, because I think restrictions upon the employment of capital, or wages of labour, would fetter the energies of both, and tend to drive commerce into foreign channels.

I beg leave to suggest that schools of design for carpet patterns might be beneficial at Kidderminster; and I believe that if schools of design were to be established in the districts where any pattern goods are manufactured, either in woollen, silk, or cotton, good would result both to masters and men.

It is to be regretted that greater facilities are not afforded to the working classes of this country, in reference to their health and comfort, by amusements and recreations. The poor man, if he wanders from his fireside, has only a turnpike-road to walk in, or a beer-house to sit in. Children have no playgrounds for air and exercise. Fields in less populous towns are exceedingly desirable for public recreation, and from every town there should be raised causeways or footpaths, extending in proportion to the population.

I more especially call your attention to the policy of recommending Government to cherish the establishment of Mechanics' Institutions, and, moreover, to assist them in obtaining public lectures, either by appointing lecturers to certain districts, or by occasional grants.

I moreover suggest that casts from the Elgin marbles, and the ancient sculpture in the British Museum, should be supplied, upon application, to the various Mechanics' Institutions, in proportion to the size of their room, their funds, and number. The moulds are already taken, and the expense would be therefore trifling.

With reference to education, I beg leave to refer you to the section in my report upon that subject, and I earnestly hope that, while religion is duly inculcated on the youthful mind, secular and useful knowledge may be more generally imparted. I am convinced that by teaching the laws of God and nature, atheism cannot exist, and mankind, by being more enlightened, will be more happy.

I have the honour to remain,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

WILLIAM AUGUSTUS MILES.

3, *Trafalgar Square.*
March 16*th*, 1839.

Counties of Lancaster, Westmorland, Cumberland, and Part of the West Riding of Yorkshire.

REPORT from Richard M. Muggeridge, Esq. on the Condition of the Hand-Loom Weavers of Lancashire, &c.

To Nassau William Senior, Samuel Jones Loyd, William Edward Hickson, and John Leslie, Esquires, Her Majesty's Commissioners for inquiring into the Condition of the Hand-Loom Weavers in the United Kingdom.

Gentlemen,

North of England.

Report from *R. M. Muggeridge*, Esq.

Introductory Remarks.

Having already laid before you reports of my local investigations in Ireland, into the condition of the linen-weavers of Ulster, and the cotton-trade of Belfast, I proceed to detail to you my observations on the state of the hand-loom weavers of Lancashire, the counties of Westmoreland and Cumberland, and a small portion of the West Riding of Yorkshire, which comprised the remaining portion of the extensive and important district you did me the honour to assign to me.

In the progress of the latter inquiry I visited the towns and neighbourhood of Manchester, Bolton, Rochdale, Ashton-under-Lyne, Middleton, Burnley, Blackburn, Preston, Oldham, Eccles, Stockport, Wigan, Huddersfield, Kendal, Ulverstone, Wigton, Cockermouth, Carlisle, and adjacent villages and divisions.

I ascertained, soon after my appointment, that, in anticipation of my visits to the several places in which hand-loom labour is extensively carried on, the weavers of those districts had had meetings among themselves, at which they had determined on the nature of the evidence they should present to the commission of inquiry, the statements and surveys which should be prepared and taken by them in corroboration of the evidence so agreed to be tendered, and the individuals who, in each town, should be delegated to give evidence on the part of the whole body of weavers, of whom they were thus constituted the representatives.

In order to put myself into communication with these parties, and to effect, through them, the several preliminary arrangements necessary to be made, before entering upon my investigation, in a manner likely to be the most satisfactory to the persons directly interested, I caused advertisements to be inserted in the local newspapers, desiring all duly appointed chairmen and secretaries of town or district committees, to transmit me their names and addresses, with particulars of any documents they proposed to lay before me. Most of them did so, and by this means I was in many instances enabled to arrange the period of commencing my local inquiries most convenient to the operatives. I also obtained lists of the principal employers of hand-loom labour, whom I apprised by circulars of my intended visit to their neighbourhoods, besides adopting the ordinary means of publicity by placarding, and advertising, in the local journals.

I transmit you herewith every word of evidence I received, and every document illustrative or supportive of it, which was presented to me in the course of my laborious inquiry. You will find that they contain the evidence of many hundred individuals, which, with the documents, would, if printed, form several folio volumes.

As the mere reading of so voluminous a mass of evidence would involve long and laborious research and investigation, and by their magnitude possibly deter many from entering upon the task, it occurs to me that I shall best promote the interests of the suffering and respectable class of operatives, whose distresses called the commission into existence if I lay before you, in the form of a narrative, a brief

North of England.

Report from *R. M. Muggeridge*, Esq.

SUMMARY OF REPORTS.

exposition of what I found to be the present condition of the hand-loom weavers of my district,—the causes, in my judgment, from whence that condition has emanated, as well as those alleged by themselves; and the remedies which were suggested or which I think could be rendered subservient to their alleviation.

Manchester and its neighbourhood contains the greatest number of hand-loom weavers I found in any part of the district assigned me. Their numbers were variously estimated by intelligent employers and others at from 8000 to 10,000. They are employed mainly in the weaving of cotton, silk, and mixed goods.

The cotton fabrics are quiltings, figured waistcoatings, quiltings for toilet covers, twilled shawls, twilled handkerchiefs, checked and striped ginghams, sarcenets, tape stripes, dimities, apron checks, checked handkerchiefs, buff checks, buffs, tangibs or coarse shirtings, and sheetings.

The silk fabrics are velvets, figured sarsenets, jenappe dresses, figured and plain levanteens, plain satins, plain serges, sarsenets, or gros de Naples, checked sarsenets, string persians, ducape handkerchiefs, satin checked cravats, Brussels handkerchiefs, black bandanas, welsh shawls, romuls, turbans, Barcelona handkerchiefs, and grey bandanas.

The mixed are chiefly for waistcoatings, handkerchiefs, cravats, shawls, &c., and are composed sometimes of silk and cotton, sometimes silk and woollen, and sometimes cotton and woollen.

The weaving of each of these fabrics, with a variety of others which I cannot enumerate, may be regarded as a separate branch of the weaving trade, and the earnings of the weavers employed on each as various as the fabrics.

I found that the weavers of Manchester had, from their own body, appointed an intelligent committee, whom they had deputed to give evidence on their behalf to the commissioners. Through their instrumentality I was enabled to obtain a very complete survey of the actual condition of a large portion of the weavers, which, containing the names and addresses of upwards of 800 families, forms of course, a very large volume, but which, condensed, gives the following results:—

MONEY-EARNINGS OF WEAVERS.

These Tables include all descriptions of weavers, and I have no means of classifying them according to fabrics.

PART I.—MONEY-EARNINGS OF WEAVERS.

RETURN of the Aggregate Average Earnings, per Week, for 12 Months, of 856 FAMILIES of HAND-LOOM WEAVERS residing in Manchester, divided into Three Classes, distinguishing the Number of FAMILIES in each Class, the Number of Looms possessed by them, and other particulars.

Class.	Number of Families visited.	Number of Looms employed by them.	Number of Individuals dependent on these Looms.	Aggregate Average Earnings per week during the preceeding 12 months.	Average Income to each person per week.	Rent, Fuel, Soap, and Candles, to be paid by each person per week.	Average to each person for Food and Clothing per week.	Average to each person for Food and Clothing per day.
				£. s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
1st.	174	534	771	142 13 7	3 $8\frac{1}{2}$	1 4	2 $4\frac{1}{2}$	0 4
2nd.	280	727	1465	172 13 11	2 $4\frac{1}{2}$	1 4	1 $0\frac{1}{4}$	0 $1\frac{3}{4}$
3rd.	402	693	2327	154 11 6	1 4	0 10	0 6	under one penny.

Dividing the aggregate amount of average weekly earnings of each class, by the number of families therein comprised, it would give,—

	s.	d.	
1st Class	16	$4\frac{3}{4}$	weekly
2nd Class	12	4	„
3rd Class	7	$8\frac{1}{4}$	„

The average number of looms employed by each, would be as follows:—

1st Class	3 looms.
2nd Class	$2\frac{1}{2}$ „
3rd Class	$1\frac{3}{4}$ „

The average number of individuals dependent on the earnings of each, as follows:—

1st Class	$4\frac{1}{2}$
2nd Class	5
3rd Class	$5\frac{1}{4}$

Omitting fractional parts.

The total number of families visited, were 856, numbering in the whole 4563 persons, or $5\frac{3}{4}$ each, and employing 1954 looms, or $2\frac{3}{4}$ each, omitting the fractions.

In illustration of their condition, the Committee laid before me the following address, adopted at a large meeting of the general body of weavers:—

"To Her Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Condition of the Hand-Loom Weavers, in the United Kingdom.

"Gentlemen,—The hand-loom weavers of Manchester, have for years borne hardships and privations unparalelled in the annals of commerce, and having learned from bitter experience, that causes over which we, the weavers, have had no controul, has reduced us to our present degraded condition; with these facts before us, we consider it to be our imperative duty to make the gentlemen acquainted with what, in our opinion, are the causes that have produced so much distress and misery as has been experienced amongst us in this district, and which we are sorry to state, at this time is making rapid strides amongst us, and has continued to do so for many years to the great injury of ourselves and families, as well as that portion of society with whom we have any dealings.

"Gentlemen,—The first cause to which we wish to draw your attention, is that of machinery, which, in our opinion, has had a powerful effect in reducing the wages paid for hand-loom weaving in this district.

"Secondly, we are of opinion that the Corn Laws have been a great evil to the hand-loom weavers, inasmuch as our exports have been crippled, whilst our bread, and every other necessary article of consumption has been taxed to an extent that makes it impossible for us to obtain food for ourselves and families, unless we are remunerated in the same proportion for the labour we perform on the various articles manufactured in this district. The third and principal cause of their present distress, they attribute to a system of reducing wages carried on by a few unfeeling manufacturers, who are always ready to reduce the wages of their workmen, when no such reduction is required according to the state of the market, and such men thereby compel the better-disposed master manufacturers to reduce their wages to the great injury of both masters and men, without any permanent benefit to society, for although it may be considered that cheap labour is a benefit to society, it can, we think, be proved to the contrary; and therefore, those men who have no principle of honour, justice, or humanity to guide them, instead of being benefactors to society, are men who do injury and injustice to the weak and defenceless, and in our opinion, will continue to do so, to the great injury of the hand-loom weavers, until they are properly checked by the Legislature of our common country. That a repeal of the Corn Laws would, in our opinion, have a most beneficial effect, in relieving us from our present degraded condition, as in all probability a new field for commerce would be opened, which could not possibly fail to be of great benefit to the hand-loom weavers, provided that some legal check would be adopted by the Parliament, to prevent those unprincipled, and unfeeling manufacturers from taking advantage of the repeal of this most obnoxious Corn Law, by reducing our wages still lower, and thereby leaving us, as we now are, starving in the midst of plenty.

"Gentlemen, in order to meet the rapacity of such men as we have described, and prevent unnecessary reductions in our wages, a Board of Trade, or Committee of Masters and Workmen, should be appointed by law to regulate the wages to be paid from time to time, according to the state of the market, with some responsible officer to preside over their meetings, and that every district where hand-loom weaving is carried on, should have its own committee to conduct the affairs, and regulate the wages of their own district; this being done, we are of opinion, would put an end to all those heart-burnings and bad feelings, that has formerly taken place, in consequence of unprincipled masters reducing the wages of their men below what is sufficient to keep themselves, not saying one word about our wives and children, which we are in duty bound according to the laws of God and nature, to protect and provide for, without being as we have been, and are at this moment, suffering the most severe privations in a land of plenty.

"Gentlemen,—There are a number of grievances that arise out of those causes already mentioned, which it will be necessary to detail, and which can be proved to be of great importance to the suffering hand-loom weavers in this district, which the Committee are prepared to lay before you on behalf of the hand-loom weavers of Manchester.

"Gentlemen,—At the same time, we have laid down our views of the causes of our distress, —you, gentlemen, must decide for yourselves. But the Committee do earnestly request that you will visit the wretched dwellings of the weavers of Manchester, and hear from them an account of their condition, and what they think is the cause of their distress, which, in the opinion of the Committee, can never be permanently put an end to, but by the interference of the Parliament.

"In conclusion, gentlemen, all we desire is to be raised to our proper station, as useful members of civil society, who have borne our sufferings with a degree of patience unexampled, which we fervently hope will make in favour of us, with the gentlemen who have to report to Her Majesty the cause of our distressed condition.

Signed on behalf of the hand-loom weavers of Manchester.

Edward Curran, *Secretary.*
6, Heywood Street, Great Ancoat's Street, Manchester.
George Marchant, *President.*
95, Cropper Street, Manchester.
James Spencer, *Vice-President.*
12, Sycamore Street, Boardman's Square, Manchester.

Manchester, March 12, 1838.

The Salford Committee made a survey, from which the following is extracted—

A STATEMENT of the CONDITION of the HAND-LOOM SILK WEAVERS of SALFORD and HULME, taken in April, 1838. In this Statement the Rent and Expenses of Looms are deducted.

Name of Weaver.	Name of Street.	Number of Looms.	Description of Work.	Price per Yard, or per Dozen.		Number of Families depending.	Average Income per Week for the last two Years.		
				1838.	1824.		Head of Family.	Other Members of the Family.	Total.
				s. d.	s. d.		s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
John Lemon	Wood Street	2	Figd. Sarsenet	1 7½	0 0	4	6 0	2 0	8 0
Patrick Shanly	7, Quay Street	1	Velvet	2 9	4 0	2	5 0	0 0	5 0
John Carroll	3, Holland's Court	1	Serge	0 7	1 0	3	6 6	0 0	6 6
James Byrne	Brown Street	1	Velvet	3 3	4 3	3	8 0	0 0	8 0
Patrick Carr	50, Spinning Field	1	Serge	0 4½	0 9	5	5 0	0 0	5 0
Thomas Savage	35, Clowes Street	3	Satin	0 6	0 10	3	5 0	1 0	6 0
Edward Cahill	72, Gravel Lane	2	Satin	0 6	0 10	3	5 6	0 0	5 6
Richard Fisher	17, Brown Street	2	Sarsenet	0 5	0 10	4	5 0	5 0	10 0
Robert Daly	41, Brown Street	2	Sarsenet	0 4½	0 9	6	5 0	3 0	8 0
James Belshaw	Union Street	4	Handkerchiefs	2 6	6 9	2	3 5	0 0	3 5
Lewis Davis	Lowes Court	1	Satin	0 6	0 10	1	4 2	0 0	4 2
John Smith	17, Wood Street	1	Sarsenet	0 5	0 10	4	6 0	0 0	6 0
Mathew M'Alister	17, Braidley's Yard	1	Laventeen	0 7½	1 0	5	5 0	0 0	5 0
Thomas Doherty		4	Satin	0 9	1 4	3	6 0	4 0	10 0
John Johnson	19, Redford Street	3	Handkerchiefs	2 6	6 9	6	6 0	6 0	12 0
Thomas Edmonds	35, Tickle Street	3	Handkerchiefs	2 6	6 9	4	5 0	5 0	10 0
James Kelly	37, Clowes Street	3	Sarsenet	0 5	0 10	5	5 0	4 0	9 0
John Elliot	40, Gordon Street	2	Satin	0 6	0 10	6	6 8	3 0	9 8
Daniel Brien	12, Cook Street	2	Serge	0 5	0 10	2	5 6	3 0	8 6
Jery Tracy	Wood Srreet	2	Sarsenet	0 5	0 10	3	6 0	0 0	6 0
John Fisher	4, Lomas Street	2	Sarsenet	0 5	0 10	3	5 0	0 0	5 0
William Peacock	19, Dale Street	3	Sarsenet	0 3½	0 8	6	6 0	8 2	14 2
John Burke	38, Clowes Street	1	Laventeen	0 7¼	1 0	5	5 6	0 0	5 6
John Barrow	18, Quay Street	1	Sarsenet	0 5	0 10	2	6 0	9 0	6 0
Bernard Daly	17, Wood Street	3	Sarsenet	0 5	0 10	6	7 6	3 0	10 6
Thomas Eckersley	20, Brown Street	4	Handkerchiefs	2 6	6 9	5	4 0	4 0	8 9
Peter Burns	21, Brown Street	1	Figd. Sarsenet	0 7	..	3	6 0	0 0	6 0
Michael Clark	18, Cook Street	3	Figd. Sarsenet	0 7	..	2	5 7	0 0	5 7
James Nowlan	15, Cook Street	4	Sarsenet	0 4	0 9	4	8 0	0 0	8 0
James Dyer	30, Gravel Lane	1	Laventeen	0 7½	1 0	2	2 0	0 0	2 0
Thomas Fenton	7, Booth Street	1	Serge	0 7	1 0	1	4 6	0 0	4 6
Patrick Byrne	Tinsley Court	1	Sarsenet	0 5	0 10	4	7 4	0 0	7 4
Samuel Elliot	Brown Street	1	Mode	0 9	1 8	3	5 4	0 0	5 4
Christopher Elliot	Bury Street	1	Mode	0 9½	1 10	3	5 6	0 0	5 6
William Elliot	Booth Street	1	Ducape	0 8½	1 2	7	7 10	0 0	7 10
Michael Townning	Back Queen Street	1	Scarf	4 0	9 0	3	4 0	0 0	4 0
Thomas Smith	48, Wood Street	1	Sarsenet	0 4½	0 9	2	4 0	0 0	4 0
Thomas Wilkinson	56, Silver Street	3	Handkerchiefs	2 6	6 9	4	4 0	2 0	6 0
Bernard Gogarty	Christ Church Square	2	Serge	0 5	0 10	2	4 6	0 0	4 6
Patrick M'Guiness	5, Nightingale Square	1	Sarsenet	0 4	0 9	4	6 0	0 0	6 0
Adam Webb	13, Prime Street	4	Handkerchiefs	2 6	6 9	8	4 0	4 0	8 0
James Britt	Christ Church Square	4	Serge	0 5	0 10	9	8 0	7 0	15 0
Thomas Dillon		2	Satin	0 6	0 10	4	6 0	2 0	8 0
John Tomlinson	25, Clowes Street	3	Sarsenet	0 3½	0 8	4	5 6	0 0	5 6
Francis Hollywood	Christ Church Square	4	Velvet	2 9	4 0	7	7 0	12 6	19 6
William Leonard	28, Cook Street	2	Mode	0 9	1 8	3	7 6	0 0	7 6
James Kavanagh	Pollitt's Court	4	Handkerchiefs	7 0	14 0	4	5 6	3 0	8 6
James Rothwell	21, Dale Street	5	Serge	0 4½	0 9	8	4 0	4 0	8 0
William Broadhurst	27, Booth Street	2	Handkerchiefs	2 6	6 9	2	5 0	0 0	5 0
Charles Cavie	13, Prime Street	1	Handkerchiefs	2 6	6 9	3	3 0	0 0	3 0
Eneas Fletcher	Prime Street Court	2	Laventeen	0 7½	1 0	4	4 0	3 0	7 0
Charles M'Donnell	54, Silver Street	4	Handkerchiefs	2 6	6 9	5	7 0	2 0	9 0

The Bolton Weavers' condition was thus illustrated:—The subjoined List being stated to be a fair average specimen of the whole number.

Names of Families.	Place of Residence.	Number of persons in each Family.	Number of persons employed in each Family.	Total Income of each Family weekly.	Weekly Expenses for winding, sizing, &c.	Rent, Taxes, and Poor-Rates.	Fuel, Soap, and Candles.	Total Weekly Expenses.	Clear Weekly Income, Expenses deducted.	Average Income for Food and Clothing a head weekly.	Average Income for Food and Clothing a head daily.	Designation of Work.
				£. s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	
Richard Aspinall	Shaw Street	9	3	0 14 6	1 6	2 6	2 3	6 3	8 3	0 11	0 1¾	Plain
James Lewis	York Street	8	4	0 18 0	2 3	3 2	2 7	8 0	10 0	1 3	0 2¼	Ditto
James Evans	Ditto	6	3	0 13 0	1 7	2 3	2 1	5 11	7 1	1 2	0 2	Ditto
William Norris	Ditto	6	2	0 12 0	1 6	2 6	2 0	6 0	6 0	1 0	0 1¾	Check
Thomas Mather	Bengal Square	6	1	0 14 6	2 9	2 11	2 2	7 10	6 8	1 1¼	0 2	Fancy*
William Green	Ditto	4	1	0 7 0	0 10½	1 9	2 0	4 7½	2 4½	0 7	0 1	Ditto
Patrick Kay	Ditto	6	2	0 9 0	1 1½	2 0	1 7	4 8½	4 3½	0 8¼	0 1¾	Plain
Jonathan Morris	Prince Street, L. B.	1	1	0 8 0	2 0	1 0	0 5	3 5	4 7	4 7	0 8	Fancy
William Slater	Balshaw Street	1	1	0 8 1	2 0¼	1 0	0 5	3 5¼	4 8	4 8	0 8	Ditto
John Smith	Ditto	1	1	0 9 0	2 3	1 0	0 5	3 8	5 4	5 4	0 9¼	Ditto †
James Pemberton	Ditto	1	1	0 9 0	2 3	1 0	0 5	3 8	5 4	5 4	0 9¼	Ditto
Richard Lancaster	Ditto	1	1	0 8 0	2 0	1 0	0 5	3 5	4 7	4 7	0 8	Ditto
Francis M'Cann	Bengal Square	1	1	0 6 6	1 7½	1 0	0 4½	3 0	3 6	3 6	0 6	Plain
Thomas Mills	Balshaw Street	1	1	0 7 0	1 9	1 0	0 5	3 2	3 10	3 10	0 6½	Ditto ‡
Thomas Brindle	Prince Street	1	1	0 7 0	1 9	1 0	0 5	3 0	3 10	3 10	0 6½	Tape ‡
John Sullivan	Balshaw Street	1	1	0 6 0	1 6	1 0	0 4	2 10	3 2	3 2	0 5½	Ditto ‡
William Runcorn	Green Street	6	3	0 12 0	1 6	3 0	1 11	5 5	6 7	1 1	0 2	
Thomas Cardon	Ditto	6	2	0 11 3	1 3	2 6	1 10	5 7	5 8	0 11½	0 1¾	Gause
Edward Hamer	Stott Hillock	8	3	0 15 0	2 6	3 2	2 0	7 10	7 2	0 10¾	0 1¾	Plain
Jonathan Crook	Ditto	6	2	0 10 0	1 3	2 8	1 11	5 2	4 10	0 9¾	0 1½	Ditto
James Paulden	Balshaw Street	8	4	0 16 0	2 0	2 11	2 4	7 3	8 9	1 1	0 1¾	Ditto
James M'Connell	Markland Street	6	2	0 10 0	1 3	1 8	1 9½	4 8½	5 3½	0 10½	0 1½	Fancy
James Robb	Ridgway Row	4	2	0 12 6	1 6	2 0	2 6	6 0	6 6	1 7½	0 2¾	Ditto
George Warmersham	Ditto	10	4	1 0 0	2 9	2 11	3 4	9 0	11 0	1 1¼	0 2	Plain
William Hulme	Ditto	8	4	1 2 0	3 8	3 1	2 9	9 6	12 6	1 6¾	0 2¾	Fancy
Thomas Gregory	Ditto	7	3	0 11 0	0 9	1 9	1 9	4 3	6 9	0 11¾	0 1¾	Quilt
Thomas Harrisson	Ditto	7	2	0 12 0	1 6	2 0	1 9	5 3	6 9	0 11¾	0 1¾	Plain
George Yates	Ditto	5	2	0 8 0	1 0	2 0	1 11	4 11	3 1	0 7½	0 1	Ditto
Nathan Smedley	Commission Street	6	2	0 10 0	1 3	2 1	1 9	5 1	4 11	0 10	0 1½	Fancy
Henry Gilmour	Ditto	7	1	0 7 3	1 4	2 1	1 9	5 2	2 1	0 3½	0 0½	Ditto
John Seddon	Ditto	5	2	0 9 0	1 6	2 0	1 10	5 4	3 8	0 8¾	0 1¼	Tape Check
Robert Darbyshire	Duncan Street	3	2	0 9 6	1 6	2 1	1 10	5 5	4 1	1 4½	0 2¼	Plain
Benjamin Boardman	Ditto	5	1	0 7 0	1 0	1 7	1 9	4 4	2 8	0 6½	0 1	Tape Check
William Watson	Balshaw Street	5	2	0 9 0	1 2	1 8	1 9½	4 7½	4 1½	0 10½	0 1½	Leno
James Isherwood	Markland Street	4	1	0 7 0	0 10½	1 7	1 9	4 2½	2 9½	0 8½	0 1¼	Plain

The fractional parts are omitted in this Survey, as it was considered the Statement would be conclusive without being complete; but care has been taken when fractional parts have occurred, not to reduce the Statement, but generally to augment it.

It ought to be borne in mind, that in addition to the privations entailed upon the Hand-Loom Weavers by the above miserable earnings, they have had to endure the greatest suffering from want of employment. As great numbers of them have been entirely without work, and still more only partially employed.

Signed on behalf of the Committee, { JAMES M'CONNELL, WILLIAM PILLING.

* One boy at factory earns 4*s.* Journeyman, 3*s.* 6*d.*

† The five weavers herein visited are weaving first-rate fancy reeds for Mr. JONATHAN HITCHIN.

‡ The four Weavers here visited are first-rate plain Weavers, able workmen.

North of England.

Report from *R. M. Muggeridge*, Esq.

MONEY EARNINGS OF WEAVERS.

Flannels.

The Rochdale Weavers put in the following :—

THE following brief STATEMENT, which was taken in November, 1837, will show the Condition of the OPERATIVE HAND-LOOM WOOLLEN WEAVERS of ROCHDALE :—

No. of Families in the Survey.	Pesons composing them.	No. of Workers in the whole.	Average Weekly Wages for Twelve Months.	Weekly Wages for each Worker.	Average for each Individual per Week.	Weekly Rent for each Family.	Fuel, Light, &c. for each Family per Week.	Left for Food, Clothing, &c. per Week each Person.
			£ s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
26	131	41	15 17 4	7 9	2 5	1 3	1 6	1 10½

	s.	d.
In 1829 we received for weaving a 20 reed flannel	8	3½
In 1837 ,, ,,	20	5 7
In 1829 ,, ,,	30	19 1½
In 1837 ,, ,,	30	13 6

	£.	s.	d.
In 1829 for weaving a 36 reed flannel	1	12	4½
In 1837 ,, ,,	1	3	3

And all other kinds and Numbers in an equal ratio.

The above prices are the highest that are given, numbers of manufacturers are paying considerable less for their work. But there is a system resorted to by the high price givers which comes on a par with the low payers, and leaves the workers as badly off as if they were working for the low prices, as they are called, as for example :—The high price manufacturers make us put our goods in finer reeds by 2, or in some instances 3 beers finer than they pay for; they will call a 32 reed a 30, and only pay the 30 price, which will make a considerable difference to the weaver.

To average the above wages, the weaver must work 14 hours the day the week round.

Cotton.

The Wigan Survey was as follows :—

Names of Families.	Place of Abode.	No. of Persons in each Family.	No. of Persons employed in each Family.	Total Income of each Family.	Rent, Taxes, &c.	Fuel, Soap, and Candles.	Total Weekly Expenses.	Clear Weekly Income, Expenses deducted.	Average Income for Food and Clothing a-head Weekly.	Average Income for Food and Clothing a-head Daily.	Description of Work. (All Cotton.)
				£. s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.	d.	
Edward Major	Spring Garden	6	2	0 7 6	1 9	1 8	3 5	0 4 1	0 8	1¼	Check
John Powess	Ditto	6	2	0 7 6	2 0	1 9	3 9	0 3 9	0 6⅕	1	Ditto
Alexander Jordan	Ditto	5	2	0 7 6	2 0	1 7	3 7	0 3 11	0 9¼	1¼	Ditto
Henry Foster	Ditto	7	3	0 9 4	1 10	2 0	3 10	0 5 6	0 9¼	1¼	Diaper
James Arkwright	Ditto	5	2	0 8 0	1 9	1 9	3 6	0 4 6	0 10½	1½	Check
Thomas Foster	Ditto	6	2	0 9 0	1 8	1 9	3 5	0 5 7	0 11	1½	Gingham
Peter Derbyshire	Ditto	6	2	0 8 0	1 9	1 9	3 6	0 4 6	0 9	1¼	Plain
Charles Donnelly	Wigan Lane	6	3	0 12 0	2 4	1 11	3 3	0 8 9	1 5½	2¼	Check
William Houghton	Ditto	7	4	0 18 0	2 0	2 0	4 0	0 14 0	2 0	3½	Ditto
William Critchley	Ditto	10	5	1 0 0	1 6	2 5	3 11	0 16 1	1 7¼	2¾	Ditto
Thomas Bibby	Ditto	7	3	0 15 0	1 6	2 5	3 11	0 11 1	1 7	2¾	Broad Cloth
James Southern	Ditto	6	2	0 9 0	1 6	2 0	3 6	0 5 6	0 11	1½	Ditto
Thomas M'Kenna	Ditto	2	2	0 5 6	1 6	1 4	2 10	0 2 8	1 4	2¼	Check
John Gorman	Factory Croft	1	1	0 6 0	1 6	1 3	2 9	0 3 3	3 3	5½	Gingham
Cornelius Shean	Ditto	1	1	0 5 6	1 6	1 2	2 8	0 2 10	2 10	4¾	Check
John Seddon	Ditto	3	2	0 6 0	1 3	0 10	2 1	0 3 11	1 3½	2¼	Plain
William Foster	Ditto	7	6	1 7 10	2 6	5 4	7 10	1 0 0	2 10¼	4¾	Check
William Coyle	Lowe's Square	4	1	0 5 6	0 9	2 0	2 9	0 3 6	0 11½	1½	Broad Cloth
James Holland	Union Street	2	2	0 7 0	2 0	1 9	3 9	0 3 3	1 7½	2¾	Twill
Richard Highton	Ditto	8	4	0 18 6	1 6	2 0	3 6	0 15 0	1 10½	3¼	Check
Andrew Perry	Ditto	4	2	0 15 0	2 0	3 10	5 10	0 9 2	2 3½	4	Broad Cloth
John Disley	Greenough's Row	6	3	0 9 6	2 0	2 0	4 0	0 5 6	0 11	1½	Ditto
John Bridge	Ditto	4	1	0 7 0	1 3	2 6	3 9	0 3 3	0 9¾	1½	Ditto
John Hage	Ditto	5	2	0 9 0	2 0	1 6	3 6	0 5 6	1 3¼	2¼	Plain
Thomas Hall	Ditto	5	2	0 9 0	1 9	1 6	3 3	0 5 9	1 3¼	2¼	Twill
Patrick Siney	Hallgate Croft	7	3	0 6 6	2 3	1 9	4 0	0 2 0	0 3½	0½	Strip
Thomas Critchley	Ditto	5	1	0 4 4	2 3	1 3	3 6	0 0 10	0 2	0¼	Ditto
Robert Wilson	Ditto	2	2	0 6 0	2 3	1 9	4 0	0 2 0	1 0	1½	Ditto
William Maxwell	Ditto	1	1	0 6 0	1 6	1 0	2 6	0 3 6	3 6	6	Check
Daniel Irons	Ditto	1	1	0 6 0	1 6	1 0	2 6	0 3 6	3 6	6	Ditto
Peter M'Surely	Ditto	4	4	0 16 0	4 0	2 0	6 0	0 10 0	2 6	4½	Ditto
Daniel M'Evoy	Ditto	4	3	0 8 6	1 6	1 6	3 0	0 5 6	1 4½	2¼	Ditto
Edward Hudson	Duke Street	2	2	0 6 6	2 0	1 8	3 8	0 2 10	1 5	2¼	Ditto
Thomas Waring	Ditto	5	4	1 0 0	2 6	2 0	4 0	0 16 0	3 2¼	5½	Broad Cloth
John Gobin	Ditto	8	6	1 5 0	2 3	2 6	4 9	1 0 3	2 6	4¼	Ditto
Thomas Liptrot	Ditto	9	6	1 4 0	2 4	2 0	4 4	0 19 8	2 2	3½	Check
Robert Gilmore	Ditto	6	3	0 13 0	1 9	1 7	3 4	0 9 8	1 7⅞	2½	Broad Cloth
William Gray	Cherry Croft	1	1	0 6 0	1 6	1 3	2 9	0 3 3	3 3	5½	Gingham
Robert White	Ditto	8	5	1 2 0	2 0	2 1	4 1	0 17 11	2 2¾	3½	Check

WIGAN SURVEY—*continued.*

Names of Families.	Places of Abode.	No. of Persons in each Family.	No. of Persons employed in each Family.	Total Income of each Family.	Rent, Taxes, &c.	Fuel, Soap, and Candles.	Total Weekly Expenses.	Clear Weekly Income, Expenses deducted.	Average Income for Food and Clothing a-head Weekly.	Average Income for Food and Clothing a-head Daily.	Designation of Work. (All Cotton.)
				£. s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.	d.	
ıard Mather .	Cherrycroft .	7	5	0 18 0	1 10	2 0	3 10	0 14 2	2 0¼	3¾	Check
n Golding . .	Coal Yard . .	5	3	0 10 6	1 2	1 6	2 8	0 7 10	1 6¾	2½	Broad Cloth
iel M'Cardwell	Ditto . . .	6	3	0 14 0	1 2	1 6	2 8	0 11 4	1 10½	3¼	Ditto
n Halliwell .	Ditto . . .	13	6	2 0 0	2 2	4 10	7 0	1 13 0	3 0	5	Check
istopher Ince .	School Lane .	3	3	0 10 0	2 0	1 9	3 9	0 6 3	2 1	3½	Twill
rard Ince . .	Ditto . . .	3	2	0 9 0	2 3	1 9	4 0	0 5 0	1 8	3	Broad Cloth
ı Blinstone .	Ditto . . .	1	1	0 3 0	1 0	0 4½	1 4½	0 1 7½	1 4½	2½	Plain
liam Atherton	Ditto . . .	4	2	0 11 0	2 0	2 2½	4 2½	0 6 9½	1 8	3	Diaper
uel Ramsdale	Ditto . . .	5	1	0 3 9	1 0	1 6	2 6	0 1 3	0 3	0½	Check
is Coyle . .	Gates . . .	5	1	0 6 0	2 0	1 0	3 0	0 3 0	0 7	1	Broad Cloth
ard Warren .	Ditto . . .	4	1	0 6 0	1 6	1 9	3 3	0 2 9	0 8¼	1¼	Check
er Coyle . .	Ditto . . .	4	2	0 8 6	1 6	1 9	3 3	0 5 3	1 3¾	2¾	Broad Cloth
iam Norman	Ditto . . .	5	2	0 8 0	1 6	2 0	3 6	0 4 6	0 10¾	1½	Twill
m Catherall .	Ditto . . .	10	4	0 17 0	2 0	2 6	4 6	0 12 6	1 3	2	Check
nael Hughes .	Greenough's Row	4	2	0 8 0	2 0	1 11	3 11	0 4 1	1 0	1¾	Twill
ard Foster .	Wellington Str.	5	2	0 8 0	1 4	1 6	2 10	0 5 2	1 0½	1¾	Plain
es Englishby	Ditto . . .	4	2	0 5 0	1 0	1 6	2 6	0 2 6	0 7½	1	Ditto

there are many cases in this statement which appear incredible, we would beg the public to consider that in such the families are supported by the benevolence of their neighbours.

Signed on behalf of the Committee,

THOMAS SHERIDAN, Secretary.
ROBERT ROGERS, Chairman.

We consider the above statement to be founded on actual facts,

RYLANDS & SONS, JAMES FARRAR, JAMES MATHER, H. INGHAM, JOHN BRIERLY, THOS. HOWARTH, } Manufacturers.

The Blackburn Survey gave the following averages :—

Names of Families.	Places of Abode.	No. of Persons in each Family.	No. of Persons employed in each Family.	Total Income of each Family Weekly.	Rent, Taxes, and Poor Rates.	Fuel, Soap, and Candles.	Total Weekly Expenses.	Clear Weekly Income, Expenses deducted.	Average Income for Food and Clothing a-head Weekly.	Average Income for Food and Clothing a-head Daily.	Designation of Work. (Cotton.)
				s, d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	d.	
as Astley .	Blakely Moor .	6	2	8 0	1 10	1 7	3 5	4 7	0 9	1½	Plain
l Crankshaw	Blakey Street .	9	6	19 3	3 6	2 9	6 3	13 0	1 5½	2½	Ditto
Heys . .	Coppy Nook .	5	2	8 0	2 3	1 7	3 10	4 2	0 10	1½	Ditto
y Abbot . .	Jackson Street .	7	3	11 0	2 5	1 9	4 2	6 10	0 10¼	1½	Ditto
ge Marsden .	Bottom Gate .	5	3	10 0	2 5	1 6	3 11	6 1	0 10¼	1½	Ditto
as Grimshaw	Ditto . . .	6	2	9 0	2 3	1 9	5 0	4 0	0 8	1¼	Ditto
t Adcroft .	Mile End . .	6	3	9 2	1 6	2 7½	4 1½	5 0½	0 10¼	1½	Ditto
Crook . .	Ditto . . .	4	2	7 0	2 0	2 0½	4 0½	2 11½	0 9¼	1¼	Ditto
Slater . .	Ditto . . .	6	3	9 10½	1 9	2 3½	4 0½	5 10	0 11½	1¾	Ditto
n Counsel .	Ditto . . .	8	4	11 8	1 6	2 3½	3 9½	7 10½	0 11½	1¾	Ditto
r Johnston .	Shire Brow . .	5	2	8 6	1 6	2 1	3 7	4 11	0 11¾	1¾	Ditto
baldestone .	Ditto . . .	5	2	10 0	1 6	2 1	3 7	6 5	1 3¼	2¼	Ditto
m Kenyon .	Ditto . . .	2	2	6 0	2 3	2 1	4 4	1 8	0 10	1½	Ditto
e Baron .	Ouze Head . .	7	2	10 0	1 8	2 6	4 2	5 10	0 10	1½	Fancy
Dewhurst .	Ditto . . .	3	2	7 0	1 11	1 9	3 8	3 4	1 1¼	2	Ditto
Wilkinson	Blakey Street .	5	2	8 5	2 0	1 3½	3 3½	5 1½	1 0½	1¾	Plain
as Ainsworth	Moor Street. .	4	2	7 6	1 1	1 4	2 5	5 1	1 2¼	2	Ditto
el Eastwood	Whalley Banks	5	1	6 0	1 5	1 6	2 11	3 1	1 0¼	1¾	Ditto
m Preston .	Blakey Street .	1	1	5 0	..	..	2 2	2 10	2 10	4¾	Ditto
Pemberton .	Daisy Field .	5	2	8 0	1 2	2 6	3 8	4 4	0 10½	1½	Ditto
Vard . .	Ditto . . .	5	2	11 0	1 11	2 8	4 7	6 5	1 3½	2¼	Ditto
m Walmsley	Pleck Gate . .	6	2	9 6	2 10	2 4	5 2	4 4	0 8¾	1¼	Ditto
Hargreaves .	Ditto . . .	6	3	14 0	2 0	2 4	4 4	9 8	1 7¼	2¾	Ditto
Baldwin .	Ditto . . .	4	2	8 0	1 3	1 6	2 9	5 3	1 3¾	2½	Ditto
Heskin .	Willworth . .	9	3	14 6	2 6	2 10	5 4	9 2	1 0¼	1¾	Ditto
Murray .	Toddy . . .	9	4	13 0	2 0	2 11	4 11	8 1	1 1¼	2	Ditto
d Anderton	Lane Ends . .	8	2	8 6	1 6	2 2	3 8	4 10	0 9¾	1½	Ditto
d Holding .	Nab Lane . .	6	2	9 5	2 0	2 4	4 4	5 2	1 2	2	Ditto

North of England.

The Preston Committee put in the following average:—

Report from *R. M. Muggeridge*, Esq.

The following is a List of Families, Weavers, showing the Names, Numbers of each Family, and Earnings, with the total Expenses, independent of Food.—Exhibiting thereby the sum left to live upon, for all and each, per Week, and per Day.

Money Earnings of Weavers.

Cotton.

N.B.—Where families were found to wind the weft within themselves, no expense was set down thereto.

Names.	Place of Abode.	No. of Family.	No. at Work.	Earnings.	House Rent.	Coals, Candle, and Soap.	Winding.	Total Expenses.	Net Earnings.	Per Week per Head.	Per Day per Hd.
				s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*d.*
Daniel Clinton	Bleasdale Street	2	1	6 9	2 6	0 4	10½	3 8½	3 0¼	1 6¼	2¼
James Procter	Starch House	5	2	9 10	2 6	2 1	..	4 7	5 3	1 0¼	1¼
John Farley	Brow Square	3	1	7 0	2 3	1 10	..	4 1	2 11	0 11½	1½
Edward Yates	Markland Street	7	2	12 0	3 4	2 3	..	5 7	6 5	0 11	1½
Nicholas Duff	North Street	1	1	6 9	2 0	0 6	6½	3 0½	3 8½	3 8½	6¼
William Wilding	Snow Hill	5	1	5 4	1 3	1 6½	..	2 9½	2 6½	0 6	0¾
James Atkinson	Vine Street	5	1	6 0	1 4	1 3½	..	2 7½	3 4½	0 8	1
Even Crook	Walker Street	6	1	6 6	1 9	2 1	..	3 10	2 8	0 5¼	0¾
Thomas Munk	Ring Street	5	1	5 6	1 8	1 9	..	3 5	2 1	0 5	0¾

The Ashton-under-Lyne district survey was as follows:—

Cotton.

Heads of families visited	483
Number of persons employed	813
Number of looms idle	213
Number of persons dependent on the earnings of those employed	1955
Clear total average weekly income	£119 3 3
Average per family per week	0 4 11¼

Woollen Cloth.

The Mirfield, near Huddersfield, average was 402 weavers, clear 5*s.* 6⅛*d.* per week, for twelve months. The total number the 402 had to maintain was 1655, giving 2¼*d.* per day, each individual.

Cotton.

The Stockport survey included near 200 families, ranging from 4*s.* to 9*s.* 6*d.* weekly. No average was struck.

The Carlisle survey, which was drawn up with great care, showed—

Number of looms	1963
Number of families	994
Number of persons	3814
Number of children	2188
Of whom were weaving	813
Employed at other businesses	172
Unemployed	1203

The average earnings of each loom was stated by the Treasurer of the Committee to be as near as possible 4*s.* 6*d.* weekly.

The Longtown survey gave the rates of earnings from 1*s.* 3½*d.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* per loom, 104 families having 286 looms.

The Ulverstone survey, 7*s.* 2*d.* clear weekly average.

Woollen.

The Kendal statements put in by the masters, which I shall presently advert to, were adopted by the weavers there, as a fair average *when they were employed;* but it was stated by them that their trade has been so much affected by the American embarrassments, that they had waited about three-fifths of their time without work during the preceding eighteen months, in which they have suffered the greatest distress.

Cotton.

The Wigton survey gave the gross average weekly earnings of the weavers 5*s.* 10½*d.*; net 4*s.* 3*d.* per loom. The total number was 419, of whom 187 were married, and 232 single. Of the latter, 94 were apprentices.

The Cockermouth average was for the cotton, or check and gingham weaving 7*s.* 5½*d.* weekly, when fully employed. On 353 looms so engaged, 216 were

worked by adult males, 59 by boys, and 34 by women and girls: 44 were standing idle. The weavers in Cockermouth are mostly engaged in weaving-shops or factories, which will explain their comparatively high average earnings. Of the boys and girls, about 3 out of 5 were the children of weavers.

The preceding statements of earnings, &c., may be regarded as those of the *employed*. I follow them by a few selections from the evidence of employers on this subject.

Cotton.

Mr. John Spencer, of Patricroft, near Manchester, who has a hand-loom factory, besides a great number of out-door weavers, gave, as the last annual average of his weavers—

	s.	d.
Working in factory	9	8
Out-door weavers	8	1

From the latter 3*d.* in the shilling, or 25 per cent. must be deducted for expenses. He also shows the following variation in the earnings of his weavers employed on different fabrics:—

	s.	d.		s.	d.	
Corded and India dimities	6	5½	to	7	3	out-door
Plain and fancy quiltings	5	8	to	10	4	ditto
Ditto ditto	10	11	to	13	2¼	factory
Toilet covers	5	10¼	to	9	1¼	out-door
Ditto	9	6½	to	11	1½	factory
Toilet quilts	15	0½	to	20	8½	out-door
Ditto	12	7½	to	17	3½	factory
Florentines, average	5	11				

Mr. John Whyte, manager of a bed-quilt weaving-shop at Bolton, estimated the average earnings of his weavers to be 15*s.* per week when fully employed. He added, "they must be stout, able-bodied men, to do the work; and ours is the best paid work in the hand-loom weaving line."

Linen.

Mr. James Mather, of Wigan, estimated that his weavers would there earn 6*s.* per week clear.

Mr. Rylands, manufacturer, Wigan, says, "my linen weavers earn from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 9*s.* 6*d.* in eight days: check weavers 6*s.* 6*d.* to 9*s.* 6*d.*; tick weavers 5*s.* to 10*s.*; and damask weavers from 9*s.* to 16*s.*; from all which 3*d.* in the shilling may be deducted for expenses."

Cotton.

Mr. Samuel Hibbert, of Ashton-under-Lyne, states, "the weavers at my lowest work would not clear more than 4*s.* 6*d.* a-week." The imitation-shawl weavers might make 12*s.* a-week on an average, from which must be deducted the expenses. Three pence in the shilling is usually allowed for expenses.

Mr. Samuel Mills, of Ashton, gave the following list:—

List of Prices for Weaving at Messrs. Mills and Co., averages (1838):—

Inches.					Weekly Earnings if fully employed.		
				s. d.	s. d.		
72	7/4	50	Coloured Chambrys, 30 yards	5 0	5 8		
72	7/4	50	Check Ginghams, 30 yards	7 0	7 10		
80	4/4	27	Coloured Chambrys, 30 yards	4 6	5 1		
80	4/4	27	Ditto ditto, all coloured	5 0	5 8		
90	4/4	27	Ditto ditto, 30 yards	5 0	5 8		
90	4/4	27	Ditto ditto, all coloured	5 6	6 2		
100	4/4	27	Ditto ditto, 30 yards	5 6	6 2		
100	4/4	27	Ditto ditto, all coloured	6 0	6 6		
80	4/4	27	Check Ginghams, 30 yards	5 0	5 8		
90	4/4	27	Ditto ditto ditto	5 6	6 2		
100	4/4	27	Ditto ditto ditto	6 0	6 6		
100	4/4	27	Check Ginghams, 3 shuttles	6 6	6 6		
80	4/4	33	Dark Fancy Check Shawls	2 0	7 6	per dozen	
,,	5/4	42	Ditto ditto	4 0	11 6	,,	
,,	6/4	51	Ditto ditto	5 0	11 6	,,	
,,	7/4	60	Ditto ditto	6 6	11 6	,,	
,,	8/4	72	Ditto ditto	9 0	11 6	,,	
,,	4/4	33	Quadrille Check Shawls	1 9	6 7	,,	
,,	5/4	42	Ditto ditto	2 9	8 9	,,	
,,	6/4	51	Ditto ditto	4 0	8 9	,,	
110*s.* and 120*s.*		28½	Muslin Delanes, 30 yards	6 3	9 4	,,	

North of England.

Report from *R. M. Muggeridge*, Esq.

Money Earnings of Weavers.

Cotton-check Manufacturers.

Mr. Peter Walker, of the firm of Walker and M'Clure, silk-manufacturers of Patricroft, states—"we allow our out-door weavers a month to weave one of our pieces of plain silk. They run rather more than 84 yards in length. For this the weaver would get 24*s.* 6*d.*, out of which he would have to pay winding and expenses."

Mr. George Dixon, of the firm of Messrs. Peter Dixon and Sons of Carlisle, who were employing 3571 hand-loom weavers, namely, 2389 in England, 599 in Scotland, and 583 in Ireland, of whom eleven-eighteenths were men, two-eighteenths women, three-eighteenths boys, and two-eighteenths girls, gave the following statement in reference to the earnings of his weavers:—

Statement of Earnings of Weavers in the employ of Messrs. Peter Dixon and Son of Carlisle.

A and his family, since 26th May, 1837, to 25th May, 1838.

Handcock Long, Carlisle.

Self . . .	£29	18	6	Total payments during the year, £87 18 0
Son Thomas .	20	7	6	
Son John .	21	5	0	
Son Robert .	16	7	0	

B and his family, since June 15, 1837, to June 1838.

George Coulthard, Carlisle.

Self . . .	£19	18	0	£50 6 9
Son James .	15	7	6	
Son Joseph .	15	1	3	

C and his family, since 10th June, 1837, to 9th June, 1838.

Joseph Hind, Carlisle.

Self . . .	£25	15	4	£72 14 10
Wife . . .	17	3	3	
Son William .	13	9	9	
Daughter Jane	16	6	6	

D and his family, since 15th June, 1837.

James Davidson, Carlisle,

Self . . .	£19	14	3	£78 9 9
Son William .	20	0	3	
Daughter Sarah	19	7	9	
Daughter Eliz.	19	7	6	

Statements of Earnings of Single Weavers.

John Graham, Brampton.

E, during twelvemonths from 13th June, 1837, to June, 1838.

Total payments £37 5 0

James Murray, Langholm.

F, during twelvemonths from 30th May, 1837.

Total payments 31 19 0

And, during harvest, lost a fortnight.

Robert Storey, Longtown.

G, during twelvemonths from June, 1837.

Total payments 29 6 6

And, during harvest month, only wrought two cuts.

John Wardrop, Longtown.

H, during twelvemonths from June, 1837.

Total payments 28 14 6

James Askew, Longtown.

J, during twelvemonths from June, 1837.

Total payments 24 11 4

Thomas Sanderson, Carlisle.

K, during twelvemonths from 16th June, 1837.

Total payments 34 17 0

Mr. Dixon added—"these sums are the gross receipts from the warehouse. There would be expenses to be deducted, which may be correctly estimated at from 25 to 30 per cent. The cases selected are those of our best and most regular workmen, and who are employed generally on our best paid fabrics."

Messrs. J. and R. Ferguson of Carlisle extracted from their books the earnings often of their most regular workmen, and eleven of those earning the lowest rate of wages, between which extremes all their hands would range.

North of England.

Report from *R. M. Muggeridge*, Esq.

MONEY EARNINGS OF WEAVERS.

Cotton.

HANDS in the employment of J. R. and J. FERGUSON.

GROSS Earnings of 10 good Workmen for 12 Weeks, from March 11th to June 3, 1838.

	Age.	£.	s.	d.		Per Week. s.	d.	
John Moses	35	4	10	0	or	7	6	
William Underwood	50	4	18	3		8	2¼	
James Sterling	48	5	1	3		8	5¼	
John Edgar	23	7	6	0		12	2	
Bartholomew M'Gar	42	7	14	0		12	10	
James Seddon	50	5	16	0		9	8	
Edward Horsley	32	6	16	0		11	4	
James Gakkie	27	6	4	6		10	4½	
Thomas Wilson	48	6	2	0		10	2	
William Smith	54	5	16	0		9	8	
		60	4	0	or	10	0	average
		Deduct 27½ per cent. for Loom-Rent, Winding, Coals, Oil, and Candles, for the shop				2	9	
						7	3	net.

HANDS in the employment of J. R. and J. FERGUSON.

GROSS Earnings of 11 inferior Workmen for 12 Weeks, from March 11th to June 3rd, 1838.

	Age.	£.	s.	d.		Per Week. s.	d.	
John Roy	64	3	11	3	or	5	11¼	
William Gakkie	60	4	2	6		6	10½	
James Ridley	16	3	1	0		5	1	
David M'Gee	14	2	12	3		4	4¼	
Mary Moses	..	4	2	3		6	10¼	
Sarah Moses	..	2	18	3		4	10¼	
Elizabeth Underwood	15	3	3	0		5	3	
Joseph Sterling	16	4	3	0		6	11	
Robert Sterling	14	4	14	6		7	10½	
Nancy M'Gee	17	3	2	3		5	2¼	
David M'Gee	15	3	1	0		5	1	
		38	11	3	or	5	10	average
		Deduct 27½ per cent. for Loom-Rent, Winding, Coals, Oil, and Candles for the shop				1	10	
						4	0	net

Mr. William Monkhouse, foreman to Messrs. John Fell & Co., of Ulverstone, manufacturers of checks, ticks, ginghams, and diapers, says, almost half his weavers earn clear 9*s.* a-week, about one-fifth of them, on the best paid work, 12*s.*, and the remainder about 6*s.* per week. Cotton and Linen.

Messrs. J. & W. Wilson, of Kendal, manufacturers of coarse woollen on broad-looms, gave a half-yearly statement of eleven of their best weavers' earnings, the whole average of which was 15*s.* 7½*d.* weekly, from which expenses would have to be deducted. They were adult men, and fully employed. Woollens.

Thirteen of the linsey weavers, in the constant employ of Messrs. John Ireland, & Co., of Kendal, averaged each 34*l.* 1*s.* 7*d.*, gross earnings, from 1st January, 1837, to 12th June, 1838.

Messrs. Medcalf and Sons' weekly average of ten good hands for three months ending June 30, 1838, was 10*s.* 4½*d.* each weekly.

Mr. William Benty of Wigton, in Cumberland, manufacturer of linen check, gave the clear weekly earnings of his weavers 4*s.* 9*d.* each loom. Linen.

Mr. Edward Fidler, check-manufacturer, Wigton, gave the net earnings of his best weavers 6*s.* 10½*d.* weekly average, and his lowest paid 4*s.* 4*d.* net. Cotton Checks.

Messrs. William & Jonathan Harris of Cockermouth, gave as their highest earning net 11*s.* 3*d.* weekly, rangings downwards to 5*s.*

Messrs. W. W. & H. Stables, woollen-cloth manufacturers at Crossland, near Huddersfield, gave the average earnings of all their weavers employed on good work 16*s.* 10*d.* each weekly. Broad Cloth.

North of England.

Report from *R. M. Muggeridge*, Esq.

Money Earnings of Weavers.

Cotton.

Mr. George Crossland of Crossland Moor, woollen-manufacturer, stated his weavers to be earning from 9*s.* to 22*s.* weekly. He was quite sure 15*s.* net would be a fair average of the whole. In all this district there was stated to be much waiting for work.

Messrs. Gillow of Preston says—"the average of our wages last week is 6*s.* for each weaver. The highest earnings is 11*s.*, the lowest 3*s.* This, clear of all deductions.

Mr. J. S. Vallet of Preston, the agent of Messrs. Gardner & Atkinson, who employ the greatest number of weavers of any firm in England in the fancy muslin trade, gave the following tables of prices, and earnings:—

Table showing the Rate of Wages paying for ⅝ Cambrics, from a 60 to 80 Reed, from 1830 to 1838.

	50 and 52 Inches wide at the Reed, 24½ and 25 yards long.											
Reed	60		60		60		72		72		80	
Picks in One Inch	108		120		136		136		152		160	
	s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
Paid in 1830	5	0	5	6	6	6	8	0	9	0	10	0
,, 1835	5	9	6	6	7	6	8	6	9	6	11	0
,, 1835	5	6	6	0	7	0	8	0	9	0	10	6
,, 1835	5	9	6	6	7	6	8	6	9	6	11	0
,, 1836	5	9	6	6	7	3	8	3	9	6	10	6
,, 1837	5	9	6	6	7	3	8	3	9	6	10	6
,, 1837	5	3	6	0	6	9	7	9	9	0	10	0
,, 1837	5	0	5	6	6	3	7	3	8	6	9	6
,, 1837	5	0	5	6	6	3	7	9	9	0	10	0
,, 1838	5	0	5	6	6	3	7	9	9	0	10	0

From the above statement, wages appear pretty equal now with the prices paid in 1830; they do not appear to have been below the wages paid in 1830, except in a few instances, but have, as there may have been a demand for these or other particular goods, advanced upon 1830 prices on the average about 6*d.* per cut. Wages appear now, in 1838, to be at 1830 prices.

Preston, June 4, 1838. J. S. VALLET.

The following Tables show the Amount, hard working, and industrious Weavers have Earned in Wages, in the Years 1836, 1837, and 1838.

	Number of Weeks.	Earned.			Weekly Average of Earnings.	
No. 1.—1836.		£.	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
Thomas Moss	20	8	0	0	8	0
Thomas Blackburn	20½	7	10	0	7	6
John Worthington	21	8	15	6	8	4¼
Thomas Moss	21	10	1	0	9	6¾
John Slater	20	7	9	0	7	5½
William Moss	28	10	0	0	7	1¾
Roger Wilding	21	5	18	0	5	7¼
Henry Eastham	21	11	16	0	11	3
Joseph Bradshaw	20	8	15	9	8	9½
—— Rushton	20	11	14	6	11	8¾
Giving an average of 8*s.* 6*d.* per week per weaver.						
No. 2.—1837.						
—— Rushton	20	8	11	6	8	7
John Davies	21	6	2	5	5	10
Stephen Loftus	22	7	19	4½	7	3
James Weasley	20½	5	8	3	5	5
John Bradshaw	23	8	2	0	7	0½
..	21	6	9	0	6	1¾
John Towers	20	8	17	0	8	10
Henry Eastham	21	10	1	9	9	7¼
John Turner	21	8	8	0	8	0
Robert Morris	17	8	4	0	9	10¼
Giving an average of 7*s.* 8*d.* per week per weaver.						

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Amount of Wages—*continued.*

	Number of Weeks.	Earned.			Weekly Average of Earnings.	
No. 3.—1838.		£.	s.	d.	s.	d.
John Turner	22	10	1	3	9	1½
Thomas Margeson . . .	20½	7	5	6	7	1
Daniel Wareing	18	8	0	0	8	10¼
A. Waddington	19	7	7	3	7	9
H. Eastham	20	10	2	6	10	1½
John Gabbot	21	9	4	9	8	9½
John Dickinson	22	10	15	9	9	9¾
Thomas Moss	22	6	4	6	5	8
Thomas Monk	21	8	18	0	8	6
Thomas Banks	22	7	18	0	7	2

Giving an average of 8*s.* 3½*d.* per week per weaver.

In Blackburn five weavers' earnings in 20 weeks amounted to 7*s.* 7*d.* per weaver per week in the year 1833 in 1834 the average for same time and number was 8*s.* 1*d.*; and in 1835 the average for same was; 7*s.* 6*d.* J. S. V.

Rates of Premiums paid in Gardner, Atkinson, and Co.'s Dandy Shop, Preston. June 4, 1838.

Cuts per Week.			
Two Cuts.	Three Cuts.	Four Cuts.	Five Cuts.
s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*
2 5	2 7	2 9	2 10
2 11	3 0	3 1	3 2
3 5	3 7	3 8	3 9
3 11	4 2	4 4	4 4
4 6	4 8	..	..
3 2	3 5	3 6	..
1 8	1 10	1 11	2 1
3 6	3 8	3 10	..
4 9	4 11	5 2	..

Evidence of this kind might be multiplied to an almost indefinite extent; but the preceding extracts will, it is believed, afford a fair average statement of the condition of the weavers, as regards their money earnings, in the whole of the extensive district assigned to me.

I proceed, therefore, secondly, to the

Part 2.—Alleged Causes of the depressed condition of the Hand Loom Weavers, and the Remedies suggested by Witnesses.

Causes of Depression. Remedies Suggested.

The alleged causes of the depressed condition of the hand-loom weavers may be thus enumerated:—

1. The influence and operation of the present laws affecting and regulating the importation of foreign grain.
2. The competition of power looms.
3. The abatements made by employers, from the wages of the weavers; and the inefficiency of the present arbitration act.
4. The competition among the masters.
5. The disproportionate number of weavers, to the labour required to be performed by them.
6. The fact of a knowledge of the weaving trade being easily acquired, and of the trade itself, being open to all classes of unemployed persons.
7. Foreign competition.
8. The exportation of yarn and machinery.

The first cause, namely, the influence of the corn laws, was that the most universally dwelt upon throughout the district assigned to me. It was contended that the effect of these laws, was,—

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CAUSES OF DEPRESSION.

1. To cause the people of England to pay a high and unnecessarily exorbitant price for their bread, whereby their physical condition was deteriorated.

2. To prevent the interchange of British manufactured goods, for Foreign grain, whereby the employment of our manufacturing population was decreased.

3. To drive foreign nations to manufacture for themselves, through our refusing to receive their corn in exchange; whereby the British hand-loom weaver had been thrown altogether out of employment, or compelled to work at a scale of wages as low as that paid to the Continental labourer, in the cheap corn-growing countries.

4. In many cases to supersede the British manufacturer in foreign markets, which are now supplied by the cheaper wrought fabrics of other countries.

COMPETITION OF POWER LOOMS.

2.—*The Competition of Power Looms.*

On this subject, Mr. Joseph Gillow, a manufacturer at Preston, says,—

"It is evident to most persons connected with hand-loom manufacture, that the introduction of power looms has been the principal cause why hand-loom weaving has been so very much reduced. That the wages paid to the weavers by the power-loom manufacturer on all, or most sorts of fabrics, made of coarse yarns from 10*s.* to 50*s.* twist, are not now per piece more than one third of that paid by the hand-loom manufacturer for the same sorts of cloth, although the earning of the power-loom weaver is at present greater than the hand-loom weaver, particularly in those sorts of cloth where they most compete.

The power looms are chiefly confined to course reeds and low counts of yarns, the finer reeds and yarns being much more difficult to manage; the finer the sorts the more inapplicable to their use.

"If it is intended to relieve the hand-loom weaver by a more adequate rate of wages, and with the least injury to the power loom, and the commerce of the country, it is my opinion that it might be done by drawing a line by which the power loom shall be restricted from going beyond certain fabrics, say not to work anything finer than a Bolton 50 reed. Hitherto the experiments tried on power looms to work finer sorts, has only tended to injure the hand-loom weaver, without effecting any real good to the persons who have made the trial.

"Should Government adopt the course here recommended, I think there would be a great increase in the demand for hand-loom cloths to various parts of the world, of jacconets, cambrics, fancy goods, &c.; and the probability is, that the hand-loom weaver (who of late has been much reduced in wages on account of the great competition in the power loom), would have greater security in procuring a fair remuneration for his labour; and it would materially assist the hand-loom weaver of coarse, light, undressed makes, to obtain an advance in his wages."

William Norris, weaver of tick, of Eccles, states—

"Power looms have entirely superseded the weaving of calicos and fustians, which were formerly wove to a great extent here."

Peter Walker, Esq., of the firm of Walker and Mc'Clure, silk manufacturers at Patricroft, states—

"The same goods I make by hand, are competed with by power here and also elsewhere, and are produced as well by power as by hand. Power has been applied about eighteen months in the neighbourhood of Manchester. I am not aware that it is applied anywhere else to plain silk goods, but in this neighbourhood.

"Wages have not been reduced by competition by power. The power production would not be a five hundredth part of the whole production of plain silk goods at present, but it is increasing."

Walter O'Carroll, fancy quilt weaver, of Patricroft, states—

"The power loom is placed upon such a basis, that it cannot be interfered with unless the power looms of America and the Continent are put under restrictions also."

James Spencer, weaver of ginghams and jacconets, of Manchester, states—

"At present the power loom has not at all interfered with any branch but the gingham and jacconets, but I nevertheless attribute our reduction in wages to the effects of power, by throwing other weavers (thrown out of work by power) upon our description of goods."

James Stafford, weaver of shawls, of Manchester, states—

"I conceive the evils of machinery to the hand-loom weavers to be very great. It is production without consumption. The work is done by fire and water, and brought into the market cheaper than human power can do it. For the benefit of society there ought to be a tax upon it, to enable human labour fairly to compete with it."

Mr. John Redfern, manufacturer, of Ashton-Under-Line, states—

"I attribute the low rates of wages of weavers to the power looms, in conjunction with other causes."

Joseph Ferguson, Esq., manufacturer, of Carlisle, states—

"The low rate of wages have been partly occasioned by the introduction of power looms."

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COMPETITION OF POWER LOOMS.

The first loom propelled by power was the contrivance of a M. de Gennes, in the seventeenth century, and is described in the philosophical transactions of the Royal Society for 1678. It does not appear to have come into general use. About the middle of the eighteenth century a swivel-loom was invented by M. Van Anson, and in 1765 a weaving factory at Manchester was filled with them. As, however, each loom required the attendance of an adult male the invention was not profitable, and soon abandoned. In 1785 an improved power loom was invented by Dr. Edmund Cartwright, and a factory set up in Doncaster, which, however, was unsuccessful, and the Doctor obtained a grant from Parliament of 10,000*l.* in 1809. Messrs. Grimshaw of Gorton, near Manchester, Mr. Bell of Glasgow, and Mr. Robert Miller of Glasgow, were each inventors of power looms, but unsuccessful, from the frequency with which it was necessary to stop the machine to dress the warp as it unrolled from the beam. This obstacle was ultimately overcome by a machine invented by Messrs. Radcliffe and Ross of Stockport, for dressing the warp before it was placed in the loom. These parties took out four patents in the years 1803 and 1804, two for taking up the cloth by the motion of the lathe, the others for warping and dressing. Another patent for an improved power loom was taken out by Mr. H. Horrocks of Stockport, in 1803, and subsequently by the same individual in 1805 and 1813. In this year there were estimated to be about 2,400 power looms in use, engaged wholly on plain work. In 1820 there were estimated to be 12,150 in England and 2,000 in Scotland. In 1829, 45,500 in England and 10,000 in Scotland. In 1833 the estimated number in England was 85,000 and in Scotland 15,000. At the close of the year 1835, according to the returns of the Factory Inspectors, the total number in use in England was 97,564; in Scotland 17,721, and in Ireland 1516, total 116,801; of which in England there were employed in the manufacture of

Cotton	96,679	
Woollen	5,105	
Silk	1,714	
Flax	41	
Mixed Goods	25	
		97,564
IN IRELAND.		
Cotton	1,416	
Flax	100	
		1,516
IN SCOTLAND.		
Cotton	17,531	
Woollen	22	
Flax	168	
		17,721

Since this return was made there has been a large accession in number. The extent of the competition may be judged of from the following comparison made by a Lancashire manufacturer.

"A very good *hand weaver*, 25 or 30 years of age, will weave two pieces of 9-8th shirtings per week, each 24 yards long, containing 100 shoots of weft in an inch; the reed of the cloth being a 44 Bolton count, and the warp and weft 40 hanks to the pound.

"In 1823 a *steam loom weaver* about 15 years of age attending two looms, could weave *seven* similar pieces in a week.

"In 1826, a steam loom weaver about 15 years of age attending to two looms, could weave *twelve* similar pieces in a week, some could weave fifteen pieces. In 1833, a steam loom weaver, from 15 to 20 years of age, assisted by a girl about 12 years of age attending to four looms, can weave *eighteen* similar pieces in a week; some can weave twenty pieces."

It would, however, be erroneous to attribute the reduction of weavers' wages wholly to the competition of the power loom, as long prior to its general adoption, or even extensive use, the reductions were greater than they have been subsequently. In 1813 there were not above 2,400 power looms in use, yet the price of weaving the ¾ reed cambric had fallen from 29*s.* in 1797 to 14*s.* in 1811. The subjoined Tables will show the great reductions that have taken place.

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COMPETITION OF POWER LOOMS.

STATEMENT showing the AVERAGE WAGES paid for Weaving a $\frac{5}{4}$ Reed Cambric, 120 Picks to One Inch, 24 Yards long.

Years.	Wages.	Years.	Wages.
	s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*
1797	29 0	1818	9 0
1798	30 0	1819	9 6
1799	25 0	1820	9 6
1800	25 0	1821	8 6
1801	25 0	1822	8 6
1802	29 0	1823	8 6
1803	24 0	1824	8 6
1804	24 0	1825	8 6
1805	25 0	1826	7 0
1806	22 0	1827	6 6
1807	18 0	1828	6 0
1808	15 0	1829	5 6
1809	16 0	1830	5 6
1810	19 6	1831	5 6
1811	14 0	1832	5 6
1812	14 0	1833	5 6
1813	15 0	1834	5 6
1814	24 0	1835	5 6
1815	14 0	1836	5 6
1816	12 0	1837	4 6
1817	9 0	1838	5 6

The 20°° $\frac{9}{8}$ jacconet, 46 inches, 135 shots to the inch, was paid for weaving :—

	s.	*d.*
In 1792	2	8
1797	2	3
1800	1	11
1808	1	8
1811	1	6
1818	1	0
1825	0	$7\frac{1}{2}$
1830	0	4
1831 to 1838	0	$3\frac{1}{8}$

The winding was paid 6*d.* per spangle to 1813. From that period to 1820 $2\frac{1}{2}$. Its present price is 1*d.*

In many other of the hand-loom fabrics proportionate reductions have been made; sometimes influenced by slackness of demand, or over production; in fancy articles from the caprice or change of fashion, and constantly from the amount of available labour in the market, exceeding the demand for it.

3.—*Abatements made by Employers.*

ABATEMENTS BY EMPLOYERS.

The Arbitration Act, 5 Geo. IV. c. 96, for the settlement of disputes betweeen workmen and their employers, appears to be generally regarded by the working population as inadequate to the end desired. The justice thereby afforded is neither as speedy, as economical, taking into consideration that the workman's time is his capital and only property, nor as secure as it should be; and this conviction operates so strongly and so universally in many districts, that appeals under the Act, though causes are represented as constantly arising, are of very rare occurrence; in some parts, altogether unknown.

There are obviously many causes to deter the workman from resorting to this mode of redress. The influences, inseparable from the relative position of master and servant, which give to the former the means and power of inflicting oftentimes irreparable injury on the refractory or discontented workman, by depriving him of further employment, will always be found to exercise, in effect, prevention from annoyance of this kind, except under circumstances of peculiar aggravation; or in cases where the latter has the clearest conviction of right on his side. It is, moreover, at all times so manifestly *the interest* of the workman to avoid collisions of this kind with his employer, that few are found to disregard it, unless goaded to such a course by the strongest sense of wrong and injury. The subject matter of dispute is almost invariably but one, two, or at most a few shillings, the attempted recovery of which usually involves the loss of more of the workman's time than is adequate to the sum disputed. Even when successful, he is so, in ninety cases out of a hundred, with the moral certainty of his success involving with it the loss of

future employment. He has also to forego, pending the time preceding and the hearing and adjudicating on his case, the receipt even of the undisputed portion of his wages or earnings; and it is as difficult to depict, as it is for those more happily circumstanced to feel, the additional suffering inflicted on an expectant and half-starving family, when a poor man so mulct of a portion of his scanty and inadequate earnings, if insubmissive, returns home penniless. The practice, where any portion of the weaver's wages are in dispute, is invariably to withhold the whole. Supposing that after three weeks' or a month's labour he has woven a web, the price of weaving which amounts to 40*s.*, and the employer proposes to abate 5*s.*, if the weaver refuses to submit to this, the employer does not pay him the 35*s.* undisputed but sends him home without a sixpence, until the case has been arbitrated and decided. The weaver's credit at the shop is almost always closed, the hour he returns home having delivered in his web without money; and frequently the consequent sufferings of his family are extreme. These considerations act as powerful influences to induce submission to arbitrary and unjust exactions. This is not, I grieve to say, a highly-wrought picture, put forth to enlist the sympathies or engage the feelings of those who possess either, but a case of everyday occurrence,—one which hundreds of weavers avert only by consenting to abatements, often as disgracefully, as unjustly demanded.

Of the general prevalence, and wide-spreading evils of this system of abatements, almost every town or district which I visited afforded but too convincing and painful evidence. The sufferers may be allowed to tell their tales in their own words.

John Smithers, of Middleton, silk weaver, states—

"That the abatements are very considerable. Much work that is made as well as work can be made is nevertheless abated. A weaver never knows what he is to get till he receives his money. The length of the yard required by the manufacturers is 37 inches."

Abel Kay, silk weaver, states—

"The abatements are general. Some masters abate more than others, but they all do so to a great extent. I consider I have been abated unjustly occasionally. I have not taken the advantage of the Arbitration Act, because I have nothing to back it. If a person did resort to this Act, he would get no more work, and then what could he do. That is the reason why they do not resort to it; and besides the weavers want money so badly when they have finished their cuts, that they cannot delay the receipt of it, which they must do if they resorted to arbitration."

John Turner, a silk weaver, states—

"I have been abated 22*s.* 11*d.* out of 4 cuts within the last year; twice a halfpenny a yard and twice a penny. It was for craping or cockeling. The count was 27 2-thread. It was occasioned by the stuff, and not by the weaver."

William Lord, a silk weaver, states—

"I am a weaver on a 72 plain satin cordeen. I was to have had 8*d.* a yard and drew but 5½*d.* It was charged that I had dressed it improperly. The total abatement was 18*s.* 9*d.* We agreed to refer it to an umpire. I was first charged with a stained shoot and then with the dressing by the umpire. I was never abated as much before. The first cut I took in was abated a penny a yard on a piece of 79 yards. There is a general complaint of the extent of the abatements."

Charles Woolstoncroft, silk weaver, of Middleton, states—

"I am a weaver on 36 or 24 3-thread. I had a warp out when the late King died. The ticket expressed it should be done in quick time. While I was working it I was taken ill and in consequence was 3 days over time. They abated me 1*d.* a yard on the piece of 96 yards and turned me out of work. The delay was occasioned solely by my illness. I have known many such like cases. Abatements for cockeling or craping are very common, and are frequently made when it is not the weaver's fault. If the dyer wrings the silk too hard, or when the winder in the mill winds the silk too hard on the bobbins it will strain the silk, or when the thrower throws it uneven or unlevel, either of these causes will make the silk cockle without the weaver having any power to prevent it. He knows nothing of it till he has it into cloth."

Richard Halliwell, a silk weaver, states:—

"I am a weaver on sarsenets; a son of mine took his work home (a plain sarsenet) about May last, and his employers said they should either abate him 4*s.* on the piece and turn him off, or 1*d.* a yard (on 32 yards) and give him a warp back. He gave him some time to consider which he preferred. Work was bad to get at that time, and the lad considered he had better get a warp, and he consented to the abatement of 1*d.* a yard. They did not even tell him what they abated him for. This is a common practice in Manchester."

Mr. Edward Curran, secretary to the Manchester committee, states—

"I find from 1826 up to the present period a reduction of the wages of the weavers has

been constantly going on. The great burthen under which the body of the weavers labour is the unjust abatements. Many of us overmake our work, on purpose to avoid the possibility of abatements, giving, in fact, our labour for nothing."

John Walters, weaver of baft check, of Manchester, states—

"I think the reductions that are made in the wages of the weavers are frequently made unnecessarily, and not forced by the state of the market. Many masters will make sales at a lower rate than the market price of the day, knowing that they have the power to pull down the wages of the weaver to the level of any price they dispose of their goods for. The necessities of the weavers compel them to take work at any price it is offered."

Thomas Brogan, weaver of ginghams and plain cotton goods, of Manchester, states—

"I am perfectly satisfied that in a general way the abatements are unfair. Occasionally, of course, a weaver may take home bad work, and deserve abatement. There is no remedy; at least the remedy is worse than the disease. I think masters reduce wages when there is no cause for it in the market, and that the low paying masters bring down the highest. All of them, however, are more willing to drop than to rise. It would much assist us if something was done to prevent this."

John Alexander Stewart, hand-loom weaver, of Ashton-under-Lyne, states—

"Abatements here are not so prevalent as in many places. It was formerly much more prevalent when we had more masters. Others may complain of abatements, but I have no occasion. I have been on several arbitrations in which I thought the abatements unjust, but not on my own account."

Mr. John Redfern, manufacturer, of Ashton-under-Lyne, states—

"The state of the market will regulate the prices of wages at all times, and where reductions have taken place it has been through this generally. I have known also reductions made which were not called for, and I have myself urged the weavers to prevent it if they could."

Mr. J. Barr, secretary to the committee of weavers, of Carlisle, states—

"It is in the power of the masters to reduce wages arbitrarily in weaving. The weaver are too poor to support a strike, and too numerous and too much scattered over the country to support or keep a union."

Joseph Ferguson, Esq., manufacturer, of Carlisle, states—

"I think there is too great facility given, and too much power in the hands of masters to reduce wages. Many small capitalists force sales to maintain their credit, and compel others to follow their example. Hence reductions in wages are paramount and of necessity."

Joseph Morgan states—

"I was in Manchester about three weeks ago, and was applied to by another weaver to arbitrate a cut for him. He had had a dispute with his employers. They wished to abate the weaver 2*d.* a yard. The set was a 30 2-thread, and was to be paid 3¾*d.* per yard. The weaver declined allowing the abatement. The master asked him, before me, if he would not stand the 2*d.* a yard, what would he stand? He said he would arbitrate. The master chose his own putter out as his arbitrator. We did not agree. The master's arbitrator proposed to reduce a penny a yard. I would not agree, and it was referred to a magistrate, and a farthing a yard was abated. The arbitration act is not worth a straw to the weaver. The best method of treating such cases would be, that three or five individuals should be selected from among the employers and the weavers to hear such cases, and whenever the weaver was found to be in the right the manufacturer should be fined, say 10*l.* for the first offence, and 50*l.* for the second. This would prevent many of these unjust exactions."

Mr. Samuel Bamford, of Middleton, states—

"A weaver requested me to act as arbitrator for him a few weeks ago in a disputed case. The price was 3½*d.* per yard. The master proposed to deduct 2½*d.* He named a neighbouring manufacturer as his arbitrator. We looked the cut over, and he proposed an abatement of 2*d.* a yard, which was ½*d.* less than the employer proposed. I refused them, and proposed another firm as umpires, or consent to an abatement of 1*d.* They looked it over, and gave an abatement of 1*d.* instead of 2½*d.*, which will show the reckless manner in which it is attempted to take the weaver's wages from them. If I had power I would not allow a manufacturer to make an abatement without making a return of it to some government or public officer, nor should he dispose of the work before he had done so. This would place the weaver in a better position than he now occupies. There should be a heavy penalty against failure of making the return."

William Heywood, of , silk weaver, states—

"I weave on sarsenets. I work at my own house. The rate of payment is 5¼*d.* per yard for 33 yards. I have a halfpenny for stamping, and a halfpenny for checking. These are included in the 5¼*d.* The last warp I took in I had been employed on and waiting

eight weeks within two days. My wages came to 1*l.* 14*s.* 6½*d.* When the putter out saw my work he said he would give me nothing for it. It has 8 patterns in about 20 inches. The previous piece was differently stamped, and I did not know I was not working the same, as he said nothing to me when he gave it me out. We had a long contest when he abated me 17*s.* 3*d.* out of the 34*s.* 6*d.* I submitted to it, and he has given me another warp. The piece I was making was with two warps, one was blanched, the other was plain. In the previous pattern they were uneven, and in this they should have come aside of each other, but I have not been informed of there being any difference. It is no use arbitrating, a man has no more chance than a cat against a horse; a man might lose a day or two, and pay ten or twelve shillings, and gain nothing after all. I have not been abated before, and in this case it was entirely a mistake. The mistake made no difference in the value of the piece, only in the pattern of it. I was once abated 2*s.* 6*d.* for the colours going, which the overlooker said he was sorry to abate, but he must do so to let his master see he looked at the work. When I was abated the 17*s.* 3*d.*, I had borrowed 11*s.* while I was weaving the cut, to enable me to live. I had but this for eight weeks; we are seven in family. I have one now in the Manchester Infirmary, who has been brought there solely through being clammed or starved. I have been obliged to take my clothes to the pop-shop (pawnbroker's) to get some food for Sunday. I put them in for 10*s.* I had never before been, or any one from my house, to such a place. There is never a day passes but one or another of us are abated in the way I was. If a man will not submit to abatements at the master's discretion, he must go elsewhere to seek for work, and this he frequently cannot find."

Robert Howarth states—

"I am a weaver on a machine in Fielding Street, Middleton. I am on a 30 figured gros de Naples; it is paid 6*d.* a-yard; the length is 95 yards, width 19 inches; I have been on it about nine weeks. I am a journeyman, and pay the master-weaver 3*d.* in the shilling. He finds loom rent, and fetches and takes home the work. It takes me generally eight weeks, because the materials are so bad; if they were good, I could do it in a month or five weeks. When my last job was finished the employer proposed to abate me 4½*d.* a yard for loss of colour; it had lost colour in parts of it; it was black and lavender colours. I refused to submit to the abatement, and proposed to arbitrate it. This was on Monday last. The putter-out was not there on Monday, and it could not be arbitrated until yesterday. They agreed to abate 3*d.* per yard, one half the price of weaving; I was obliged to submit to that reduction. Part of the colour was lost from the weather. There were five yards at the beginning, and two or three yards in other places. The total abatement was 23*s.* 3*d.*, and gave me but 6*s.* 4*d.*, which, with one yard of the cloth which was cut off, and valued at 3*s.* 6*d.* by the employer, is all I had for my eight weeks' work."

James Kenyon, silk weaver, states—

"About a fortnight ago I was in a silk warehouse in Manchester, and I heard the manufacturer say to another person, 'with respect to light-colour silks, you can bring them about 21 or 22 ounces (to the pound), and the blacks you can bring 24.' These, when weighed out to the weavers, would be expected to be brought back the same weight, or deductions made. In a pound, therefore, of this sort of silk, the weaver would have 12 ounces of silk, and 4 ounces of the superficial stuff, put in by the dyer. Whatever proportion of the latter flew off in the weaving (and a good deal would do so) would diminish the weight, and the weaver would be deducted for that amount of silk."

The fact spoken of by this witness is well known to all engaged in the silk trade. The silk is imported in the white or yellow state. When it is sent to the dyer (which it always is before being delivered out to the weaver) the manufacturer marks the colour he desires it to be dyed, and also the weight he expects or requires it to be brought home. Blacks and dark colours bear the best weighting, and the pound is frequently sent home 22, or even more ounces, the weight being made up by bone-dust, and other deleterious compositions. These give the silks when manufactured, an artificial degree of thickness and stability, and induce many "fair ladies" to pay an extra shilling a yard for silk of such substantial quality. Some of this rubbish evaporates in the winding and weaving, for the weight of which deficiency the grinding-masters deduct the price of silk. The more liberal make small allowances. The proficiency of a dyer was stated to be greatly tested by the amount of extra weight he could make the pound of silk to bear.

John Simpson, another weaver, states—

"On Saturday fortnight I took a piece of satin home; I laid it out at the warehouse; the employer found fault with the piece before he looked at it. They then opened it, and he and the putter-out went into another room together. The putter-out came back, and looked the cut through, and said he would abate me 3*d.* a yard. I was to have 9½*d.* a yard. I would not stand it; and he said I might arbitrate it. I left it, and a brother weaver agreed to be my arbitrator, if I could arbitrate it that day. The master refused to do so, and said I might come again on Monday. I went again on Monday with my arbitrator. They arbitrated, and the master's arbitrator wanted to take 6*d.* a yard off. They could not agree, and I stated my case to a lawyer, and he advised me to get a summons for the master to appear

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before the Magistrate. I did so, and the following day they appeared. The Magistrate asked for the cut, and it was not produced, and the case was put off till the following day for its production. The following day I went again, and the case was again put off. I was ultimately abated 2½ a yard, besides losing a week in attending about the arbitration."

Abatements by Employers.

John Asbridge Huddard states—

"I have woven for a highly respectable silk manufacturer at Manchester for eight years. During that eight years I have not been abated 8*d.*, and I firmly believe that my work has been no better than the rest of my neighbours. I have never heard them say I was short of weight. The effect, however, is, that my employer told me that if they did not abate their weavers they could not compete with other masters who did, as they were underselling them in the market. I have mentioned this to show that a manufacturer cannot be honest if he will, and compete with others."

John Rigley, of Middleton states—

"I have been a hand-loom weaver for 24 years, in all sorts of fancy-work, cottons and silks. Lately, all in sarsenets. I have suffered a good bit from undue abatements. I have woven for one house for 14 years together. My circumstances are such that you would not credit. I have not a mouthful of meat in my house, or a bit of coal at home, or a rag on my back that was not given to me. In October I took out a piece of work. It came to 30*s.* when woven. I was then out of work for three or four weeks. I had then another, which I hope will be out of the loom to-morrow. That will come to about 30*s.*, if I get my brass; that is all I could get as work from that time. Out of this 30*s.* there will be 3*d.* in the shilling to deduct for expenses, and wear and tear. I have a wife and four children, and how I have lived God only knows. Other cases are worse than mine. My eldest child is seven years of age."

Mr. Richard Boardsman, of Middleton, agent to Messrs Stone and Kemp, silk manufacturers of London, states —

"Subjects of dispute between weavers and employers are matters of common occurrence. They arise principally on account of abatements; they are very common in the trade; I do not think the present Arbitration Act affords the weavers the protection they require; I think every manufacturer should be compelled to keep a book, in which he should be forced to enter every abatement he makes, and make a return of them to a Government public officer, who should have the power of adjudicating in the case, and calling for the aid of competent persons to assist him in forming his judgment. I do not complain of the extra time the weavers keep out work intrusted to them. They generally bring in when they can, and frequently inconvenience themselves to oblige their employers by working extra time. In the fancy trade it is frequently very important to have them speedily executed. I have in my experience known putters-out reprimanded by their employers for not abating in cases where they, the putters-out, thought they could not do so conscientiously. I do not know whether they have a positive interest (pecuniary) in the abatements made."

Evidence of the general practice of abatements was offered me in almost every place I visited, which, in ninety cases out of a hundred, were said to be submitted to by the weavers, from the fear of losing further employment.

The means resorted to by employers to defeat the Arbitration Act, and to escape its powers, were also stated to display a degree of skill and ingenuity, which would be amusing, were they less mischievous in their operation. It is a very general, though not, as it should be, made a positive, custom for manufacturers to give out tickets with their work to their weavers. These contain the conditions on which the weavers consent to accept the work, and, as such, are usually held by Magistrates, to be specific agreements, which supersede the authority of the Act of Parliament, and take the cases out of it. I believe this to be an erroneous view of the subject; but I am not lawyer enough to have any great confidence in my own opinion, or to know how far it is a correct one. My idea always has been, that the law of the land cannot be superseded or set aside by the consent of any parties, and that it as much protects a man against himself as it does against the acts or injustice of his neighbour.

A Londonderry manufacturer's ticket is as follows :—

LARGY GREEN, LONDONDERRY, BALLYMONEY, COLERAINE.

No. 1282. 1*st September*, 1838.

18$^{oo}/_{8}$ Linen, 52 Yards, 79 Beers, 240 Pins.

The cloth of this web to count 20 shots of weft, through a 40-inch glass, and to measure 33 inches in width; for every shot less to be stopped 5*s.* per web. If returned in 21 days from this date, and sufficient work, dressed with flour dressing, without being rubbed, well picked, kept clean, free from grease, lumps, stubs, high threads, dropped warp, temple breaches, and every other imperfection, will be paid for weaving at the rate of 17*s.* per web, and if prime 5*s.* premium.—Deductions will be made for all imperfections. If longer detained 3*d.* per day will be stopped. Should the warp be complained of it must be returned on the beam, and

in the heddles, if required. When the web is returned, or the work discontinued, no settlement will be given until the reed and remaining weft, &c. be returned in good order. This web, when woven, to be left entirely to Mr. John Simpson, of Largy Green, near Newtonlimavady, for ascertaining the quantity of yarn, both in warp and weft, and the wages to be paid without appealing from whatever decision he may make. Attendance at Largy, on Tuesdays; Londonderry, on Wednesdays; Ballymoney, on Thursdays; and Coleraine, on Saturdays; from 6 to 12 o'clock.

††† This ticket must be produced, or no attendance can be given.

The price herein stated is 17*s.* per web, and if prime, 5*s.* premium,—22*s.* being in fact the current rate. Deductions to be made for all imperfections. But the pinching condition is,—

"This web, when woven, to be left entirely to Mr. John Simpson, for ascertaining the quantity of yarn both in warp and weft, *and the wages to be paid* WITHOUT APPEALING FROM WHATEVER DECISION HE MAY MAKE."

Now, in this case, the Mr. John Simpson, who is made the dispenser of justice, instead of the Magistrate, is actually the servant and putter-out of the employer, and as such, the very individual between whom and the weaver any dispute as to abatements would probably arise. The effect, of course, is to deprive the poor weaver of any remedy, though the abatement may be double the 5*s.* conditional, on the work being deemed to be "prime." Besides these stringent conditions, the same employers require each weaver to give a surety in the following form:—

LARGY GREEN. 18

Messrs R——— and S———

I request that you will give

such warps and weft in your line as he may require and suits your convenience; and in case of your doing so, I hereby engage to become responsible to the amount of (until this ticket be withdrawn,) for the safe and regular return of said warps and wefts, and other materials, in a well finished state, as also for damages.

Some of the Carlisle manufacturers adopt the following tickets:—

_____ No. 605.

1000 Slay. 56 Porters. 3 Cuts. 60 Yards.

No. 10583.

Must be dressed with the best flour dressing.

5*s.* per cut.

1*s.* per cut extra if approved.

9 shots of weft on the glass.

If any dispute arises about the length, the piece shall be doubled and measured by hand in the centre.

The cut marks to be distinctly in the cloth at both ends.

*** 6*d.* per day deducted off work kept out longer than 28 days.

No extra weft allowed.

N.B.—No allowance will be made for broken yarn, unless it is seen when beaming by a person from the warehouse.

For John Ferguson and Co.,

May 11, 1838. L. A.

Now here it will be observed, the mode of quietly abating 20 per cent. on the amount of the weaver's rate of wages is "1*s.* per cut extra if approved." The market rate of weaving being 6*s.* per cut for the description of work herein referred to, the employer has only to say he disapproves of it, to secure him this abatement without risk or liability to arbitration.

Another Carlisle ticket is:—

_____ No. 333.

15 robes.

4 cuts, 2 yds., and 10 in., on 36 in. Porters, 70.

WARP

43 In robe. Spotted.

No. 51.

1100.

Must be dressed with the best flour dressing.

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ABATEMENTS BY EMPLOYERS.

10*s.* 6*d.* per cut.
1*s.* per cut extra if approved.
10 shots of weft on the glass.

On all pieces which are to be split up the centre, sixpence per cut will be deducted if they are not carefully cut, and the selvages neatly pasted.

If any dispute arises about the length, the piece shall be doubled and measured by hand in the centre.

No pins to be left in the cloth.

N.B.—No allowance will be made for broken yarn, unless it is seen when beaming by a person from the warehouse.

For Peter Dixon and Sons,

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Here again we have the "1*s.* per cut extra if approved."

Mr. James Graham, of the establishment of Ferguson and Chambers, manufacturers at Carlisle, was examined on this point. He says—

"We give out tickets with our work. They express, '1*s.* per cut extra if approved.' This practice has been in operation about 18 months. It originated in consequence of there being frequent cases of arbitration between the masters and the men. *The masters generally got the worst of it,* and this plan was adopted to prevent the practice. It has been found perfectly effectual in preventing arbitrations."

Joseph Brown Hanson, a Carlisle hand-loom weaver, says, on this subject—

"It is considered as an undue advantage taken of the workmen. If the abatement made from the weaver does not exceed this 1*s.*, he has no power of appealing under the Act of Parliament."

Mr. Joseph Ferguson, a manufacturer, says—

"Mr. Dixon first introduced the plan of paying '1*s.* per cut extra if approved.' He did it from the best of motives, but it has subsequently been abused, and has become, I think, an evil."

Mr. George Dixon, himself speaking on this subject, says—

"In the end of 1836 and beginning of 1837 there was great commotion among the workmen, so much so that if 3*d.* was stopped an arbitration was called for. A union was then newly formed to which I attributed this, and to avoid this unpleasantness I had the word 'extra' introduced, that we might keep the power of withholding that shilling in our own hands. I never heard a complaint against it until I heard it in this court. We take a weekly account of all our stoppages, and I find, on examining our books, that the total amount of our stoppages has varied from 10*s.* to 20*s.* in each 100*l.* We never take one shilling of these stoppages ourselves, but apply the whole of them to charitable purposes."

This highly honourable but unique fact was subsequently confirmed by other witnesses.

Another manufacturer's ticket runs thus:—

"*No wages promised.* Weaving paid according to the manner the work is executed."

COMPETITION AMONG MASTERS.

4.—*Competition among Masters.*

Competition among masters was almost invariably adduced as one of the minor causes of the lowness of the weaver's wages. It was endeavoured to be shown that any "unprincipled master," as the weavers term the low-paying ones, has the opportunity of forcing down the most liberal to his niggardly scale, or of driving him out of the market. If, for instance, the current rate of wages for weaving a particular fabric be 6*s.* the cut, one of the "unprincipled" will search out a particular place or district where, from any cause, labour is abundant and work scarce, and offer this sort of work at say 5*s.* the cut. The necessities of the weavers, it is assumed, invariably compel them to accept the price offered; they have no alternative, they state, between that and starvation, or recourse to the poor-rates. By the saving of the shilling in the price of weaving, the "unprincipled" is enabled to produce, and offer his goods in the market, at a lower rate than the higher-paying manufacturer, and thereby not only undersell him, but cause a positive depreciation of the value of his stock in hand exactly proportionate to the amount of such reduced rate of prices. To meet these two disadvantages, the liberal master, in his turn, is constrained to come down a shade lower than the previously reduced rate of the unprincipled one, because he has not only to meet him in the same markets on at least equal terms, but he is also forced to endeavour thus to recover the whole, or such part as is so attainable, of his money loss, by the decreased value of his stock of manufactured goods. This, I was assured by the most opulent of the manufacturers, was a case of every-day occurrence, and an evil of great magnitude,

the reductions almost invariably originating with small and needy manufacturers, who are not holders of stock. When the latter have succeeded in getting their work done at this 5*s*. per cut, say, for example, at Colne or Burnley, he then turns round on his Preston or Blackburn weavers, and, as soon as they have finished their webs at the stipulated rate of 6*s*. per cut, he tells them "he has no more work to give out at that price, as he finds he can get it done at Colne for 5*s*.; they may take another web at that rate if they please." Here again their necessities compel acquiescence, and they take the web at the reduced rate. By the time they have begun upon the weaving at this price, the Colne weaver has finished his web, and he, in turn, is told "he can have no more work at that rate, as the employer finds he can get it done at home on those terms. He may take another web at 4*s*. 6*d*." This acceded to, the same game is again played, until the weaver is brought to the lowest possible scale at which he will, with starvation staring him full in the face, consent to weave the web. The maxim of "half a loaf being better than no bread" causes such attempts to be successful, always, be it remembered, coupled with the fact of the labourers being more plentiful than the amount of labour. Another great evil of this system is, that, at the very time depressed markets, or slack demand, are put forth as the ostensible causes of such reduction of wages, the weaver, in order to bring his 5*s*. rate of wages as near as practicable to the claims for bread upon him by his family, will work many additional hours in order to produce a greater quantity of cloth; and the consequence is, that the amount of production is stimulated and increased, when, if the alleged causes of reduction be truly stated, it ought to be limited, or curtailed. Increasing production again operates on prices, and these are thereby further reduced, and necessarily augment the embarrassments, and diminish the rate of profits.

On this subject many of the employers coincide in opinion with the weavers.

Mr. John Scott, an intelligent weaver, at Salford, thus speaks:—

"The very peculiar circumstances in which the hand-loom weavers are situated, preclude the possibility of their having the slightest control over the value of their own labour. In the first place, the fact that the weavers of even one employer may be scattered over an extensive district presents a constant opportunity to that employer, if he be so minded, to make his weavers the means of reducing the wages of one another alternately; to some he will tell that others are weaving for so much less, and that they must have no more, or go without work, and this in turn he tells the rest: this has often been done, and is generally practised at present in the silk-trade. Now the difficulty, and loss of time, it would occasion the weavers to discover the truth or falsehood of this statement, the fear that, in the interval, others would step in and deprive them of the work so offered (for their poverty is such as to make them afraid of losing it at any price), the jealousy and resentment enkindled in the minds of all, tending to divide them in sentiment and feeling, all conspire to make the reduction certain to be effected. And again, the circumstances of the hand-loom weavers, differing in quality from those of any other trade, cause the protection of their trade, by means of unions, extremely impracticable, while, by means of unions, other trades protect themselves: and the difference is this—when strikes take place in other trades, such as the coach-makers, the machine-makers, engravers, tailors, dyers, and others, the masters have to send their agents to distant parts to seek for workmen, and to bring them to work upon the ground which the others have left, which is not only attended with very great expense, but the men, if they get any, must be destitute of manly feelings and of integrity, and they must conceive themselves to be inferior workmen, or they could never brook the obloquy and contempt, as well as the low wages, consequent on accepting of such employment. To avoid these inconveniencies, the coach-manufacturer cannot send his coach materials from London to Manchester to have his orders accomplished; neither will the master tailor send his orders from Manchester to Glasgow—the danger of misfits, and other casualties, effectually prevent such a step. The master engraver, by sending his rollers and his plates to other places to be executed, in such a style, and in such a time, would have to run the chance of being disappointed, with the loss of rent upon his building, his machinery standing idle, and the danger of losing his trade: and thus it is with the master mechanic, dyer, and others, and therefore it is more to their interest to give a living price for labour, than incur such losses by striving to reduce wages. But the case is different with the hand-loom manufacturer; he has none of those difficulties standing in hi way: if his workmen should turn out to resist his arbitrary deductions from the value of their labour, he sends his work to wherever weavers can be found, and, having to provide only the material to be woven into cloth, has no other risk to be run, except the slight disadvantage of changing from one set of weavers to another, and a sufficient number have at all times been found to render futile almost every attempt to prevent reductions by means of turn-outs; and this is through the weavers being scattered throughout the country having to provide their own loom and other weaving materials, and having also to perform the work in their own dwellings. With these favourable circumstances, the manufacturer has it in his power, at all times, to reduce his weavers' wages; and, however unwilling they may be to accept of the reduction, the thought that others at a distance may be weaving for the price offered, and the fear of

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being thrown without employment, induces them to submit, let the price be ever so insufficient for the wants of themselves and families. Therefore, it is not the great number of the weaving body, nor their supposed want of intelligence and skill, neither is it a want of moral rectitude, as some would insinuate, nor is it mainly through the corn-laws and the influence of machinery, that the hand-loom weavers are reduced to their present state of want and wretchedness; but it is the very peculiar circumstances in which they are unavoidably placed, differing essentially from those of any other trade, and rendering them a ready, and the constant prey of the rapacious and grinding manufacturer; and this is the principal reason why boards of trade are necessary for the protection of the hand-loom weavers.

"In addition to the causes above set forth, the repeated reductions made by masters who are foremost to reduce, necessarily compels the rest to follow their example, however unwilling they may be to do so. The manufacturer who has reduced wages is enabled to bring his goods into the market at a lower price than those who give a higher rate, and therefore, on the principle of self-defence, they are obliged to reduce also, or cease manufacturing but at a loss. It is the objection that is always alleged when reductions are offered, and alleged, not by those only who are unwilling to reduce, but by those who are amongst the foremost. The plea has force in it. It is often the case that reductions are effected by such false statements as I have alluded to."

George Jacson, Esq., of the firm of Horrocks and Jacson, of Preston, very extensive manufacturers of printing cloths, shirtings, cambrics, &c., says :—

"I admit the competition among masters to be a great evil, and that its tendency is occasionally that the low-price paying masters do bring down the wages of those who are paying, and who are disposed to pay, a higher rate; and, did this competition only exist in our own country—that is, among our own manufacturers—I might be less indisposed to listen to a legislative plan for regulating and equalizing wages; but it must be remembered, we have foreign manufacturers also to compete with, and that now the Americans are successfully competing with us in domestics, and some other fabrics, in Brazil, the Pacific, and elsewhere. I myself buy domestics occasionally in America cheaper than I can in Manchester. If, from any cause, any number of masters, be they low-priced or otherwise, were to cease putting out work, the weaver would then lose the broken staff on which he now rests."

Mr. James Parker, agent to Mr. Gillon, manufacturer, Preston, says :—

"The wages of weavers are constantly reduced for want of an uniformity of wages. There are houses in this town now paying 6*d*. less than us, for exactly the same sort of goods. If we reduce to their prices they would directly reduce still lower. At Blackburne, where they make the same goods, prices are always under ours. We have been obliged to give up the manufacturing of several kinds of goods, from finding that other masters produce them at a lower price elsewhere, and that, consequently, our stocks remain on hand. I attribute the distressed condition of the weavers to the competition among masters, the competition by power, and to over-production."

James Spencer, weaver of ginghams and jaconets, of Manchester, states :—

"The small capitalists are usually the first to reduce wages, because the lower they pay the more goods they can produce with the same amount of capital. The most respectable manufacturers are often desirous of keeping up wages, but cannot compete with these grinding ones."

Mr. Robert Bradshaw, manufacturer, of Haggate, states :—

"One part of our manufacturers constantly pay lower prices than others, and are enabled to undersell the higher paying masters. I would recommend a fixed rate of wages being agreed upon, or fixed, for two, three, or four months. A master manufacturer should be chosen for each place or district, or a given district. I should see no objection in vesting the choice in the weavers who are householders, or in those who pay poor-rates, or whose houses are assessed. Such masters should fix the rate for a given district, and no master should be permitted to pay a lower rate than that fixed upon. The duration of the fixed rate should be determined on by the masters chosen as representatives. Many small masters without capital are forced to sell, and must take any price offered. They then come home, and pull down wages to fit in the price."

John Alexander Stewart, hand-loom weaver, of Ashton-under-Lyne, states :—

"The low-paying masters will generally bring down the others to their rates. There may be some who will reduce of their own accord unnecessarily, but this I believe to be the pressing cause."

Mr. James Graham, connected with the firm of Messrs. Ferguson and Chambers, of Carlisle, states :—

"The competition among masters may reduce wages. We have reduced because others had done so before."

Mr. Jonathan Brett, member of the Committee of Weavers of Carlisle, states :—

"The masters, from 1817, have been fighting against each other, and all trying what advantage they could get for themselves, at the expense of the weavers."

William Norris, weaver of tick, at Eccles, states:—

"The competition among masters, and the desire to get rich on their part as speedily as possible, has had a great effect in reducing wages."

5.—The disproportionate number of weavers to the labour required to be performed by them.

6.—The fact of a knowledge of the weaving-trade being easily acquired, and of the trade itself being open to all classes of unemployed persons.

To these two causes, more than any other, the most intelligent of my witnesses attributed the low rate of wages of the weavers.

Many fabrics, formerly made by the hand-loom, are now exclusively manufactured by the power-loom, such as fustians, and plain and printing cloths, which formed the principal portion of the Lancashire hand-loom weavers' trade. The hands so thrown out of employment have, in many instances, resorted to other occupations, but to nothing like the extent to which their labour has been superseded by the use of machinery. The weaver will stand by his loom while it will enable him to exist, however miserably; and many, induced temporarily to quit it, have returned to it again, when work was to be had. A variety of causes tend, I think satisfactorily, to account for, if not to extenuate, the pertinacity with which an employment is clung to, yielding, as has been shown, such scanty and inadequate remuneration.

1st.—It gratifies that innate love of independence which all more or less feel, by leaving the workman entirely the master of his own time, and the sole guide of his actions. He can play or idle, as feeling or inclination leads him; rise early or late; apply himself assiduously, or carelessly, as he pleases; and work up at any time, by increased exertion, hours previously sacrificed, to indulgence, or recreation. Beyond the necessity imposed upon him of yielding a given quantity of labour to produce a given amount of earnings, he has little, if any, control. In the proportion he is willing to sacrifice the one, he can dispense with the other, and idleness carries with it no punishment, beyond the restrictions of enjoyment which arise from its being unremunerated. There is scarcely another condition of any portion of our working population, thus free from external control. The factory operative is not only mulct his wages for absence, but, if of frequent occurrence, discharged altogether from his employment. The bricklayer, the carpenter, the painter, the joiner, the stonemason, the out-door labourer, have each their appointed daily hours of labour, a disregard of which would lead to the same result. Similar restraint is carried throughout all our commercial, and trading establishments. Another cause of the attachment of the weaver to his precarious occupation arises, I am persuaded, in many cases, from better, and more commendable feelings. It concentrates the family under one roof; gives to each member of it a common interest; leaves the children under the watchful eye of the parent; and, the fate of one being the fate of all, it is borne, be it harsh or otherwise, without repining. "*Home is home*, be it ever so homely," is a trite but an apposite proverb, the truth of which cannot be more practically evinced, than it has been by hundreds of families of hand-loom weavers. A third cause, and an influentially operating one, is the remembrance of bygone days. Few weavers but recollect the "good old times" when their labours were four-fold remunerated, compared with their present rates of earnings; and it is hard to cast off altogether the cherished, though it may be but a delusive, hope, that such days are past never to return. Many, who, if interrogated on the subject, would perhaps deny being actuated by such feelings, would nevertheless admit that an influence is exercised over them by such reminiscences; and that some latent prospect of an ulterior change for the better induces them to continue in an employment at present so ill requited. "It is a long lane that has no turning" has been more than once offered me as a significant apology for the weaver's continuance at his loom.

Apart from these influences, which may be regarded as of a personal nature, there are others which greatly tend to keep up, if not to augment, the number of hand-loom weavers. The trade if it may be so called, particularly in its inferior branches, is one, of all others, the most easily acquired and understood. I have had abundant testimony, as well as direct personal proof, that a young person of either sex, of from 13 to 17 years of age, possesses the requisite physical capacity, and will, with a few weeks' practice, acquire the requisite skill, to weave an ordinary cotton fabric, as well as the most robust and most expert adult weaver of the same

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CAUSES OF DEPRESSION.

description of goods. The peculiar facilities moreover afforded the destitute and unemployed of engaging in this occupation, will also account, in a great degree, for the keeping up the numbers in an employment so scantily remunerated. It was proved to me that a young person may, in the neighbourhood of Burnley, Colne, &c., hire a lodging, with the use of a loom, for one shilling a-week. For this small sum, acquired in some instances by a day, or half a day's mendicancy, a person enters on a home, and on a trade. The weaver with whom he lodges, who possesses usually a fixed connexion with some employer, will supply his lodger with materials to enable him to go to work, and afford him the necessary instruction to perform it, receiving in return a stipulated proportion of the earnings: with such probationary assistance, continued for a few weeks, the scholar becomes an adept, and is fairly launched into the community of hand-loom weavers.

The class of "journeymen," as they are termed, is one conducive to the same result. The practice, in their case, is to give their labour to their employer, who is an operative weaver. The latter finds loom, warp, and weft (materials), receiving in return one-fourth part of the earnings of the journeyman; the remaining three-fourths form the fund of maintenance.

On foreign competition, Mr. Daniel Howard, manager of Mr. Spencer's works at Patricroft, states,

"The foreigners manufacture for themselves and their neighbours, and our goods, after paying a heavy duty, must be brought to market at their price. These duties have been laid on, I think, in retaliation for our laying on duties on their commodities, particularly the duties put on corn. In Switzerland they manufacture the same goods as we do, and in Russia also, which causes our goods to be sold at a lower price."

Mr. W. S. Lees, of the firm of Fletcher and Lees, of Middleton, manufacturers of twilled nankeen, states,—

"Our export trade in nankeens has declined through the competition of foreigners. They are now making them in Switzerland, Bohemia, and in Silesia. In the interior of Germany, I am informed, they get the same length of cloth wove for four shillings, paid in potatoes, meal, and oil, for which we are paying eight shillings in money. They make from English twist, which is dyed abroad."

William Dixon, of Wigan, weaver of diaper, states,—

"The foreign manufacturer gets his work done cheaper than the English, who cannot consequently compete with the foreigner."

James Stafford, weaver of shawls, of Manchester, states,—

"I think a higher rate of wages to the weaver would increase our consumption abroad as well as at home. The people of England would, owing to such increase of wages, be enabled to consume a larger quantity of foreign productions."

John Alexander Stewart, hand-loom weaver of Ashton-under-Lyne, states,—

"That the effects of the great influence of foreign labour, with home labour, are very detrimental to the interests of the hand-loom weavers."

Joseph Greenhalgh, chairman of the Ashton committee of weavers, states,—

"I am of opinion that it would be a source of relief to reduce all the duties upon raw silk, and put a higher rate of duties upon the wrought silks of other countries. If we had the raw material free, we should be enabled to compete with foreigners."

Peter Walker, Esq., of the firm of Walker and M'Clure, silk-manufacturers at Patricroft, states,—

"The exportation of machinery has mainly enabled the foreigner to compete with the English manufacturer."

Joseph Rylands, Esq., manufacturer of Wigan, states,—

"We are recently adding to our productions by power, and should do so to a greater extent, if we had confidence in the foreign policy of the country with respect to trade.

"Whilst the present corn-laws are allowed to exist, and the free exportation of machinery or its permission for export by order in council, with a duty on the raw materials in the import, and the high foreign duty imposed upon our manufacturers in the export, there is danger in investing capital in machinery to produce by power. The greater portion of our productions are for exportation, and these causes have in some degree retarded the increase of such productions."

REMEDIES SUGGESTED.

The remedies suggested by most of the employers, and many of the employed, were,—

The repeal of the corn-laws, and a removal of all restrictions upon commerce,

together with the repeal of any existing duties on raw materials, used in manufacturing processes.

The weavers (apart from their employers) urged almost universally the establishment of Boards of Trade to regulate wages. The committees of many of the weaving towns put in evidence the drafts of the legislative protection they sought. As these usually were of considerable length, and differed but slightly from each other, I have selected the proposed Bill of the Manchester Committee, put in by Mr. Edward Curran. In so doing I trust I am not deviating from that portion of your instructions wherein you desire I should "require every person who proposes a remedy to explain in detail both the object to be effected, the means to be used, and the process by which the proposed means are to produce the contemplated effect. Those means should be stated with the fulness and precision of a law; so that, if the suggestion were adopted, the law for affecting it would be ready."

"Copy of an Act to Improve the Condition of the Hand-loom Weavers.

"Whereas great distress and suffering exists amongst a very numerous class of artisans in this kingdom who are employed in the manufacture of silk, woollen, cotton, and linen, upon hand-loom, by reason of the unequal and inadequate wages that they are paid for their work by manufacturers who employ them: And whereas it has become expedient to remedy the same by adopting a regulation to determine from time to time the lowest rate of wages that shall be paid by any manufacturer to any hand-loom weaver employed in the manufacture of silk, woollen, cotton, and linen.

"Be it therefore enacted, by and with the consent, &c.

"1. That from and after the passing of this Act, Her Majesty's Government shall issue orders for a definite number of manufacturers and hand-loom weavers in each of the manufacturing districts of the United Kingdom, to meet in their respective district, in the most central place, and form a Council or Board of Trade; and that this Council or Board, as it may be hereafter termed, shall, within the period of fourteen days from the date on which the order is given, decide the lowest price to be paid for weaving the various fabrics of hand-loom goods given out in their division of the county, which price shall be the lowest paid for the weaving and winding of such fabrics for the period of three or six months, as may be agreed, or until the Council or Board shall deem it necessary to meet again, and advance or reduce the prices agreed to at the last sitting, according to the state of the market.

"2. That immediately on the publishing of this order, the manufacturers shall meet in their respective districts and elect two of their number for each of the fabrics made or given out to be woven within the boundary of their jurisdiction; and also that the weavers shall meet in their respective districts and elect two of their number for each of the same fabrics, that is, two for each fabric, chosen by public meetings of the weavers regularly called, and that the Council or Board of Trade thus constituted shall be elected annually, and shall meet once every three or six months, or oftener if necessary.

"3. That in discussing the proper price of any fabric, should it at any time occur that one-half of the Council or Board is opposed to the other by a parity of votes on the question under their consideration, then that portion of the Council who represent the master manufacturers shall appoint one person, and the operative portion another, and the president a third person, and the decision of the three thus appointed shall define and decide the lowest price to be paid for that fabric or description of work for the next three or six months as may be agreed upon.

"4. That the prices thus regulated by the different Councils or Boards of Trade for each of their respective districts shall be published in a Commercial Gazette immediately after their semi-annual sittings.

"5. That after the various minimums are duly registered in the Gazette, should the weavers of any district consider that their scale of prices is too low when compared with those of other districts where work is given out of the same description, they may call another meeting of the Council or Board if two-thirds of those engaged in working the fabric or fabrics complained of draw up, sign, and forward a requisition to the president of their own district, who shall on the receipt of this requisition be authorized and ordered by law to call another meeting of the Council or Board, in which meeting their table of prices shall be reconsidered, and, in the event of not agreeing, an appeal shall be made to the presidents of its three immediate districts where work of the same kind is manufactured, and their decision shall be final.

"6. That the prices officially gazetted by each Council or Board shall be the lowest prices paid to any district drawing work from, or depending upon, the manufacturing district over which each Council or Board presides.

"7. That when any district of the country remote from any centre of manufacturers draws work from two or more centres, the table or list of prices of whichever centre sends the greatest amount of any fabric of work to such district or districts shall regulate the payment of such work done by the weavers of such remote district.

"8. That the weavers residing in any district so distant from the centre of its hand-loom manufacturers as to lay them under the necessity of drawing their work through the medium of agents, shall pay the cost of carriage of their materials, and all necessary expenses incurred in the agency of their work.

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Remedies Suggested.

"9. That any district not embraced in any of the centres of hand-loom manufacturers, and which make, or may hereafter make, goods to an equal extent with that of the lowest centre in point of numbers specified in this Act, shall, by procuring evidence to that effect, become itself a regular centre, and have its prices regulated by its own Council or Board of masters and men duly appointed by virtue of this Act.

"10. That two-thirds of the weavers in any small manufacturing district, over which no Council or Board of masters and men presides, shall, by drawing up, signing, and forwarding a memorial or petition to the president of its immediate centre or district where work similar to their own is made, have their prices regulated by its Council or Board.

"11. That any manufacturer or agent giving out work under the published list or table of prices agreed to be paid within the limits of the centre or district in which such manufacturer or agent resides or puts out his work, shall be liable to a penalty of not less than 20*l.* sterling for his first violation of this Act, and double the amount for every succeeding offence.

"12. That the president of each district Committee, Board, or Council, as it may be hereafter termed, shall be duly appointed by the Government.

"13. That no master manufacturer shall be qualified to act as president, in any district or centre of the United Kingdom, where this Act is brought into operation, to regulate the wages of hand-loom weaving.

"14. That any weaver engaged in hand-loom weaving in any district or centre where a legal Council or Board may be sitting, or where they may have sat to direct and agree upon the prices to be paid for the various fabrics manufactured in such district or centre, such weaver taking work at a price below the minimum agreed upon at the previous sitting (of the Council or Board) to his taking out the said work, shall be fined not less than 10*l.*, and, in the event of his not being able to pay the said fine, shall be imprisoned in one of Her Majesty's jails for two calendar months for the first offence, and not less than three months for each succeeding offence.

"15. That all abatements made by the master manufacturer, or his agent, for real or supposed faults be stamped upon the piece so abated in the presence of the weaver previous to his being paid for the said piece so abated by the master, his foreman, agent, or any other person acting for him, where the weavers are ordered to return their work when finished.

"16. That all works made by hand-loom weavers be paid for by the yard, the ell, or the dozen, as is considered the most proper, according to the custom of the place where such goods are manufactured, whether they be silk, woollen, cotton, or linen, and that no more length be required than 36 inches to the yard by the manufacturer so employing such hand-loom weaver, in any and every branch of goods so made within the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

"*Manchester, April 6th,* 1838." "Edward Curran.

The previous service of an indentured apprenticeship, before weavers should be allowed to take out work, on their own account, was also strongly urged by many weavers, as a measure that would afford a salutary check to an undue increase of the number of weavers in the labour-market, and also be greatly conducive to the improvement of our manufactures, by ensuring better workmen. It was stated that most other trades did, in effect, through the regulations of their body, or the instrumentality of trades unions, accomplish this object; but that the weavers were so scattered about the country, that they were prevented combining for this, or any other object, and therefore were always made the prey of the selfish, or avaricious employer. In the recollection of almost all the old weavers, it was stated, that the practice of apprenticing to the loom was general, and that at such periods, the labour of the weaver had been adequately requited; but that, since this wholesome custom had been abolished, vast numbers of destitute persons had entered the trade, which, with agricultural labour, were the only refuges, and become one of the main causes of the reductions which had taken place in the wages of weaving. On this subject Mr. William Harling, a manufacturer, states:—

"We have a large number of men in the trade who should not be in it at all, men who take up the trade for a period, and do their work very badly; they deserve heavy fines. I would not employ such men; the majority of them are men who come into the town from a distance, and, when they could not get other employment, turned to as weavers. I do not think the weavers, as a body, are inclined to litigate. I only speak from my own experience, and, know not what other masters have found them. The weavers have not been in an improving state for some years, nor do I look forward to any improvement while the number is so large. It is a general evil that they are not obliged to serve a regular apprenticeship. In less than 12 months inexperienced men will draw out work as weavers; they will not be good or efficient workmen in that time; their work will be badly done, and such men are a constant drag on the trade. These are the sort of men that will take work at the lowest rate of wages, or at any rate offered, and spoil the work when they had got it. A legislative enactment, compelling men to serve as apprentices, would be advantageous."

James Castles states:—

"I would prevent an increase of hands, by requiring a seven years' apprenticeship from

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the weavers, prior to working as such. It would be satisfactory to me, though a weaver with a large family. At present our children are put to work before they have received any education, and, indeed, before they are of an age fit for work. If such an arrangement operated harshly in a particular instance, it could not be avoided; but it would not be complained of, as it would manifestly be of interest to the whole."

Remedies Suggested.

Richard Cahorn states:—

"If persons arrived at weaving in the same way as persons arrived at other trades, that is by serving regular apprenticeships, from five to seven years, it would greatly benefit all. Hands would be less numerous, and more capable of doing their work well. This would guard against much of the distress we have experienced, by reducing the number of hands. The manufacturer would maintain his respectability and character in the trade, by having good goods or articles in lieu of inferior ones, which he now has, through the causes I have enumerated.

"We have no trade that bears the name of a trade, to which a boy would not have to serve an apprenticeship, except weaving. Stone-cutters, bricklayers, carpenters, hatters, shoemakers, upholsterers, tailors, printers, book-binders, painters, tinmen, and even chimney-sweeps, all require apprenticeships for seven years. Is not the trade of the weaver as important to society, to himself, and to his family, as any I have enumerated? I think more. They do more for the home trade than any other, and altogether more than all put together for the foreign trade; they have made more fortunes for our merchants, than any other class of men. There is no remedy I can see so effectual, or so efficient I believe, as a wholesome system of apprenticeship. It would go further for the good of the trade than anything else I have heard of, or seen. It would give us good workmen and good work, instead of bad workmen and bad work, and, by lessening the number of hands in the market, benefit the condition of those remaining in it."

Much evidence of a similar nature, was adduced throughout the whole district of my inquiry.

Part III.—In reference to Instructions from Central Board.

Instruction from Central Board.

Having attempted to lay before you, in the best way in my power, what is

1st. The actual condition of the weavers, as evidenced by the amount of their money earnings;

2nd. The alleged causes of that condition; and,

3rd. The suggested remedies for its improvement;

I proceed to the consideration of such of the other branches of my detailed instructions, as my inquires enabled me to judge of.

1. I am of opinion that the ordinary hours of labour of the weaver, when work is attainable, may be estimated, on the average, at 14 daily.

2. I think the weavers wait for, or are out of work, about one-fourth of their time, on an average of years.

3. With few exceptions, the weavers are not now in the habit of receiving apprentices, or journeymen. The weaving is so ill-requited, that no man, who has the opportunity of bringing up his child to any other trade, will put him to the weaving; most country weavers, however, still bring their children up to the loom, for lack of such opportunity of otherwise providing for them.

4. They are, to a very limited extent, in the receipt of parochial relief—at Blackburne, Colne, Burnley, and Wigan, more so than elsewhere, from the manufactures in which they are there engaged being the least paid. In this district they have been assisted by public subscriptions, and also at Carlisle: at the latter place by money wages of 6*s*. per week, in exchange for labour, in repairing and improving public walks. Of 200 persons so relieved at Carlisle, in April and May, 1837, about three-fourths were weavers.

5. I believe they do not possess adequate elementary scriptural information, and are not, generally, frequenters of places of worship. It is right I should add, that the almost invariable excuse made for such non-attendance was the want of decent apparel, and the fact of exceedingly long weekly toil at the loom. The insufficiency of existing church-accommodation for the working classes, was also occasionally mentioned as a cause of their non-attendance. It was urged, that in most of the old churches the entire space was occupied by private pews, to which the poor had not access; and that in many of those of modern erection the greater part of the sittings were rented, to give the incumbent an income, and therefore not attainable by persons in such depressed circumstances as the great bulk of the hand-loom weavers.

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In the churches of St. Jude, at Manchester, under the ministry of the Rev. J. P. O'Leary, and Christ Church, Belfast, under that of the Rev. Thomas Drew, where extensive accommodation is gratuitously afforded to the poor, and both of which are situated in weaving districts, the attendance every sabbath was crowded; and it was stated that the pious efforts of these excellent men had produced a marked change in the character and condition of the poor in their respective neighbourhoods.

6. I do not think that the weavers, as a body, particularly understand *the principles* of the machinery and implements which they employ, or the means of improving them. Where improvements have been made, they have usually emanated from some skilled employer, or scientific person, such as the drop-box, fly-shuttle, jacquard, &c.

7. Many of them are acquainted with the number, and comparative accessibleness of the markets for their labour; and great numbers of unmarried weavers, particularly the class of journeymen, avail themselves of them, and migrate from place to place, where labour is in demand, or best requited. These sort of wandering, or travelling weavers, were regarded with disfavour by the constantly-resident, who were fixed in their locations by large families, or other causes, and who considered these importations as injurious competition, the effect of which was to reduce the price of labour.

8. They do not generally subscribe to book societies, or frequent mechanics' institutions, but, where any pains have been taken to induce them to do so, they have invariably been attended with success. In the townships of Bedford and Pennington (Leigh) a reading society was established about seven years ago. At first it made little progress, but, owing to the efforts made by Mr. Richard Guest, a retired manufacturer, and Messrs. Higgings and Crumpton, the librarians, the society is now on a firm and respectable footing. The library comprises above 1200 volumes. Members residing within two miles of it may borrrow books for 14 days, and those beyond that distance, for 21 days. I obtained, from Mr. Guest, the following enumeration of the trades of the several subscribing members.

Classification of the Trade of the several Subscribers to the Bedford and Pennington Reading Society. April, 1838.

Bedford.

51 Weavers.	4 Cloggers.
1 Sawyer.	2 Dressers.
2 Joiners.	4 Tailors.
2 Carders.	2 Spinners.
3 Shoemakers.	1 Painter.
1 Glazier,	1 Shopkeeper.
1 Malster.	1 Collier.
1 Doctor.	1 Shuttle-maker.
2 Servants.	1 Carpenter.
6 Steam-loom weavers.	4 Farmers.
2 Mechanics.	2 Schoolmasters.
1 Putter-out.	2 Publicans.
1 Warper.	
2 Reed makers.	102, of whom 51 are weavers
1 Capper.	

Pennington.

40 Weavers.	2 Millers.
1 Reed-maker.	1 Grocer.
2 Heald-knitters.	3 Ropemakers.
2 Cloggers.	1 Warper.
2 Drapers.	1 Tin-plate worker.
3 Manufacturers.	2 Shoemakers.
1 Carter.	4 Schoolmasters.
4 Farmers.	1 Surgeon.
1 Confectioner.	1 Labourer.
3 Shopkeepers.	2 Blacksmiths.
6 Joiners.	
2 Clerks.	85, of whom 40 are weavers.

9. Their habits, with reference to diligence, providence, frugality, honesty, and temperance, do not, I think, present any marked difference to that of other classes of the working population, except that, as they have less to spend, they are somewhat less intemperate. The embezzlement, or making away with the weft intrusted to them to weave, is an old subject of complaint, and, in many cases, no

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doubt, rests on some foundation. As, however, the weaver is invariably abated in his wages for any quantity of material found deficient, I cannot see that he has any direct inducement to theft beyond that which the frequent exigencies of a distressed condition may temporarily impose on him. I have no doubt that, for pressing present purposes, a weaver may frequently sell weft, which he at the same time knows he will have to pay the value of when he carries in his work, or have to replace to enable him to finish it.

The districts of Burnley, Colne, Pediham, Haggate, &c. where a light calico fabric, called little supers, is woven, and which is made by power-looms at Blackburne and elsewhere, was that in which I found the greatest distress to exist, and consequently the most debased moral condition, and the most frequent accusations of embezzlement.

Messrs. Spencer and Moore, who employ a great number of out-door weavers, besides having a dandy or weaving-shop, stated that their out-door weavers did not average as much weekly earning as those engaged in the shop, although I found, from an inspection of their books, the average of the latter to be but 3*s*. 11¾*d*. weekly each. In all this district complaints of embezzlement, and detention of work, were much more general than in any I visited. As a proof of this, a respectable witness told me that, on going to the cottage of one of the weavers, to look after some work he had entrusted to him, and which he had kept out some weeks over the stipulated time, the weaver not being found at home, he went up-stairs, and the first thing that presented itself to him was "seven *widows*, hanging across a clothes-line."

A widow is the term usually applied to the unsaleable *warp*, when divorced of the marketable *weft*, which, in this case, it was stated the weaver had embezzled, or made away with.

Many power-loom factories have been, and are now, in course of erection in this neighbourhood, and it is not unlikely that hand-loom weaving here, will speedily be superseded altogether. One manufacturer, who had recently adopted power-looms, gave as the influencing causes of the change, that

"He could turn over his capital in much quicker time. He could command a much better price for his cloth, by its being more regular in the weaving, and more honestly manufactured. That he was neither robbed of warp or weft; and that now he could take an order, and know *when* he could execute it, which, while he employed hand-loom weavers, he never could do."

Some of the weavers, it was stated, had found employment in the power-loom factories; but as the far greater proportion of the hands in such establishments are females and young persons, the erection of power-loom factories does not, in the case of adult male weavers, furnish an adequate extent of employment to them which it deprives them of. In Mr. Edward Pollard's factory, I found the number of hands 245, of whom were—

Females above 18 years of age	129
Females under 18 ditto	38
Males above 18 ditto	42
Males under 18 ditto	36

which is about the average of other establishments of this nature.

In the township of Briercliffe with Entwisle in this neighbourhood, Mr. James Smith, of Haggate stated:—

"Our tenants are nearly all weavers. There has been no payment of rents for the last two half-yearly rent days in our township, and a third is fast approaching."

In a survey of this township, I found 171 families of weavers, numbering 968 persons, and possessing 606 looms, all then employed. Their gross earnings for the week were 85*l*. 16*s*. 6*d*., or 10*s*. 0¼*d*. per family, from which it was alleged 30*l*. 4*s*. 10*d*. must be deducted for expenses, giving net 6*s*. 6*d*. per family, on an average of 3½ looms to each family.

In Colne, where there are no power-loom factories, and where similar low kinds of calico are manufactured, the distress was represented to have been so great in 1837 as to have led to open violence.

It was stated that on Monday the 12th of July, 1837, the principal cotton manufacturers in Colne and its neighbourhood, who had been gradually withdrawing employment from the hand-loom weavers, a class of operatives which there constitutes the great bulk of the population, ceased entirely from giving out any such employment; whereby the last part of the employed poor was suddenly thrown

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upon parochial and charitable resources. The motive of this proceeding of the manufacturers was professed to be, in order that they might bring up to a fair and remunerating scale of wages, several small and less respectable manufacturers, who were availing themselves of the pressure of the times to get pieces woven at a very depreciated price, and so unequal to the support of the labourer, that a large deficiency must unavoidably be made up out of the poor-rate.

On Saturday the 17th, and Monday the 19th, a large mob assembled around the premises of one of these small manufacturers, who was attempting to deliver out work at 9*d.* per piece, for which the larger manufacturers had been giving up to their stoppage 13*d.* They succeeded in deterring him from giving out more work, and the following days of Tuesday and Wednesday passed over without any greater threatening of the public peace. But on the return of the manufacturers on the Wednesday evening, the 21st, from the Manchester market, finding that they could not, by their stoppage of work, arrest the downward progress of the depreciating wages, they resolved to resume giving work at the last price of 13*d.* per piece. To their great astonishment, however, and to the great surprise also of many benevolent individuals who had been diffusing their charity very widely during this distress, the weavers had resolved that even their best and acknowledged friends should not start again, except at an advanced price. On Thursday, one of the largest manufacturers and spinners began to give out materials at the old rate of 13*d.* per piece, and as his premises are a short distance from the town, he succeeded in giving out this work to a few weavers, but it happened about 10 o'clock that four of these weavers (one woman and three men) had to pass through the town with their work on their backs, to their homes. As soon as they were perceived in the town, they were intercepted by a small party of weavers, which increased rapidly in numbers, and were soon obliged to take refuge in a public house. In about half an hour the constable, and one or two respectable inhabitants, volunteered an endeavour to convoy these weavers through the street, and they again came out; but after proceeding a few hundred yards a scene of perfect riot took place. The mob soon amounted to at least 1000 persons, many of whom armed themselves with broken limestones, (of which there happened to be unfortnnately large collections on the road) and threw them at the small party who formed the convoy, and who were at last obliged to give up the attempt; and by professing to abandon it, they were allowed to reach their houses without any serious injury being done to their persons.

This display of strength on the part of the mob, induced some of the inhabitants to solicit the aid of a military force, which was granted, and, shortly after, considerably increased; nevertheless a very excited rabble was still retaining possession of the streets, though not proceeding openly to violence further than by breaking a few windows.

About 9 o'clock a large body of special constables were sworn in, but between 10 and 11 o'clock the mob proceeded to direct acts of violence against the persons and property of every individual who was obnoxious to them, and it was soon found necessary to call out the detachment of infantry, which had been left for the night.

The riot act was twice read, and after much resistance, the streets were tolerably well cleared by about half past 12.

On Friday the 23rd and Saturday the 24th, large crowds still kept their station in the streets, and although on the nights of those days there were strong bodies of special constables patrolling, it was with some difficulty that they were at last dispersed, and not until several windows had been again broken.

During the week the inhabitants of Colne had been exerting themselves in procuring a local subscription for the relief of the poor of the town, and on the very day of the principal riot, made a public distribution of oatmeal to upwards of 1400 families, comprising from 8000 to 10,000 inhabitants, many of whom were stated to have been seen in the riots with the meal in their possession.

The fact of such an extensive distribution of meal will show the extent to which the distress had reached the weaving population.

The embezzlement of weft was stated to have materially declined since the employers had united as a body to prevent it. About four years ago a general meeting of the trade was held, as was stated, for the purpose of taking into consideration the best means of preventing the further progress of the increasing crime of embezzlement among cotton weavers and waste buyers. It was unanimously resolved,

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"That it is the decided conviction of this meeting, that the most straightforward, and only sure method of preventing embezzlement, is to insist on the undoubted right of the manufacturer to require from the weaver the full return of every part of the material delivered out, including the whole of what is called necessary and unavoidable waste; the manufacturers enforcing upon every weaver that he shall not retain even the smallest portion of warp or weft delivered out to him, but shall faithfully return the whole material in piece and waste. If this principle be strictly and rigidly enforced, it will follow that there ought to be no waste buyers in the neighbourhood, and the meeting therefore announces its determined resolve to apprehend and prosecute all persons who shall hereafter be found in the old calling of waste gatherers; and they resolve to instruct the constables, and other officers of the district, to keep the strictest watch on all suspected sellers and buyers of weavers' waste."

Mr. James M'Connell, Secretary to the Bolton committee of hand-loom weavers, states,—

"The practice exists in Bolton of embezzling materials to a considerable extent on the part of the weavers."

Mr. John Blinkhorn, muslin-manufacturer, of Bolton, states,—

"The practice of embezzling weft prevails to some extent in this district, particularly about Blackburn, and is much calculated to reduce the weavers' wages."

Mr. Hugh Brodie, muslin-manufacturer, of Bolton, states,—

"The *mooters* have hurt the weavers greatly; they purchase embezzled weft, not alone from the weavers, but sometimes from agents of manufacturers, and sometimes stolen from the factories; they undersell the honest manufacturers, and bring down prices, and consequently wages. There is a practice here of selling the weaver the warp. He engages to find the weft himself, and to bring home the cloth at a price. This is of a most injurious tendency, and leads to much stealing and embezzlement, and besides tends to lower wages. The weaver must, in such cases, get embezzled weft."

Mr. William Moore, Chairman of the committee of hand-loom weavers of Bolton, states,—

"A cause of our distresses is persons buying embezzled or stolen weft, which is carried on to a very considerable extent about here, whereby they are enabled to sell their goods 1*s.* or so, a cut under others, and thereby bring down prices as well as wages."

Mr. John Goodbranck, of the firm of Goodbranck and Baxter, manufacturers of light jacconet, of Bolton, states,—

"The practice of dealing in embezzled or stolen weft is very common in Bolton. The principal part of the weft stolen throughout the district is manufactured at Bolton and Blackburn. Much comes from Blackburn, Preston, and other parts. This dishonest dealing greatly brings down prices, and wages also."

The same facts were stated as common at Carlisle, Blackburn, Preston, &c.

In reference to their providence and frugality, the earnings of the weavers are ordinarily so limited as to afford no amount beyond that required for present support; indeed, the far greater portion of them are considerably in debt. I examined the saving banks' books in most of the places where I found such institutions existing, and rarely found the name of a single weaver, except in Manchester, where the most skilled of the body may be said to reside. I there found 1265 male weavers, and 350 female weavers, among the depositors; but as no person connected with the establishment could answer my inquiry whether the weavers might not many of them be *power-loom weavers*, I attach little importance to the statement.

11. As regards Education, the great mass of the children of the weavers appeared to me to be receiving none worthy of the name. I rarely found one above seven or eight years of age receiving any, except such as was derived, in some few instances, from attendance at Sunday-schools. Even where daily schools existed it was urged that the poverty of the parents necessitated them to employ their children at home in some of the auxiliary processes to weaving, such as winding &c.; and that if they did not do this, they had not apparel which would fit them to appear with the children of other branches of the better paid working population. In many instances I found children of from seven to ten years of age employed in nursing infant brothers or sisters, while the mother was at the loom, or engaged in her household affairs. I never met a weaver who did not express himself as desirous of giving his children education, though I could rarely trace the exercise of any self-denying means to this end.

12. Much of the evidence I received tends to show that the employers of hand-loom

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weavers do possess, and exercise, a power of fixing or reducing the wages of their workpeople, which is not possessed by the employers of labourers in other trades: and that this power is frequently exercised by small and needy manufacturers to enable them to undersell their competitors with larger capital. The consequent decreased value of the stock held by such large manufacturers, necessitates them to reduce wages in a greater ratio than the reduction previously made by the small competing manufacturers, to cover their loss. I believe that these influences are operative solely from want of the power of effectual combination on the part of the workpeople, and from the redundancy of their numbers.

13. I believe there are special circumstances attending the case of the hand-loom weavers which renders them peculiarly liable to be affected by causes which do not operate upon other classes of the manufacturing population; the most important of which is, that in periods of actual commercial depression, or of anticipated slackness of demand, the employer of the hand-loom weaver may at once suspend or limit production by withholding work, without any loss to himself. The amount of his fixed capital is considerably less than that of the power-loom manufacturer. He has not, as in the case of the latter, a large amount vested in building and machinery, and a superintending establishment, the expenses of which are going on, whether employed or idle; and he has besides comparatively little difficulty in calling together, at any time he may want them, any number of hand-loom weavers, whereas it is well known that factory hands, when dispersed, are not again collected in a state of efficiency without considerable time, trouble, and loss. In effect, it is always found that in seasons when trade is dull, the hand-loom weavers are the first to suffer from want of work. The power-loom manufacturer may, but rarely does, work short time; that is, but eight or ten hours daily; he never risks the dispersion of his workpeople, by leaving them totally without employment. Their production still goes on, and adds to an already glutted market, which must be carried off by new demand, before the hand-loom operative is again set to work. Where the power-loom does not come into apparently direct competition with the weaver, at such times, by working at a precisely similar fabric, it has a positive tendency to throw the proportion of hands with whom it does so directly compete, upon the labour market of the other branches of weavers, and thereby add to their distresses, by such an increase of competitors.

14. I proceed to the consideration of the remedies which have been actually proposed by a Committee of the House of Commons:—

1st. The enactment of the law proposed by Mr. Fielden—"That returns shall be made every three or six months of the prices of weaving paid by the smallest number of manufacturers, who collectively make one-half of the goods of any description, in the parish or township whence the returns are sent, and the average of the highest prices paid by a majority of such manufactures shall be the lowest price to be paid in such parish or township during the succeeding three or six months."

2nd. A more exact specification of the length and breadth of the pieces of goods to be manufactured.

3rd. A cheaper legal form of indenture of apprentices, and a reduction of the stamp-duty to 5*s*.

4th. A more summary and effectual protection against embezzlement of weaving materials.

1. As to Mr. Fielden's plan—

Throughout the whole of Lancashire I found both employers and weavers well acquainted with this plan, but, with two or three exceptions, who were weavers, not a single individual regarded it as capable of being carried out into practice. The simple fact that under it wages might rise, but never could, under any circumstances, *recede*, was sufficient to stamp its utter impracticability, apart from many other considerations which were urged as conclusive against such a scheme.

Among the latter, it was stated, that from perfectly valid and legitimate causes, a variation in the rate of wages might beneficially exist in different places where the same fabric was made. For instance, the manufacturers in remote country districts, at a distance from the best markets, either for the sale of their goods when manufactured, or for the purchase of the raw materials, and from, and to which, the cost of transit formed a considerable item, could neither afford, or be

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expected to pay, as high a rate of wages, as those manufacturers who were making the same fabric in such places as Manchester or Glasgow, with the market in their hand.

2. That as the first *minimum* rate must be struck from *present prices*, from which no reduction could ever henceforth be made, it followed that such branch of weaving would migrate to the district where it was found the *average* rate of wages had been struck the *lowest*. Hence Belfast would carry away the weaving trade of Glasgow, many of the same fabrics being now made at both places, and the existing rate of wages being from 10 to 15 per cent. lower in the former than in the latter town.

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3. That the first probable effects of such undue migration of demand for labour to particular localities would be greatly to enhance the price of labour in such places; and if this was found, as it probably would be, to be either permanently or temporarily beyond the rate which prices warranted, or which curtailed the legitimate profits of manufacture, the manufacturer would cease to give out work at all.

It would be no use the weavers offering to take it out on terms which the employers could afford, or was willing to pay, their doing so would be an infringement of the proposed regulation. The trade would be annihilated, and with it the weaver, as well as the manufacturer.

4. That if it were attempted to avert this result, by carrying back the work to any other district where the minimum scale was lower than such increased ratio, the same effects would there follow, and be produced by the same causes. The thus bandying about of the manufacture would be moreover utterly destructive of its prosperity, from the utter absence of regularity in the amount, or cost of production.

5. The nature, and almost infinite variety, of the fabrics made, would practically exclude either their correct classification, or any accurate enumeration of the prices paid for weaving either each particular fabric, or the aggregate of any given class. The silk fabrics are said to embrace nearly three hundred varieties in length, breadth, quality, and purposes to which they are applicable. The cotton and mixed goods, nearly as many, and woollen and worsted, fancy and plain, a very considerable number. The task of determining the actual prices paid for each, in a variety of districts, would of itself be an herculean one, even if the returns and specifications were honestly made, which I believe they rarely, or ever would be, and quite sufficient to deter from the recommendation of any such questionable and difficult mode of relief.

6. Many of the hand-loom manufacturers regard that the fixing of any such *minimum* of wages for their workpeople, would be tantamount to a premium, or bonus, to the power-loom manufacturer, who they contended should, in justice, be placed under similar restrictions. The fact of the recommendation proceeding from a gentleman, who is himself an extensive power-loom manufacturer, was also complained of; it is possible, however, the plan may have been suggested antecedent to his entering on such mode of manufacture.

2. *As to Tickets.*

I am of opinion that a more exact specification of the length, breadth, quality, and other particulars, of the pieces of goods to be manufactured, should be made upon the tickets given out to the weavers with their work, and that the delivery of such tickets should be made compulsory.

Great complaints were made to me that the employers of hand-loom weavers not only assume to themselves perfect power to give out with their work such tickets as they please, with the conditions of which the weaver is necessitated to submit, or in most instances go without work, but in many cases they give out none at all, and as may be expected, disputes almost invariably arise. The section of the Arbitration Act, on this subject, is *permissive* only, instead of *compulsory* as it should have been; it stands thus,—

"Sec. XVIII. And be it further enacted, That with every piece of work given out by the manufacturers to a workman to be done, there shall (*if both parties are agreed*) be delivered a note or ticket, in such form as the said parties shall mutually agree upon; and which said note or ticket, in the event of dispute between the manufacturers and workmen, shall be evidence of all matters and things mentioned therein, or respecting the same."

I would strongly recommend that the delivery of a ticket should be made com-

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pulsory, and that such ticket should set forth the quality and quantity of the materials delivered out, the actual length and breadth, and the price to be paid for it, the time to be occupied, and the manner in which the piece should be worked up; and that no conditions, contrary to the letter or spirit of the Arbitration Act, or any other statute, should be permitted to be inserted; or if inserted, valid.

3. *Indenture of Apprentices.*

So little apprenticeing to the hand-loom weaving now takes place, that I heard few complaints of the amount of the stamp duty on indentures. If, however, any relief were proposed to be afforded to the weavers by enforcing the service of apprenticeship previous to the lawful exercise of the calling of a hand-loom weaver, as recommended by many of my witnesses, I would strongly urge a reduction of the stamp duty to half-a-crown.

4. *As to a more summary and effectual protection against embezzlement of Weaving Materials.*

On this subject the present laws are not regarded by employers as adequate to their protection. I would recommend that in any amended Act, sections to the following purport be inserted:—

"And be it enacted, That if any person entrusted with any cotton, woollen, silk or flax, or any one or more of those materials mixed with each other, *or mixed, or to be mixed, or made up with any other description of yarn*, or any tools, materials, or apparatus for manufacturing the same, shall fraudulently sell, pawn, or embezzle such linen yarn, hempen yarn, cotton yarn, or each or any of them respectively, or such tools, materials, or apparatus, every such offender, and the receiver of any such article knowing the same to be, or have been, so fraudulently sold, pawned, or embezzled, shall *be imprisoned for not less than* 14 *days nor more than six months, with or without hard labour.*

"And be it further enacted, That every weaver shall well and sufficiently weave all sound and sufficient yarn, weft, or shoot, to him delivered to be woven, within such time, and in such reeds, and into cloth of such breadths, as shall be agreed upon between the owner or owners of such yarn and such weaver, upon pain of forfeiting the full value of such yarn, weft or shoot, or the full price agreed upon for weaving the same.

"And be it further enacted, That if any person or persons who shall be entrusted with any yarn, weft or shoot, or materials, or tools, or apparatus for manufacturing the same, shall refuse or neglect to return such yarn, materials, tools, or apparatus, within 48 *hours* after the same shall have been demanded by or in behalf of the owner thereof, such neglect or refusal shall be deemed and taken as embezzling under this Act, *unless reasonable cause be shown, to the satisfaction of any justice or chief magistrate before whom such case shall be heard, why such return has or can not be made within the said period of* 48 *hours.*

And be it further enacted, That in case any manufacturer shall make oath before a Justice of the Peace that he has entrusted any yarn, weft or shoot, or the materials, tools, or apparatus for manufacturing the same, to any person or persons, and that he has just cause to suspect, and does suspect, that such person is about to abscond with the same, then such Justice shall have power and authority, at his discretion, to issue his warrant requiring such person or persons *to appear before him forthwith, or at such time as he shall appoint; and such Justice is hereby authorised to order such person or persons to restore the article or thing entrusted to him or them, at such time as he may direct, and in default thereof, to commit such person or persons to the common gaol of the county or place in which the offence is committed, for any period not exceeding three calendar months, with or without hard labour: provided always, that the owner of such materials or apparatus as aforesaid shall make to such offender such reasonable compensation for any labour expended therein or thereupon as to such Justice shall seem proper.*

And be it further enacted, That all complaints which shall be made of any offence or offences committed against any of the regulations or directions contained in this Act, shall and may be heard by any one Justice of the Peace acting within his jurisdiction, or by the chief Magistrate of any town presiding in his court in such town; and for that purpose such Justice or Magistrate shall and may *summon* and examine any person or persons upon oath; and in default of the payment of any such penalty or sum of money as shall be awarded by any such Justice or chief Magistrate by virtue of this Act, upon the hearing of any such complaint, it shall and may be lawful for such Justice or chief Magistrate to levy the same, by warrant of distress under his hand and seal, on and off the goods and chattels of the person liable to the payment of such penalty or sum of money, rendering the overplus, if any, after payment of the costs and expenses of such distress, to such person; and in case no sufficient distress shall be found, then to commit such person to gaol, or to the house of correction, for any period not exceeding *three calendar months, with or without hard labour.*

And be it further enacted, That in case any person who shall have been robbed or defrauded of any yarn, weft or shoot, shall make oath before any chief Magistrate or Justice, that he has reason to believe that such yarn, &c., or any portion thereof, is illegally or improperly in the possession of any individual, it shall be lawful for such chief Magistrate or Justice,

if he shall think fit, to grant a warrant to search the house or premises of such individual suspected of having such stolen or fraudulently obtained yarn in his possession; and in the event of any yarn, &c., being so found on the premises, which the person making complaint is willing to swear he believes to the best of his judgment to be his property, such chief Magistrate or Justice may forthwith require the person possessing the same satisfactorily to account to him of the manner in which, and of the person or persons of whom, he obtained such suspected yarn, &c., and in default of his doing so, he shall be adjudged guilty of knowing the same to have been fraudulently sold, pawned, or embezzled, and be subjected to the punishment awarded for such offence by this statute.

Having unreservedly proposed the above enactments for the protection of the employers, I feel it to be my duty to state on behalf of the employed, that their interests, and their safety, alike require, that the arbitrary power of abatement exercised by the employers, should not be allowed to continue, without previous trial of the merits of the case. A master may always discharge his workman, if he does not please him. He ought not, I think, to be at liberty to take his money without his consent, or previous proof of the fairness and honesty of his demands to do so; and certainly should not be allowed to withhold the *undisputed* portion of his earnings.

This part of the subject leads me to the consideration of what would be the most probable means of affording justice in such matters; and indeed, in the many other causes of dispute constantly arising between masters and workmen. At present it ought not to be disguised that the workmen generally consider their interests are not adequately protected; an opinion in which I have no hesitation in stating as regards the hand-loom weavers, I entirely and unreservedly concur.

The best mode of meeting the case appears to me to be erection of an entirely new Tribunal, to be specially devoted to the hearing and adjudicating on disputes between employers and workmen. It might be termed a "Court of Arbitration," and be presided over by officers appointed by the Crown, to be denominated "Commissioners of Arbitration," who should not be removable, but in the mode prescribed for the removal of the Judges of the superior Courts; a regulation alike essential to their security, and independence.

In some cases an entire county, and in such places as Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham, the town themselves, with a portion of the surrounding townships, would afford sufficient extent of business and jurisdiction, for any one Commissioner. The number of these officers, and their districts, might be defined by Statute, or fixed by the Queen in Council.

I would suggest that the Statute creating the appointments, should also define, or enumerate, as in the present Arbitration Act, what subjects should be matter of dispute or trial, between masters and men, in the jurisdiction of such tribunals, and to what amount of money in dispute the Court should take cognizance, either summarily, or with the aid of a jury. It perhaps might be desirable that the presiding Commissioners should, where the subject-matter of dispute did not exceed 40*s.*, have summary power of adjudication; and on all claims between that amount and 5*l.*, that he should be assisted by a jury of six individuals, two of whom should be employers, and four workmen, who should be required to return an *unanimous verdict* as to whether the cause of complaint was "proven" or "not proven,"—the amount of penalty or abatement being declared by the Commissioner, as in criminal cases, the measure, or particular degree of punishment, is awarded by the Judge. The lists of persons eligible to serve on such juries, their qualification being previously defined by the statute,—might be prepared in the same manner as the present jury lists, or as is followed in the Assistant Barristers' Courts in Ireland. The Jury each to receive payment of 3*d.* or 4*d.* per case heard before them, which would be adequate to compensate the workmen engaged, for their loss of time. If it were thought most desirable in the first instance to limit the jurisdiction of the Commissioner to cases not exceeding 40*s.*,—the jury department of the proposed machinery could be dispensed with. The Courts might be held weekly,—fortnightly,—or monthly, at farthest, separating the days for hearing causes where the Commissioner has summary jurisdiction, from those on which jury causes are to be tried; and no manufactured work, the subject-matter of dispute, should be allowed to be disposed of before adjudication. The tickets which I have proposed to make compulsory given out with work, should always be required to be produced in Court, as the original terms of contract.

Such courts should be approachable without any costs whatever to the litigant parties; but to guard against their abuse, and to prevent vexatious or unnecessary

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litigation, I would place in the hands of the Commissioner, discretionary power upon preliminary hearing of a complainant upon oath, to decide whether or no sufficient cause exists for him to grant, or issue summonses for proceeding to trial. This would, I think, be a safeguard against abuse,—and not unknown to the Constitution, as being but a type of the discretionary authority now exercised by Magistrates, in cases proposed to be brought before petty-sessional tribunals. Parties ought not, I think, to be allowed to appear by either counsel or attorney; because the poverty of the workmen would prevent him availing himself of such aid, which the employer could afford to do, and would thereby possess undue advantage,—and no appeal should be permitted. When, upon hearing of the cause, it appeared to the Commissioner, that the complaint, or defence, was "frivolous and vexatious," I would propose that he be allowed to certify to that effect, and that such certificate should impose the payment of the full costs of the action, upon the party thereby declared guilty of such conduct; a precaution I consider desirable to guard against the authority of the Commissioner to issue summons for trial upon *ex parte* evidence, being wantonly, or fraudulently obtained by false representations. The Commissioner should have power to summon, and call for the production of "persons, papers and records," necessary, in his judgment, to elucidate the justice of the case.

It is not proposed by the creation of the suggested new Court, to supersede, or abrogate, the authority of any existing tribunals, but simply to afford greater facilities than these appear to me to give, for the settlement of disputes between workmen and employers; and perhaps the safest course that could be adopted, and therefore the best mode to be recommended, would be, in the first instance, to create one or two such courts only, experimentally.

Manchester, and a circuit, say, of seven miles round the Exchange there, seems, in my judgment, to present the best field for the trial of the experiment, comprising within such limits, as it does, a large body of hand-loom weavers, who are the greatest sufferers from arbitrary abatements, under the present system, and also, a very numerous body of almost every other description of artizans and labourers. A fair test might there be made of the merits of the scheme, at very small expense; which, if found to work well, might advantageously be extended to other large towns and districts.

If the plan there proved defective, or useless, there would still remain the existing tribunals to fall back upon; so that the public interests could not, I imagine, be in any way endangered.

I have great reason to believe that some such Court as here suggested, the plan of which is thrown out rather for your consideration, than in the conviction of its being either perfect, or sufficiently matured, would do more to allay the heart-burnings and discontent constantly arising in the breasts of the working population, from the frequently supposed injustice and ill-treatment of their employers, than any other measure that could be devised,—short of a very wide extension of the suffrage, which I know many of them desire, only as a means to this, and similar ends. It was a constant source of complaint to me, not from dissolute and ill-disposed workmen, but from intelligent and industrious labourers, that their labour was without protection; that the road to justice was beset with thorns and costly obstacles, which their poverty prevented them surmounting; and that because they did not resort to open violence and disorder, they were erroneously supposed to be contented, and uncomplaining.

I would also observe, in conclusion, that the removal of all Legislative restrictions on commerce; the repeal of the duties on the raw materials of manufacture, and on the articles used in the various processes, such as dyes, oils, &c., were among the remedies suggested for improving the condition of the weavers, in common with all other classes, and interests, engaged in manufacturing.

I have the honour to remain,
Gentlemen,
Your faithful servant,
RICH. M. MUGGERIDGE,
Assist. Commissioner.

Manchester, 30*th March*, 1839.

NOTE

TO BE APPENDED TO MR SYMONS'S REPORT.

I AM of opinion, as far as my observation has gone, that in the first place no connexion exists between *texture* of fabric and the weaver's condition. I have seen many silk weavers using costly material, and yet working at far lower wages, and in a far worse condition, than some cotton weavers using a material of the lowest value. This remark applies equally to Scotland and the continent. The price and value of labour necessarily depend on the amount of artistical skill or strength required for the work. Where either requisite exists in a great degree, the supply of labour is proportionately narrowed, and its price raised; and where the skill and strength needed are small, wages are low. As regards the latter element in the value of labour, a sort of connexion may indeed be traced, as regards woollens and some linen fabrics, but even there the distinction applies to the *width* of the fabric, and by no means to its texture. Where wide, as in broad cloths and damask table cloths, a degree of strength is required which no very young, very old, or weak person can apply. Women are debarred from entering into competition with men in these fabrics, not by the material used, but the physical force required. To illustrate this, I have seen in the same shop a strong person earning 25 per cent. more wages, in the same time, working at a wide loom, than a weaker person could earn working with the same material, on a pattern no less difficult, at a narrow loom. Another illustration may be taken from woollens. At the first introduction of thibets, or mousselines-de-laine, requiring the finest and dearest species of woollen yarns, the price paid for weaving was tolerably high, both in Scotland, and at Roubaix, and the north of France, which is frequently the case when any new fashion takes the popular taste; for the novelty of the work, the invariable disinclination to commence a different work—perhaps even the good-humour of the manufacturer, at the success of his enterprise and the increase of his profit—will TEMPORARILY raise wages, *independently* of the only permanent causes which affect them. This was the case with the thibets. But it happened that, after a little practise in the management of the fine woollen yarns, the weavers of inferior strength and skill, found they could weave these goods just as easily as common muslins; and even before I left Scotland the price had fallen of these fine woollen fabrics to very nearly a par with common cottons; but carpets, requiring strength and skill though also of woollen, *did not fall*, and are and will always remain twice as well paid as thibets. There may be a distinction as regards silk; and, 'generally speaking, silk weavers, as a body, are better off than cotton weavers. But why is this? simply because there happens to be a greater complexity of pattern in silks in the aggregate, than of cottons, in the aggregate: but skill, not texture, is the determining cause. To weave a plain web, you might be taught in a month; to weave a figured velvet, not in years. One is merely mechanical, the other artistical. One of the reasons *why* cotton weavers, in the aggregate, are worse paid is, that a species of rough mechanism, consisting of a wheel with an irregularly undulating circumference, is applicable to the formation of patterns for window curtains, &c.; it operates on the principle of a barrel-organ; and, where the pattern does not require to be elaborately executed, it answers well enough. Whenever mechanical invention has sufficiently softened the action of the power-loom, its inroads will be as great on silks as on cottons. Seeing that a very simple mechanism has greatly reduced the difficulty of pattern-weaving in cottons, and that in no department is much strength required, cotton-weaving is certainly most identified with poverty. But whether linens or silks come next I cannot determine. Woollen weavers are generally best paid in the aggregate, not because they are woollen weavers, or even chiefly because the trade is or was brisk, but mainly because woollen weavers (bating

thibets) must be either stronger or more skilful than the generality of those employed on other textures. The requisite of strength I always found a more powerful ingredient in the value of wages than that of skill. Sail-cloths, for instance, are always woven at very much higher wages than book-muslins, aye, even than a great number of figured webs requiring the Jacquard, or harness looms. I account for this fact in two ways—physically and mentally: first, men cannot work hard without good food, or have good food on low wages: next, I am confident that the weavers, both of Scotland and the continent, but especially the former, are more cultivated in mind than most other artisans, and, I believe, mental elevation invariably heightens aversion to the sale of sinews. The more mind a man has, the less willing is he to be used animally: he would rather be paid for his head at 10*s.* a week, than his hands at 15*s.* He would sooner live sparingly on the exercise of his skill, than abundantly on that of his strength: he prefers mind and a bare sustenance, to beer and bacon by brute force. Where skill unites with strength, there indeed the case is altered.

I have almost everywhere, in both my Reports, specified the fabrics on which the weavers were employed generally; but I think the following statement is needed to indicate the distinctive qualities, as affecting condition and wages which belong to each class: First let me sum up the governing causes of wages thus:—

1. The highest wages belong to the fabrics which require *strength and skill combined.*

2. The next highest belong to those which require *strength alone.*

3. The next, to those which require *skill alone.*

4. The lowest wages belong to those which require *neither much skill nor strength.*

Into the first of these Classes fall—

In Silks.—Broad shawls, silk damasks, and all wide-figured webs; also, broad velvets.

N.B. Skill is however required much more than strength.

In Woollens.—Broad carpets, called "combres," where the pattern is not repeated in the whole width. (Vide p. 36.). All Brussels or Wilton carpets; some broad Tartans and fine broad cloths, and some fancy trouser pieces.

In Linens.—Damask table-cloths, and all wide-figured webs.

In Cottons.—A few of the wide shawls; but generally silk or woollen enter into these.

Of the Second Class are—

In Silks.—None to the best of my knowledge.

In Woollens.—Blankets; coarse broad cloths; Shepherds' plaids; carpets, not combres, with simple patterns, and not Brussels or Wilton's, which each require skill.

In Linens.—Sail cloths; broad linens of every description, but this has nearly become a remnant of housewifery: in Scotland they are called, *par excellence*, "domestic weavers."

In Cottons.—None. The power-loom has monopolised all cotton-weaving, where strength is alone required.

Of the Third Class are—

In Silks.—Every species of *pattern* not wide, and ribbons; also some gauzes, and where the texture of the thread is very light.

In Woollens.—None to my knowledge; except, perhaps, some of the very finest thibets, or lamas.

In Linens.—Napkins, narrow damasks, and cambrics.

In Cottons.—The finest muslins only, chiefly book-muslins; where the number of shots must exactly correspond with the number of warps when measured by a micrometer. This requires great evenness of blow with the lay, and much dexterity and practice. I never yet saw a book-muslin woven by a debauched or ignorant weaver.

Of the Fourth Class—

In Silks.—Plain narrow silks.

In Woollens.—The mousselines-de-laine, narrow plaidings, and simple Tartans, &c.

In Linens.—Narrow sheeting, or shirting, chiefly domestic; plain napkins, coarse cambrics.

In Cottons.—Ginghams, pullicates, coarser muslins, calicoes (if any remain for hand-looms), sprigged patterns not in harness-looms, &c. &c: &c.

I do not except from the last of these classes checked ginghams, or checked pullicates,* because I have frequently witnessed the extreme ease and expedition with which the change of the shuttles, containing each a different colour, is learnt even by mere children. I may here mention that, easy as is this operation for the hand-loom weaver, it is one which has wholly baffled the power-loom; and yet in no department of hand-loom weaving are wages lower, or does more distress exist than among these very pullicate weavers, wholly sheltered as they are from the competition of machinery.

JELINGER C. SYMONS.

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* Handkerchiefs—an immense department of weaving both in Scotland and abroad.

London:—Printed by William Clowes and Sons, Stamford Street,
For Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

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HAND-LOOM WEAVERS.

COPY of REPORT by Mr. *Hickson*, on the Condition of the HAND-LOOM WEAVERS.

[*PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT BY HER MAJESTY'S COMMAND.*]

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed*,
11 *August* 1840.

[***Price* 10*d.***]

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—No. 1.—

Comparative View of the Four principal Classes of Hand-loom Weavers.—Future Prospects of the Trade.

Report of *W. E. Hickson*, Esq.

1. WHETHER the means exist of improving, to any material extent, the condition of the working classes is a question I have been led to consider for many years. Perhaps the problem is one, for the practical solution of which a fair opportunity has never yet been afforded. That the uninstructed masses would discover for themselves the causes of the moral and physical evils under which they labour was not to be looked for at any past period of our history, and that they will yet do so, to the extent required, unaided by the classes above them is hardly to be expected of the future. The most cultivated minds have often failed in tracing the calamities nations have endured, from causes unconnected with ambition, to their true source; and although no Government is omnipotent for either good or evil, the remedy (should a remedy be found) for the privations and sufferings of the most numerous section of the community, will, we may presume, be one which a Government only can apply.

2. In accepting the honorary appointment of a Commissioner of Inquiry into the state of the hand-loom weavers, I entered with my colleagues of the Central Board upon a very wide field of investigation. Next to agricultural labourers the class engaged in the manufacture of clothing is the most considerable, and of this class the weavers form one of the largest sections. In the weaving trade there are four principal divisions, comprising silk weavers, cotton weavers, linen weavers, and woollen weavers. Each of these branches has many ramifications. Thus, in the silk trade, there are ribbon weavers, velvet weavers, handkerchief weavers, weavers of plain sarsnets, and figured sarsnets, &c.; and in the cotton trade, weavers of stripes, checks, pullicates, ginghams, shawls, muslins, with many other subdivisions. The weaving trade, moreover, is not confined to any one locality, but is spread over the greater part of the United Kingdom. The Inquiry therefore embraced the hand-loom weavers of England, of Scotland, and of Ireland, as influenced by differences in religion, and in the state of education, and peculiarities of laws, habits, and customs. It included the causes affecting the exports, imports, and home consumption of all silk, cotton, flax, or linen goods; for the condition of the weaver is obviously dependent upon whatever regulates the supply and demand of these commodities. And as the Inquiry involved also a comparison of the condition of the weaving class with other classes of the community it was necessary to take a general view of the state of the whole population.

3. And indeed it may be safely asserted that no question relating to the moral and physical state of one portion of the public can be properly considered without treating it as part of the more general and comprehensive inquiry of what is best for the community at large: the subject of protecting duties, for instance, is one not to be discussed with reference, exclusively, to the trade or manufacture said to require them. A more important question is,—to what extent will the public consumer be injured by compelling him to buy inferior articles in the dearest market? Will the measures taken to encourage one branch of industry depress, to an equal or greater extent, some other branch containing within itself the self-sustaining elements of permanent prosperity? When in Belfast I visited two large linen-houses, in the habit of shipping their surplus stocks of linen to Port-au-Prince, St. Domingo. They get their returns in coffee, upon which, not being the produce of our own colonies, we have placed a prohibitory duty. To dispose, therefore, of the coffee, they have to send it to Antwerp, and of course the various expenses attending this double shipment materially limit the amount of business transacted by so circuitous a mode. The same measure,

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therefore, intended to benefit the country through the West-India interest, injures the country through the Irish manufacturer. So with regard to all laws having for their object remedial measures. Many, based upon sound principles, have failed through the limited sphere of their operation. Thus the Act of Parliament which practically excludes young children from factories, sends them, as I shall have occasion to show, in greater numbers than before to work in collieries, because the latter were not included in the same Bill. Partial legislation is always an error. If a principle be good, let us apply it universally; if applicable only to some particular case, let us reconsider it. A neglect of the public interest has often produced evils, but none so great as those which have resulted from an unwise legislative interference.

4. I am not advocating the necessity of travelling minutely over every part of the ground I have indicated, to arrive at correct conclusions about the trade of hand-loom weaving; with the limited means at our command, such a course would not have been practicable, had it been prescribed. The facts, however, noted incidentally in the progress of this commission, will prove the importance of a more general and searching inquiry into the condition of the whole working population than has yet been instituted. And I trust one result of our labours will be, to show that a Commission of Inquiry is, or may be rendered, the safest as well as the most economical means of obtaining correct data for legislative enactments upon all questions affecting the interest of trade and production. It may therefore be useful to glance, in the course of my observations, at some of the points which may engage the attention of future commissions, and which have forced themselves upon my notice while engaged in that portion of the present inquiry which I took upon myself, and of the result of which I am about to give, by desire of my colleagues, a brief account.

5. The task of personally visiting the principal weaving districts of the United Kingdom was assigned to travelling assistant commissioners; and the duties devolving upon the Central Board consisted chiefly in giving them instructions, and in examining the evidence they collected. Personally, however, as it regards myself, knowing in the first instance but little of the trade of weaving, and feeling my incompetency to judge of the fidelity of reports which I had no means of verifying, I determined to undertake a tour through the manufacturing districts (at my own charge), and see with my own eyes as much of the actual state of the weaving classes, and other classes connected with them, as was practicable in the time I could devote to the object.

6. I gave up, therefore, three months of the autumn of 1838 to personal investigation. Beginning with the silk district of Bethnal-green and Spitalfields, I proceeded to Manchester, and afterwards to several of the principal towns of the north of England. I then visited the south of Scotland; afterwards Ireland, landing at Londonderry and passing through the provinces of Ulster, Connaught, and Leinster. The time devoted to the excursion was short; but in Scotland and Ireland I had travelled before, and my object on this occasion was not to inquire into a multitude of mere details, for which other agents were employed, but to gain such general information as would enable me to fairly compare the state of one class with that of others; to take a connected view of the whole subject, and help to link together the facts collected by our assistant commissioners.

7. The Commission was appointed in consequence of a Resolution to that effect, which somewhat unexpectedly passed the House of Commons last session.

The resolution was founded upon numerous petitions, praying for inquiry into the distressed condition of the hand-loom weavers in various parts of the United Kingdom. The first question, therefore, to which it was necessary to give my attention, was the fact of the alleged distress, its nature and extent. Upon this I have to remark, that, during the interval that elapsed between the signature of the petitions and the time when we were placed in a position to commence the inquiry, a change had taken place of a favourable character. I learned, from conversations with the weavers of Spitalfields, Manchester, and other towns, that during the winter of 1837–8, the year of the American panic, a greater number of looms had been thrown out of employment than for a long time had been remembered, and that, in consequence, some thousands of families had been plunged in the greatest distress.

8. It

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8. It was gratifying to find that the severity of the storm had passed, and that the condition of the weavers by whom its effects had been most felt, however bad it remained, had yet materially improved. In the summer and autumn of 1838 trade had revived; the number of looms idle had greatly diminished; where a family possessed three or more looms, one at least was employed, and often the whole. In a large factory of hand-loom weavers at Manchester (that of Messrs. Turner and Gaskell, which had stopped work entirely during the winter), 88 looms were now employed, and the demand for weavers was increasing.

9. It was necessary, therefore, to make a distinction between the distress of the weavers as arising from want of employment, and that proceeding from a low rate of remuneration. Some instances of comparative content which I met with, where all the members of a family were employed, led me to doubt whether the cry of distress would ever have been effectively raised had the greatest grievance of which the weavers complained been inadequate wages. An inability to obtain work upon any terms is a much greater evil than low wages, and before taking any further step in the inquiry, I deemed it important to ascertain to what extent the trade was subject to a recurrence of seasons of stagnation, when a want of employment must always be sensibly felt.

10. Upon this head, every weaver I consulted, whose testimony was entitled to credit, agreed in opinion that the trade of weaving had ever been, from the earliest period, subject to great fluctuations; this, however, is more characteristic of the silk trade than of any other branch of weaving, and partly perhaps from the peculiar circumstances attending its introduction in this country. Although silk-looms were known in England in the reign of Edward III., the trade was inconsiderable until, at the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in 1685, England became a refuge for French Protestants flying from persecution. The unfortunate emigrants were objects of general commiseration. Subscriptions were raised in their favour, charitable institutions formed, and a Government fund set apart for their support, known as "La Munificence Royale." Many of these French Protestants were silk-weavers, the greater number of whom settled in Spitalfields. The protection afforded them by the Government was extended to their trade. It was supposed that the prosperity of the silk-weavers, and the public interest as connected with it, would be best promoted by securing them from the rivalry of foreign competition. The weavers were thus led to put their trust not in their own efforts, but in legislative or in charitable assistance, and here we see the origin of the belief (all but universal till of late) that the trade is incapable of self-support.

11. Complaints of want of employment, and distress from other causes, were made to the Legislature by the silk-weavers, long and frequently before the protective system was partially abandoned by the repeal of the prohibitory laws against foreign silks, and the substitution of a fixed duty of 30 per cent. (a measure which came first into operation on the 5th of July 1826). But it may be remarked that, even in the cotton trade, when the wages of cotton-weaving were indisputably much higher than at present, there appear to have been great fluctuations. Petitions setting forth the distress of cotton-weavers date back many years previous to the introduction of power-looms.

12. Although this and all similar effects must not be referred to one general cause, there is one which ought not to be overlooked: trade generally is as liable to periods of depression as agriculture is to unfavourable harvests, and not merely from physical but from moral causes. A merchant suffering from a bad debt loses confidence in his foreign correspondents, and closes their accounts; another year, having met with no loss, his confidence revives, and he trades to an unusual extent. As it is with one so it is with a class; and as all human impulses are contagious, the same causes often operate simultaneously, and produce at one time a year of great activity, and at another a commercial panic. From long observation of these changes, I am satisfied that their recurrence at certain intervals may be expected with as much certainty as the ebb and flow of the tides. This, however, is no explanation of the more permanent causes of depression or improvement. A slack season in any branch of industry,

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is not a proof that the trade is not gradually extending itself; and a few months of prosperity are quite compatible with progressive decay.

13. William Bresson, a velvet-weaver of Spitalfields, says,—

"The silk-weaver would do pretty well if he could depend upon full employment throughout the year, one year with another; and especially upon the best fabrics. But the trade has always been uncertain and precarious. Every five or six years there comes a period of stagnation, which often lasts for two years before the trade is brisk again. The last winter was one of the worst I have known; the weather was unusually severe, and the trade almost destroyed, owing to the panic which affected the American houses. Holders of silk could not sell at any price, and the manufacturers therefore completely stopped. I and my family were always able to get work, but thousands could not; and owing to the inclemency of the weather they suffered much. At the present moment there are still many looms idle, but the greater part are employed."

14. Every trade has its own peculiar causes of fluctuation, and none perhaps have more than the silk trade; every branch of which is dependent upon the caprices of fashion. At the present moment there is a great demand for velvets, and the condition of the velvet-weaver employed upon the best fabrics is very flourishing. Should a change come in public taste (which a few months may bring about), and velvet-dresses, mantillas, velvet bonnets, shawls, collars, and waistcoats, go out of fashion, some thousands of the best paid class of weavers would suddenly be reduced below the common level. For this there would seem to be no remedy but a careful husbanding of present resources; and when the evil comes, a vigorous effort to meet altered circumstances by a different adaptation of the same skill.

15. But, in the case supposed, should the velvet-weavers, for want of energy of character or providence, be helpless, their sufferings would not prove that the trade of silk-weaving at large was depressed. Perhaps Dublin poplins, or some new fabric, known neither to poplin nor velvet-weavers, would be as fashionable as velvets were before, and create an equal demand for the labour of a new class of weavers. And it is this, with some other considerations, which render it extremely difficult to institute a fair comparison between the past and the present state of the hand-loom weaver. We cannot go back, say to the ten years ending with 1800, and ascertain with precision what number of looms were then employed, and upon what fabrics; what wages were given for each; how often the same looms were idle; how permanent and extensive was the demand: and, in the absence of statistical documents, the testimony of a few individuals who saw but a part, and could not see the whole, compels us to rest our conclusions upon very vague and uncertain data. When in Edinburgh I found the weavers complaining of the lost trade, and low wages now given for weaving 'imitation India shawls,' which were first introduced and brought to perfection in that city. Any conclusion drawn from this solitary fact would almost certainly be erroneous. When the new fabric was first invented, the wages for weaving it were high, but the demand was extremely limited; now that lower wages have brought the 'imitation India shawl' within everybody's means, the demand is immense. The trade is lost to Edinburgh and gained to Paisley; and where some years back one loom was employed in weaving these shawls, there are now at least a hundred.

16. And this opens another question, which cannot be answered as satisfactorily as could be wished. When the wages of hand-loom weaving were higher than at present, what was the comparative state of other classes of the community? In some cases I have found that the breaking up of a close combination, and the throwing open a trade to an inferior paid class of operatives, has reduced the wages of the few, but has raised the wages of the many. If then high wages were at one time maintained by silk-weavers, by means of an exclusive system, when other classes were without the means of obtaining bread, it would follow that this appearance of prosperity was delusory as regards the happiness of the greater number. In Glasgow I found that a large proportion of the cotton-weavers were Irish. The Glasgow cotton-weavers said that the multitudes of Irish coming over and seeking employment had a greater effect in reducing wages than the power-loom. The Irish weavers, however, although but ill supplied with the necessaries of life, yet congratulated themselves upon obtaining higher

higher wages in Glasgow than at home. Excluding them from the market would have been sending them back to starve.

17. One fact may be assumed as certain. The condition of the great body of weavers has deteriorated; the only exception being the woollen-weavers of Scotland, and of the North of England, and some branches of the silk, cotton, and linen trades, in which greater skill is required than is possessed by the weavers of plain fabrics, constituting the majority. In this statement, all the witnesses I have examined concur. Upon the nature and extent of the deterioration I shall not attempt to enlarge. My personal observations have been confined to existing circumstances, and the present, rather than the past, forms the more important part of the inquiry.

18. In attempting now to describe the state of the trade of hand-loom weaving, comparing one branch with another, I will first state the general conclusion at which I have arrived. It is, that, on the whole, the silk-weavers are in a more prosperous state than the rest of the body; although residing, as many of them do, in London, their complaints at seasons of depression are the first to attract attention. That next to the silk-weavers the woollen-weavers are in the least unfavourable condition. That the linen-weavers are in a much lower condition than the silk-weavers; and that the class in the lowest state is the cotton-weavers.

19. If I thought it desirable to describe minutely some of those extreme instances of human misery I have met with when visiting the dwellings of the poor, I think I should take them from the hand-loom cotton-weavers. I am anxious, however, to avoid everything that may appear approaching to a tone of exaggeration. Some of the friends of the working classes have unconsciously done much mischief to the cause they have advocated, by statements which have provoked incredulity, or otherwise have made the evil appear of such frightful magnitude as to be utterly irremediable. There are sufferings which excite our sympathy, and which we attempt to relieve; there are others at which the heart sickens, at which we shut our eyes, and stop our ears, and turn away in despair.

20. Weaving, as a domestic occupation, among the hand-loom cotton-weavers, is carried on in circumstances more prejudicial to health, and at a greater sacrifice of personal comfort, than weaving in any other branch. The great majority of hand-loom cotton-weavers work in cellars, sufficiently light to enable them to throw the shuttle, but cheerless because seldom visited by the sun. The reason cellars are chosen is, that cotton requires to be woven damp. The air, therefore, must be cool and moist, instead of warm and dry. Unhappily, the medium which might be preserved without injury to the constitution, and which is preserved in the best power-loom factories, the impoverished hand-loom cotton-weavers are obliged often to disregard. I have seen them working in cellars dug out of an undrained swamp; the streets formed by their houses without sewers, and flooded with rain; the water therefore running down the bare walls of the cellars, and rendering them unfit for the abode of dogs or rats. The descent to these cellars is usually by a broken step-ladder. The floor is but seldom boarded or paved; a proper place for coals and ashes, but less fitted for a workshop than even an Irish hovel, because under ground. This description is not of universal application. In some instances I met with streets of small modern-built houses, in which the cellars occupied by the cotton weavers were light and convenient apartments, and in many towns the cotton-weavers work not in cellars, but in an unboarded room on the ground-floor.

21. The wages earned by hand-loom cotton-weavers when in full work vary in different parts of the United Kingdom. In Belfast they are lower than at Glasgow, upon the same fabrics; and, believing that their existence depended upon working somewhat under the Glasgow weaver, in consequence of being more remote from the market, the Belfast weavers refused to listen to the delegates sent from Glasgow to propose a general strike, with the view of raising prices at Belfast to the Glasgow level. It would be difficult to give a correct average of the sums earned by hand-loom cotton-weavers, on account of the great variety of fabrics in the trade, for which different prices are paid. The most

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most extreme case I met with of low earnings was that of a young woman at Londonderry, employed by Mr. Scott, an agent for some Glasgow houses. Her name was Mary Ann Tagart; she was an orphan, age 20, supporting herself entirely by weaving plain checks. From the 20th of June, the time she received her web, to the 16th of July, when it was finished, nearly four weeks, her net earnings amounted to but 10*s.*, or 2*s.* 6*d.* per week. Able-bodied men in this establishment did not earn more than 5*s.* per week, but it was possible to make 7*s.* The highest sums earned by hand-loom cotton-weavers brought under my own observation, I found at Preston, by weavers employed in a large factory belonging to Messrs. J. Bailey and Co., extensive spinners and weavers. Besides power-looms, these gentlemen employ on the premises 160 hand-looms. I made the following extract from the foreman's book of the net earnings of the weavers under his immediate superintendence:

Sums paid to a single woman, age about 35, employed at the loom, No. 91, on cotton twill.

		s.	*d.*
For the week ending	6th April	14	8
—	13th April	10	–
—	20th April	12	3
—	27th April	12	3
—	4th May	11	11
—	11th May	12	3
—	18th May	11	11
—	25th May	14	4
—	1st June	14	4
For the week ending	8th June (Whitsuntide week.)	5	4
—	15th June	12	3
—	22d June	12	3
—	29th June	10	–
—	6th July	12	3
—	13th July	11	11
—	20th July	16	8
—	27th July	14	3
—	3d August	9	8

Sums paid to a woman for hand-loom weaving, working upon cotton twill, at No. 2 loom.

		s.	*d.*
For the week ending	13th July	14	4
—	20th July	14	3
—	27th July	12	–
—	4th August	12	–
—	11th August	9	11
		£. 3	2 6

Average of the five weeks, 12 *s.* 6 *d.*

Sums paid to two men and their wives for hand-loom weaving on cotton twill, for the week ending 27th July.

	s.	*d.*
Loom, No. 8.—Husband	19	3
Loom, No. 49.—Wife	7	11
	£. 1	7 2

	s.	*d.*
Loom, No. 42.—Husband	16	5
Loom, No. 109.—Wife	7	9
	£. 1	4 2

Sums paid to hand-loom weavers for work done in one room containing 44 looms. The week ending 3d August. All single looms, and none weaving double breadths. The work chiefly cotton twill.

	s.	*d.*
Loom, No. 1	7	–
— 2	12	–
— 3	8	–
— 4	12	–
— 5	15	–
— 6	11	–
— 7	15	–
— 8	11	8
— 9	10	3
— 10	7	8
— 11	7	8
— 12	7	6

	s.	*d.*
Loom, No. 13	7	4
— 14	7	8
— 15	10	–
— 16	9	9
— 17	7	8
— 18	10	–
— 19	7	2
— 20	7	8
— 21	7	8
— 22	7	8
— 23	7	8
— 24	4	6

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	s.	d.
Loom, No. 25	5	4
— 26	2	6
— 27	7	8
— 28	9	9
— 29	7	5
— 30	7	1
— 31	7	8
— 32	7	8
— 33	7	8
— 34	12	6
— 35	11	–
Loom, No. 36	10	–
— 37	12	–
— 38	14	3
— 39	9	11
— 40	16	8
— 41	19	3
— 42	16	5
— 43	14	3
— 44	19	3
£.	21	18	5

Average earnings of 44 looms, 9 *s.* 11 ½ *d.*

22. The preceding extract must not be considered as a fair statement of the sums which the great body of hand-loom cotton-weavers are capable of earning when in full employment, and yet, if so considered, it would, perhaps, be nearer the truth than that respecting the cotton-weavers at Londonderry. Whenever there is a marked and striking inequality in wages of different workmen employed upon the same material, there is a presumption that the one class is inferior to the other in industry or skill, or in steady application to one pursuit, and that the case of the latter is not a fair illustration of the state of the manufacture, and of the degree of support to be derived from it. This struck me forcibly when comparing the state of the hand-loom weavers in Ireland and Great Britain. Weaving in Ireland is less an exclusive occupation than in this country. The vast majority are small occupiers of land, and the weaver who is one day driving his pig to market, another digging his potatoes, and a third getting a job at harvest-work, can neither become as expert at the loom, nor as careful a workman, as one living in a large manufacturing town, and giving up his whole attention to the same occupation. This explained the fact stated to me by Mr. Scott, that, although the price paid for cotton-weaving was nearly one-third lower at Londonderry than at Glasgow, the manufacturers of Glasgow were by no means anxious to put out work in Londonderry, but required rather to be importuned for a supply. The conclusion I drew was, that the expense of transit, delay in the manufacture, and inferiority in the web produced, made up for the difference of wages. The same cause may account for the difference between the wages of a country weaver in England or Scotland, and the wages of a weaver in large manufacturing towns. Messrs. Jeffry, of Glasgow, told me an instance of a country weaver, whose interest they were anxious to promote, because he was related to their agent. This weaver, whose earnings, at Westlington, in Peeblesshire, had not exceeded 6 *s.* per week, was offered employment in the factory, and enabled to earn 11 *s.* 6 *d.* He soon found that more leisure and less money suited him better than close application to the loom during factory hours (69 working hours in the week). He returned therefore to his native village.

23. Weaving is not invariably a domestic occupation among the hand-loom cotton-weavers, as it is, with but few exceptions, among the silk-weavers. The cotton-weavers, in most cases, work at home; but the practice is beginning to extend itself of assembling them in factories. There are hand-loom factories, as well as power-loom factories. In large manufacturing towns, a saving of time is regarded as a saving of money. One thousand pounds capital, if it can be returned four times in the year, is equal to a capital of 4,000 *l.* returned once; and the interest on 3,000 *l.* is the saving effected. Hence the anxiety of every good man of business to despatch his orders quick, and hence the urgency of merchants, when writing to the manufacturer, to ship without delay. In fact, promptitude of execution is often a more important consideration than price. A merchant, not limited by his foreign correspondents, but left to his own discretion, will give his orders to the manufacturer, who, on a given day and month, will engage to have his goods on board a ship in the export docks, and will disregard the offer of another manufacturer less punctual, and more dilatory in the conduct of his business, although cheaper, perhaps, by five per cent. On this account factory labour is much more

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advantageous to the manufacturer than domestic labour. The domestic weaver is apt to be irregular in his habits, because he does not work under the eye of a master. At any moment the domestic weaver can throw down his shuttle, and convert the rest of the day into a holiday, or busy himself with some more profitable task; but the factory weaver works under superintendence; if absent a day, without sufficient cause, he is dismissed, and his place supplied by one of greater power of application. One hundred webs, therefore, in a factory of hand-loom weavers, would be finished, even in Manchester, in the time in which 50 would not be finished by an equal number of domestic weavers. But in Ireland the disparity is much more striking. I was assured by Mr. M'Cauley, of Belfast, that it would be necessary for him to employ 400 country weavers to get through the same quantity of work in a given time which he could produce from 100 hand-looms employed in his factory, under his immediate superintendence.

24. The account-books kept in every factory, of the work done by each weaver, and the sum to be received by him, including all deductions for rent of loom, winding, &c., furnish the best test with which I am acquainted of the sum which a cotton-weaver is capable of earning, under circumstances the most favourable to habits of steady industry. In all other cases, it is extremely difficult to arrive at the exact truth. The object of the weaver being to procure Government interference in his favour, he has no disposition to weaken his case of hardship and distress, by stating the whole of his resources; and he will withhold the knowledge of every fact tending to show that he has sometimes the command of other means of alleviating his sufferings than appear to the inquirer. The Commissioners of the Income Tax found the same difficulty in determining appeals made to them by the rich, and deemed themselves fortunate when they could succeed in making a man with an income of 1,000*l.* admit that he was not absolutely a beggar. The domestic weaver states the sum of money he has earned during the last week or month; but the strictest reliance is not always to be placed upon his account of the causes which have prevented him earning a larger sum. Time lost in attendance at shop, time consumed in preparing the web for the shuttle, deductions for loom expenses, fines imposed by the manufacturer for alleged defects in the work, or for detaining it more than the specified time, have all to be considered. But upon all these points, the anxiety of the witness to place his own conduct in the fairest point of view, and magnify his difficulties, leads him to represent the facts in a light often very different from that in which they appear after the statement of the master manufacturer has been heard.

With a weaver for my guide, acquainted with the locality, in every town I visited, I generally desired to be conducted first to the houses of those who were in the lowest condition. In Spitalfields I was taken to the room occupied by a miserable object with the pallid hue of death; his children covered with dirt and rags, and not an article of furniture in the apartment but the loom at which he was at work. I found, on inquiry, that this man was a confirmed gin-drinker, who, if his wages were trebled, would remain in the same state. In Manchester, the first person to whom I was taken by the Secretary of the Weavers' Association, was a cotton-weaver, earning, as he stated, but 3*s.* 6*d.* per week. This man was 74 years of age, had been 50 years in the trade, and was almost past work. These, and similar instances, have a tendency to mislead. The case of the old and infirm, and the victims of intemperance, have no direct relation to the main inquiry; and to determine to my own satisfaction what wages could be earned by steady and industrious hand-loom weavers, with youth and strength in their favour, I went, whenever it was possible, to the factories employing hand-looms on the premises.

25. The factory hand-loom cotton-weavers employed by Mr. M'Cauley, at Belfast, were earning, upon an average, 5*s.* per week, but five-sixths of the weavers were women and girls, Mr. M'Cauley discouraging applications made to him by men, it being an employment for which they could not be sufficiently remunerated. One man in the factory earned at the rate of 7*s.* per week. The factory hand-loom cotton-weavers, employed by Messrs. Turner & Gaskell, at Manchester, were able to earn, upon an average, 9*s.* per week; but these gentlemen had not been so fortunate as Messrs. Bailey, of Preston, in securing the services of men disposed to make the best of their opportunities. Some had earned but 4*s.* 6*d.* on the

the same kind of work on which others had made 9*s.* 9*d.* A boy of 15, employed at loom No. 193, had earned 6*s.* The best-paid weavers were those employed upon double looms. Of three of this class, one had earned 14*s.* 2*d.*, the second 12*s.* 8*d.*, the third 12*s.* 2*d.* In Messrs. Jeffry's factory, at Glasgow, for heavy striped cottons, the quickest workman, Robert Davidson, had earned, during the three weeks ending September 1st, 13*s.* 3*d.* per week; Robert Thompson, an average weaver, had earned, during the same time, 11*s.* 6*d.* per week; Samuel Burns, one of the slowest weavers, had earned, during the five weeks ending September 1st, 9*s.* 9*d.* per week. In the extensive spinning and weaving works of Messrs. Johnstone & Galbraith, employing 1,100 persons, I found 64 hand-loom weavers at work upon plain and fancy ginghams. I examined the book kept of their accounts with Mr. J. Somerville, the manager, who assured me that, if a weaver earned habitually less than 8*s.* 6*d.* he would be discharged for not rendering his loom more productive. One of the quickest and steadiest weavers had earned, on 1300 twill and plain ginghams, for the four weeks ending August 30th, 12*s.* 4*d.* per week; one of the slowest hands had earned, for the same period, 8*s.* 3*d.* per week; several 11*s.* 6*d.*; average, about 9*s.*

26. In no instance did I meet with a domestic weaver willing to admit that he could earn as much as I found from the manufacturers' books was earned by the factory hand-loom weaver; and I believe the fact to be, that the latter is rarely in a position, from various causes, to earn the same amount, within, perhaps, 2*s.* per week of the factory weaver. The majority of the domestic weavers, however, showed a willingness to submit to this sacrifice rather than quit their homes. Everywhere I observed a visible reluctance to working in factories, excepting among the woollen-weavers, where the custom of working in shops is the general rule of the trade. In the Tan-Field factory at Edinburgh (a new establishment), the proprietor, Mr. John Wyllie, had found, previously to my visit, a considerable difficulty in obtaining a sufficient supply of hands. He assured me that the majority of their weavers might earn, on the premises, from 10*s.* to 12*s.* per week, and without extraordinary application; but that although they had posted bills about the streets, advertising for weavers, but few were willing to accept the terms, and of the 18 first engaged five had left of their own accord in less than a month. On this account, Mr. Wyllie was turning his attention to teaching the trade to the young, whose habits were unformed. Perhaps at Paisley or Glasgow the same difficulties would not have been found.

27. It is undoubtedly true, that a large class of weavers, dependent entirely upon the loom, do not earn, when in full employment, 9*s.* per week; and I was anxious to ascertain to what description of persons the fact applies. From all I have myself seen, I do not think it applies very extensively to able-bodied Englishmen or Scotchmen between the ages of 20 and 35. Those who earn the most inconsiderable sums at weaving, excepting women and children, are family men above the age of 40, too much advanced in life, or too infirm of constitution, or too fixed in their habits, to think of changing their trade for a better. When younger men, they are rarely persons having no other resources than the loom. They calculate upon field-work in harvest time; upon the produce of their potato-settings; in some districts upon fishing; and upon occasional employment in various capacities. There is, however, a class of able-bodied young men, chiefly Irish, living entirely by weaving, and who never, excepting at the approach of a holiday-time, earn more than 6*s.* in the week. This class consists of those accustomed to live upon herrings and potatoes, till they care for no better diet, used to rags, and indifferent about decent clothing, and whom no consideration of wages can tempt to close application.

In the manufacturing districts of the north of England, I did not meet with any instance of a young man earning habitually but 6*s.* per week, or less, at weaving, which did not appear to me the result of moral evils rather than the nature of the trade. The season was one of unusual activity, and abundance of employment could be found at common day-labour. In Lancashire, and generally in the northern counties of England, field-labourers earn wages a

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third higher than in the purely agricultural districts. A good ploughman in Lancashire will obtain 21 *s.* per week. The railroads also in progress gave the opportunity, to all who chose to avail themselves of it, of earning at least 2 *s.* 6 *d.* per day; and yet, in Manchester and other towns, I was sometimes told, by young men with no lack of muscular strength, that they were making at the loom but 5 *s.* per week.

28. In considering, however, the wages of the working classes, the important question is, not what is earned by the man merely, but what are the collective earnings of the whole family; and this is more especially important in the case of weavers, because in almost all branches of weaving the labour of women and children is more available than in other trades. A mechanic, employed in the manufacture of steam-engines, has no use for the labour of his wife and daughter; but not so the weaver. I have seen cases in which the wife was more expert at the loom than her husband; and although this is not a general rule, the wife and children of a weaver in most cases contribute very materially to their own support. This is one reason why a weaver will cling to his trade longer than prudence would appear to dictate. His own earnings may be but 7 *s.*, but, with the assistance of his wife and children, that 7 *s.* may be made 21 *s.* To give up his loom, and take to day-labour, would be therefore to place himself in an inferior position, unless other employment for his wife and children could be obtained. When the children of a hand-loom cotton weaver are turned of 13 (although not now before that age), if they are not able to earn money at the loom, there is little difficulty in getting employment for them in factories; and a factory girl will bring home to her father often much more than he earns himself. The pinch of distress is most felt immediately after the first year of marriage, when frequent confinements of the wife, and the birth of children, as yet unable to do anything for their own support, throw the whole family upon the earnings of the husband, however inadequate to their proper maintenance.

I have seen, however, no reason to believe that weavers with young families, in England or Scotland, living upon wages as low as I have described, form a very large proportion of the body. An extreme case of the kind appears to have been met with by Mr. Symons; but although I took some pains, when in Glasgow, to find its parallel, I did not succeed. I believe the young men are either earning better wages, or are abandoning the trade. The class entitled to the most commiseration, consists of the old, of whom there are many, who, having lived on in hope of better times, while the trade has gradually declined, now find themselves, with failing sight, and failing limbs, strength scarcely sufficient to throw the shuttle, and none to help, (their children married and gone away,) left to depend upon the miserable pittance they can yet earn at the loom, which they cannot leave till they leave the world and the trade together.

29. Before passing from the case of cotton weavers, I may express the surprise I felt at the discovery, that, notwithstanding the gigantic competition of the power-loom, the number of hand-looms, employed in this branch of the trade of weaving, is not only very considerable, but, from universal testimony, almost as great as at any former period.

After visiting the power-loom factory of Messrs. J. and W. Sidebottom at Mottram, where, in one immense apartment, 125 yards in length by 25 yards in width, I saw 620 looms working by power, and producing, almost with the rapidity of light, as much cotton cloth, apparently, as would suffice for the consumption of the whole country, I was struck with the fact as extraordinary, not that the labour of the cotton-weaver at the hand-loom should be ill remunerated, but that his employment should not have been altogether superseded. It would seem, however, that the power-loom had created for itself a market almost sufficient to carry off its own productions, leaving the demand for hand-loom cotton cloth nearly as great as before.

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The total declared value of manufactured goods exported from the United Kingdom was in

1790	-	£. 1,662,369	1836	-	£. 18,511,692
1834	-	15,347,050	1837	-	13,650,583
1835	-	16,421,715	1838*	-	16,700,468

I found Mr. M'Cauley, of Belfast, employing 64 hand-looms on coarse 900 narrow fabrics, not made by power, only because power-looms were generally more profitably employed on higher fabrics. To some extent, however, hand-looms must always continue to exist. There are many fabrics, of which the demand is limited and uncertain, for which it would never pay to erect complicated and costly machinery; and the experiment of new fabrics invented will always be made first on the hand-loom, until public favour creates for them a demand sufficient to make it worth the while of a large manufacturer to apply power.

30. The money wages of the hand-loom linen-weavers are, on the whole, as low as the average of the earnings of the hand-loom cotton-weaver; but I place the linen-weaver higher in the scale, because this branch of the weaving trade, which is carried on chiefly in the north of Ireland, is, for the most part, made subsidiary to other employments, and is not the sole dependence of families. In Scotland, the linen-weaver and the cotton-weaver are nearly upon a par, with a slight difference in favour of the linen-weavers; and even in Ireland, in the great towns, the wages of both are about the same level. The factory hand-loom linen-weavers, employed by Messrs. Craig, of Belfast, were earning but 7*s.* per week; one man alone had earned 14*s.* 6*d.* in eight days, and this was an extraordinary case. But very little linen is made in Belfast, or indeed in any of the principal towns of Ireland. The weavers are small farmers and cotters, cultivating land; the loom occupies one corner of a cabin, and a pig another. In fine weather, the weaver is in the field looking after his crop of oats or potatoes; when the weather is unfavourable, he returns to his loom; or perhaps the wife, or some junior member of the family, is kept at the loom, while the husband attends to the field work. Thus, when the loom pays the rent, and the farm supplies provisions, a family may live in much more favourable circumstances than one earning three times the amount in money wages, but having everything to buy.

31. Some years ago, before our improvements in spinning machinery, the farmer in Ireland grew his flax, and employed his family in dressing and spinning it, and weaving it into linen, or selling it in yarn; now that home-spun yarn is superseded, he is often obliged to give up growing flax, for which, when carried to market, he is not certain of obtaining a remunerative price; and the manufacture of linen is, therefore, from this cause alone, no longer the same source of domestic profit as heretofore. Other causes, however, have been in operation, and which must help to explain the depressed condition of the Irish linen-weaver, as compared with his state in former years. The most important is, that the introduction of cheap power-loom cottons, necessarily limited the demand for Irish linens; so that the quantity exported from Ireland in 1824 and 1825, was even less than in the years 1817 and 1818.

LINEN GOODS exported from *Ireland* to *Great Britain* and Foreign Ports.

	Yards.	
1817 - - - - - -	56,230,575	
1818 - - - - - -	50,925,308	
		107,155,883
1824 - - - - - -	49,493,377	
1825 - - - - - -	55,113,265	
		104,606,642

Since

* I have given the dates of the years as ending December 31st, and not as ending the 5th of January the year following; a system which produces much confusion in quoting from the financial government accounts.

Declared value of Cotton Yarn exported from the United Kingdom:

1834 - - - -	£. 5,211,014	1837 - - - -	£. 6,955,942
1835 - - - -	5,706,589	1838 - - - -	7,430,582
1836 - - - -	6,120,366		

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Since 1825 no separate account has been kept of the quantity of linen goods exported from Ireland; the Custom-house returns give only the exports from the United Kingdom.

Although the trade has increased since 1825, and is improving at the present moment, the Irish weaver has been but little benefited, owing to the competition of the Scotch, which has been successful to an extent that threatens entirely to remove the seat of the linen manufacture from Ireland to Great Britain. In 1814, the quantity of flax imported into Dundee, for the manufacturers of that town, amounted to but 3,000 tons; in 1833, it had increased to 18,777 tons. The quantity of linen sail-cloth and bagging shipped from Dundee the same year amounted to 60,000,000 yards, a larger quantity than was exported from the whole of Ireland in 1825*. The rapid increase of the linen trade of Scotland, since 1822, when the Board of Trustees was abolished by which the trade had been governed, affords presumptive evidence, that the present Linen Act of Ireland, with the whole of its machinery of county boards, inspectors, and seal-masters, by impeding the freedom of commercial operations, is injurious to the Irish weaver. Power-looms, in the linen manufacture, are of such recent introduction, and are at present so limited in number, that as yet they have exercised no direct influence upon the condition of the linen-weavers; but, indirectly, they have undoubtedly affected him to some extent by an influx of hand-loom cotton-weavers, who, but for the power-loom, would have remained in their own branch of the trade.

Declared Value of Linen Manufactured Goods† exported from the *United Kingdom*, in the Years commencing 5th of January

1834	£. 2,443,344	1837	£. 2,133,731
1835	2,992,142	1838	2,919,719
1836	3,326,323		

Silk

32. Silk-weaving, in the United Kingdom, is confined almost exclusively to England, but the principal seat of its manufacture is no longer Spitalfields, (although, from the census taken by Dr. Mitchell, it appears there are still 10,000 silk-looms employed in London), but Manchester, Macclesfield, Leigh, Coventry, and the villages surrounding these and a few other towns in the north of England. Poplins (a mixture of silk and wool) continue to be manufactured in Dublin, but plain silk-weaving has wholly left that city.

In the silk trade there is more employment for all the members of a family, and the labour is lighter, than in cotton, or linen, or woollen-weaving. Hence, when trade is brisk, instances are by no means rare of families earning, collectively, upwards of 3*l.* per week; and if all branches of the silk trade were equally paid, and employment were constant, their state would be superior to that of any other class of operatives. But this is very far from being the condition of the weaver of plain sarsnets or gros de Naples, the staple of the trade.

I subjoin, in the Appendix, the evidence of William Bresson, a silk-weaver and loom-broker of Spitalfields, as containing the best and most complete account of the state of the weaving trade in London I have been able personally to obtain, or have yet seen among the evidence of any of the witnesses examined by this Commission.

On the subject of earnings, I was informed by a manufacturer, who at one time had 1,750 looms employed in Manchester and the neighbouring villages, that the average sum he had paid to his weavers for each loom, during a year, allowing for sickness, idleness, deductions, and all sorts of allowances, was 8*s.* 6*d.* per week: 8*s.* 6*d.* is but a small sum per loom; but where three or more looms are employed, which is the case in all large families, when trade is good, the collective earnings are not inconsiderable.

For

* Porter's Progress of the Nation, page 267.

† Declared value of linen yarn exported from the United Kingdom, in the years commencing 5th January:

1834	£. 136,312	1837	£. 479,307
1835	216,634	1838	655,699
1836	318,771		

The great increase of exports of linen yarn is owing to our recent improvements in the art of spinning flax. It can now be spun of a degree of fineness which no other nation can equal, and will not, until they have copied our machinery, and learnt the same methods.

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For weaving a certain description of velvets, the wages now are the same as the book prices given before the repeal of the Spitalfields Act in 1826; and, taking into the account the fall of prices in most articles of consumption since that period, this class of weavers must be considered as placed in improved circumstances. Velvet-weaving, however, requiring a peculiar degree of skill, there has not been the same influx of new hands into this branch of the trade (although the demand has increased), as among the plain silk-weavers, with whom wages have generally fallen.

33. This fall of wages in plain silk is, among the weavers of Spitalfields, almost universally ascribed to the loss of their Book, by the repeal of the Spitalfields Act, and to foreign competition. The truth, however, is obvious, that the competition which the Spitalfields weavers have to dread, is not so much that of foreigners, as the competition of their own countrymen in the north; and this competition is so formidable, that, had the book prices been maintained, in all probability the trade would long before this have left London altogether. The reason will be partly explained by the following short statement (for which I am indebted to Mr. G. Smith, of Manchester,) of the difference in wages between Manchester and Spitalfields:

	Spitalfields.	Manchester.
	d. *d.*	*d.*
18°° and 20°° 3 threads plain - - -	5	4
22°° — - - - -	5 and 5 ½	4 ¼
18°° 6 thread - - - - -	8 and 9	7 ½
20°° — - - - - -	9	8
22°° — - - - - -	10	8 ½
For double extras - - -	1	– ½

The following Tables, for which I am indebted to Messrs. Morrison & Co., of Fore-street, will show the proportion of purchases of silks and ribbons, in different markets, by one of the largest houses in London:

BROAD SILKS.

Rateable Proportion of Purchases in different Markets; namely,	Five Years, ending 31st July 1826.	Five Years, ending 31st July 1831.	Year ending 31st July 1838.
	£. *s.* *d.*	*£.* *s.* *d.*	*£.* *s.* *d.*
1. Spitalfields - - - - -	66 10 6	53 6 –	43 5 9
2. Manchester, Macclesfield - -	33 9 6	44 2 8	51 19 3
3. France - - - -	- - -	2 11 4	4 15 –
£.	100 – –	100 – –	100 – –

It will be seen, comparing 1838 with the five years ending 1831, that the purchases in Spitalfields are reduced in the rate of 10*l.* 0*s.* 3*d.* per cent., the deficiency being supplied from Manchester, &c., 7*l.* 16*s.* 7*d.* per cent.; from France, 2*l.* 3*s.* 8*d.* per cent.; making up the 10*l.* 0*s.* 3*d.*

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A similar calculation as to ribbons:—

RIBBONS.

Proportion of Purchases.	Five Years ending 31 July 1826.	Five Years ending 31 July 1831.	Year ending 31 July 1838.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
1. English, Coventry - - -	100 – –	88 8 6	75 13 5
2. French, St. Etienne - - -	- - -	11 11 6	24 6 7
£.	100 – –	100 – –	100 – –

Among the causes of the increased proportion of French purchases in 1838, may be suggested the decrease of smuggling, that decrease as compared with the former period enabling the house to do a larger share of the trade, which was before in other hands.

I am assured, also, that the manufacturers of the north have another advantage in their favour; they are men of more enterprise, less wedded to antiquated notions, and old methods of doing business, than the manufacturers of the south. They aim more generally at trading upon the principle of small profits and large returns; and when the ports were opened to the French weaver, instead of folding their arms, and calling upon Hercules to help them, they put their shoulders to the wheel to try if, in the home-market, at least, they could not beat their foreign rivals, and they succeeded. When the prohibitory duties were removed, several of them went to Lyons to ascertain at what cost French silks could be manufactured. They found at that time (1826), that, although the French weaver manufactured a neater article, the difference in wages upon gros de Naples was but three farthings per yard. They returned satisfied, that with a protecting duty of 30 per cent., the French manufacturer could never obtain the command of the home market. That they were right, and that the removal of the old prohibitory duties, instead of ruining the trade, as was predicted, gave it an impulse unknown before, is placed beyond controversy by the Custom-house returns.

Declared Value of Manufactured Silk Goods exported from the United Kingdom, in the Years commencing 5 January.

1820 - - - -	£. 371,755	1835 - - - - -	973,785
1826, when the ports were first opened - - - -	168,801	1836 - - - - -	917,821
		1837 - - - - -	503,673
1834 - - - - -	637,197	1838 - - - - -	778,031

That which, however, appears the most remarkable is, that a considerable part of these silk goods have been exported to France, our most formidable rival in this manufacture.

The Exports of Silk Goods to France were, in

1832 - - - - -	£. 57,187
1833 - - - - -	76,525
1834 - - - - -	60,346

The fact would seem to be, that we excel in certain fabrics, the French in others; and a mutual interchange is, therefore, going on to the advantage of both nations.

34. The above returns appear to set the question at rest, that the late depression of the silk trade was, in great part, occasioned by the free-trade system and the introduction of French silks; and yet the contrary opinion prevails, to a great extent, among the London manufacturers and the weavers they employ. Assuming the home market to be glutted with French silks, and yet being aware that the French weaver cannot work 30 per cent. below the English manufacturer,

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manufacturer, they allege that the duties are unfairly collected; and that, owing to a false valuation of the silks imported, the duties paid upon them, instead of being 30 per cent., are practically less than 15 or 10. I took some trouble to inquire into the truth or incorrectness of this statement.

It appears that the duty upon imported silks is sometimes charged upon the assumed value, and sometimes upon the weight of silk contained in the fabric, at the discretion of the Custom-house officers. When the value is well known, 30 per cent. is charged, *ad valorem*; when doubtful, the silk is weighed, and a fixed rate charged per pound. The principle is perfectly fair, but its operation is somewhat unequal. When the duty is collected *ad valorem*, it is practically sometimes only 20 per cent. upon the invoice price; when collected by weight, it is often much more than the Legislature intended to impose. It has been stated to me by importers, that, upon the article of French figured muslin gauze, the duty charged of 27 *s.* 6 *d.* per pound, has, in some cases, amounted to as much as 60 per cent. on the invoice price.

The testimony of importers, when it can be implicitly relied upon, from the known respectability of the parties, is the only certain means of determining whether the amount of duty, said to be imposed by the Legislature, is actually paid or not, the importers alone knowing the price they have paid for the article. Every importing house adds the duty to the invoice of every article before fixing the selling price. And as the information was, therefore, to be obtained, I applied to Messrs. Morrison & Co., of Fore-street, and received from them what I believe to be an honest and faithful statement of the actual duties they have paid upon French imported silks. It is as follows:

"The rates of duty are so various, part by weight and part *ad valorem*, that the particulars would be very complicated. The result for the year, upon all the French goods imported by Todd, Morrison & Co., is an average duty of 27 *l.* 9 *s.* 9 *d.* per cent. The ribbons being about that average, and the broad silk goods somewhat below it."

35. It seems almost incredible that, upon any article of silk manufacture, it should answer the purpose of an English house to import goods charged, by weight, with a duty, practically amounting to 40, 50, and 60 per cent. But the fact is explained by the superiority of the French in taste and elegance of design. Plain silk, from all I can learn, if the duty were but 5 per cent. instead of 30, would not be imported to any considerable extent; but in articles of fancy and fashion, through their schools of design, the French at present distance all competition. An improvement has, however, commenced; smuggling has ceased in French ribbons; and the Coventry weaver, stimulated by the open rivalry of his foreign competitor, now produces ribbons but little inferior to those of France, and of a beauty formerly never known in ribbons of home manufacture.

36. Although the silk-weavers in the manufacturing districts work for lower wages than the weavers of Spitalfields and Bethnal Green, they are on the whole in better circumstances than the latter. In the suburbs of Manchester, house-rent is much cheaper than in Spitalfields; a weaver being able to obtain a small house, with four rooms, for the rent of one room in London. Provisions also are somewhat cheaper in the country than in London; but the most important advantage is cheap fuel. Next to bread, perhaps, in this cold and damp climate, the most important necessary of life is fuel; and so indispensable is it to an operative that he should be placed where, during a long and severe winter, fuel can be obtained upon reasonable terms, that I doubt whether anything can prevent the rapid decline of all the principal London manufactures, by their removal to the northern counties, unless means can be devised to cheapen here the supply of fuel. The weavers of Manchester, during the hard winter of 1838, were paying for coals but 9 *d.* per cwt., for which the silk-weavers of Spitalfields were charged 2 *s.* 2 *d.* The distress which thence ensued, at a time when the thermometer fell to zero, and three-fourths of the looms were idle, it would be impossible to describe. A woman, the wife of a silk-weaver, relating the sufferings of her family, said to me, "Often, Sir, and often, were we obliged, when half starving, to go without a pennyworth of bread, and buy a pennyworth of coals, or take the children over to a neighbour's to borrow a warm at their fire, or put them early to bed shivering and crying with cold."

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37. I stop, for a moment, to contrast the superior condition, in this respect, of the poorest Irish cotter to that of the London operative. In England a notion prevails that the innumerable bogs of Ireland must necessarily be unproductive; but they constitute the wealth of the Irish poor. The turf cut from the bogs, and dried, makes a fuel but little inferior to coal. The bogs may, therefore, be regarded as coal mines on the surface. Whatever may be the privations of the Irish cotter, he rarely wants for firing. For 5*s.* he can purchase a bank, that is to say, leave to dig, at his leisure, a square plot of ten yards, which produces him a stock of fuel sufficient for the year, and in some parts, where the bogs are of great extent, liberty to dig turf is given or taken without payment. Compare this with the state of the London operative, who, out of 15*s.* or 20*s.*, has to spend in winter 2*s.* for one solitary cwt. of coals, and make that quantity last for the whole week.

38. These facts render the policy very questionable of perpetuating the tax of 1*s.* 1*d.* per ton upon all coals consumed in the metropolis; a tax which is levied in no other city in the empire; and which, from the distance of the metropolis from the coal district, is more oppressive to the poor than a similar tax would be in the north of England. The coal-owners in the north have the right of all producers to agree among themselves to regulate the supply of the article in which they deal, so as to raise prices. Whenever such a combination exists, the importance of removing all dues and taxes *, bearing upon the commodity,

* It is deserving of consideration whether the removal of the prohibitory duty of 40*s.* per cwt. on foreign coals is not desirable. If coals could not be worked for the London market, in any part of the Continent, cheaper than they are now supplied (a fact by no means certain), the duty is not wanted as a protection to the British coal-owner; if otherwise, the public would be benefited and protected against the attempt to raise prices beyond their present level. The present system raises prices in two ways—first, by increasing the coal-owner's profit; secondly, by raising the charge of freights; into which, when at Newcastle, I particularly inquired. The following statement has been published by a society called the "Anti-Coal Monopoly Association:"—

"In the north, the great coal-owners enter into a bond, with heavy penalties to each other, not to send more than a certain quantity of coals to the London market, and to sell coals to none who will not sign a paper agreeing to conform to the regulations of waiting their turn. In the south, those regulations are, that when coals are in the Pool at 23*s.* 6*d.* per ton, only 40 cargoes shall be sold; when 23*s.* 9*d.* and 24*s.*, 50 cargoes; when 24*s.* 3*d.* to 24*s.* 6*d.*, 60 cargoes; when 24*s.* 9*d.*, 70 cargoes; and a reduction of 10 ships for every shilling below 23*s.* 6*d.* The operation of this may be seen in the following table:—

AN ACCOUNT of the NUMBER of VESSELS, Coal-laden, sold from the Pool on the Coal Market each Market-day, during the Month of December 1838; the Price of the best Coals (Lambton); the Number of Ships waiting for Meters at Four o'clock; and the Number detained in the different Sections of the River, between Bugsby Hole and Gravesend:—

Market Days. December 1838.	Ships sold from the Pool each Day.	Price of the Best Coals.	Number of Vessels waiting for Meters.	Number of Vessels detained in Sections.
		s. *d.*		
3	31	25 –	129	Return not
5	13	25 –	94	perfect.
7	44	24 3	94	293
10	66	24 3	94	375
12	47	24 6	101	386
14	58	24 9	106	360
17	59	25 –	100	360
19	58	25 3	109	315
21	64	25 –	128	306
24	41	25 –	109	315
26	49	25 –	136	294
28	47	25 –	143	297
31	50	24 9	152	299
Average - -	48	24 9	121	325

Charles Rowland, Harbour-master.

Average detention of vessels in the river—Twenty-three days.

The effect of this system has been to raise prices to a great extent, and to decrease the consumption:

modity, becomes the greater, and every facility that can be desired should be given to rival competitors. If such measures do not succeed, the evil is one which must be borne.

Woollens

39. The woollen-weavers when fully employed earn, individually, higher wages, upon the average, than plain silk-weavers; but the labour of women and children is not so available in this branch of the trade as in others. The loom, required for weaving blankets or broad cloth, is of great width and corresponding strength; the labour, therefore, is much more severe than in weaving light and narrow fabrics of silk or cotton, and the physical powers of a woman would be unequal to the muscular exertion required. Women, therefore, are for the most part excluded the trade, and, through the absence of their competition, the wages of the men are higher, but the earnings of a family less than among the plain silk-weavers.

The woollen trade appears to be an illustration of the constant tendency of manufacturing industry to seek new channels, when its forward course is impeded either by combinations of workmen, or sluggishness, on the part of manufacturers, to adopt the improvements of which others are ready to avail themselves. From both these causes the woollen manufacture is decaying in the west of England while it is flourishing in the north. In Scotland I was informed that it has been gradually extending itself for the last 30 years, and was then in a very prosperous state. In Dublin a large broad-cloth manufacturer assured me that, were he to begin business again, it would be at Leeds rather than in any part of Ireland, owing to the division of labour at Leeds rendering every branch of the manufacture a separate trade, against which it was impossible for a manufacturer upon the old system, without an unlimited capital, to stand his ground.

Looking generally at the woollen trade of the United Kingdom, the Custom-house returns lead to the conclusion that the trade is not upon the whole in so flourishing a state as in former years.

Declared Value of British-manufactured Woollen Goods exported from the United Kingdom in the Years commencing January 5th:—

1815	£. 9,381,426	1835	£. 6,840,510
1818	8,140,767	1836	7,639,353
1822	6,488,167	1837	4,655,977
1830	4,728,666	1838	5,792,156
1834	5,736,870		

Parliamentary Returns do not give the declared value of woollen manufactured goods previous to 1815. According to the official rates of value the exports were,—

1799	£. 6,876,939
1836	7,541,364

The decline in our exports of woollen goods* since 1815 (a year, however, which, in consequence of the peace, was one of unusual activity), may be attributed partly to the circumstance of cotton having, in some fabrics, superseded articles of woollen manufacture, and undoubtedly, to some extent, to the influence of foreign competition in neutral markets. In a paper, compiled from official German documents, by R. W. Rawson, Esq., and presented to the Statistical Society, it is stated that in the years 1835 and 1836, the exports of woollen

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tion: thus, whilst London is annually increasing in population, there has been a positive decrease in this chief article of comfort and of necessity. There were imported into London—

In 1837	2,626,997 tons.
In 1838	2,581,085 —
Less in 1838 than in 1837 by	45,912 tons.

with probably an increase of half as many inhabitants.

* In stuffs, and woollens mixed with cotton, there has been a fourfold increase since 1815. The export of woollen yarn has progressively but not rapidly increased.

1834	£. 240,541	1837	£. 337,140
1835	309,091	1838	365,657
1836	358,690		

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woollen cloths, stuffs, and hosiery, of Prussia and the Commercial Union, increased 18 per cent.; the gross amount being as follows:—

1834 - - - - - -	£. 6,040,910
1835 - - - - - -	7,119,557
1836 - - - - - -	7,948,814

40. From this rapid sketch of the present state of the weaving trade, I proceed to consider the future prospects of the hand-loom weaver. Every weaver with whom I have conversed, has his own theory of remedial measures. Boards of trade for the regulation of apprenticeships; repeal of the stamp duty on indentures; repeal of the corn laws; the enactment of laws against foreign competition. But before examining any of these or similar propositions, it appeared to me necessary to inquire to what extent the very existence of the hand-loom weaver was threatened by new and rapidly improving machinery. Assuming, for the moment, the fact, that through the progress of the power-loom, in another 20 years, the hand-loom will be as completely superseded as the cottage spinning-wheel, of what avail would be boards of trade, or any other legislative contrivance, to a class of men whose occupation would be irretrievably gone, and whose only hope would be to obtain employment in some new branch of industry? This was the question I asked myself. The facts I have now to state will supply the answer.

41. For reasons already assigned, I believe there will always be hand-loom weavers. Power-loom weaving is inapplicable to some branches of the trade. No improvements in machinery will interfere with the skilled labour of a certain class of weavers; but these are comparatively few in number; the mass are plain weavers. Will not the power-loom gradually interfere with them? and what will be their condition when its utmost capabilities have been proved?

But 30 years have elapsed since the power-loom began to be extensively introduced. The unexampled increase of the cotton-trade, and the profits made by manufacturers, have hitherto confined the power-loom almost exclusively to cotton-weaving, leaving, notwithstanding, much to the hand-loom. First, then, what are the future prospects of the hand-loom cotton-weavers? I fear the answer must be, as a class, all but extinction. I found, in many instances, hand-loom weavers employed on certain cotton fabrics, only because the power-loom was employed on fabrics paying better. A very slight rise in wages, I was assured by all, would make it worth the while of a manufacturer to employ power.

Mr. M'Cauley, of Belfast, states, that a rise of ten per cent. would destroy the whole of his hand-looms; and many other manufacturers gave me similar testimony. The power-loom has therefore already fixed a limit to wages which no board of trade or other devices can enable a hand-loom cotton-weaver to pass. But will not the limit soon be even narrowed? I need quote no evidence to prove, from the signs of universal alarm among the mill-owners, that power-loom weaving has ceased to be a source of high profits. Competition, both abroad and at home, has in this respect produced its natural result; profits have fallen, and the supply is beginning to outstrip the demand. The immediate effect therefore must be to force the power-loom upon those fabrics which have hitherto been left to the hand-loom. Thus, must wages of labour be still further reduced, until the hand-loom cotton-weavers be driven from the trade.

Among the linen-weavers, the influence of the power-loom has not yet been sensibly felt. Flax being a material less yielding and elastic than cotton, an opinion prevailed that power could not be applied with success. When this was shown to be an error it was said that the power-loom could not produce in linen cloth as good a *selvage* as was required. This difficulty has, however, been overcome; and at Preston I saw power-loom weaving, on a large scale, in the establishment of Messrs. German and Petty, applied to linens. Their example and that of some other manufacturers have already been so influential that I found manufacturers everywhere contemplating breaking up their hand-looms and introducing power-loom machinery. They all assured me that, however low were the wages of hand-loom linen-weavers, not only would there be no rise, but it would be impossible, at any rate of wages, for the great body of weavers to maintain a struggle against the new machinery that would soon be generally introduced in the trade.

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The same remarks apply very generally to the woollen trade. Power-loom weaving is in this branch also quite in its infancy. After many attempts and failures, however, it has been found that power may be applied as successfully to fabrics, of which the material is wool, as of cotton. In weaving stuffs at Halifax, power has been some time introduced; and now, at Leeds, power-loom weaving is applied to broad cloths. In a few years, therefore, a complete revolution in the trade of woollen-weaving may be anticipated.

Among the silk-weavers I met universally with a deep-rooted conviction that the power-loom could never interfere with them. The numerous failures which are incident to all new experiments were referred to as conclusive evidence that all succeeding attempts must fail in like manner. In silk-weaving the difficulties which the power-loom has to overcome are greater than in other branches of the trade: first, the slight texture of the materials, liable constantly to break; and, next, the incessant labour required in picking out, with the hand, the knots and loose fibres, in order that the surface may have a glass-like smoothness. After experiments for 18 years, however, these difficulties have been triumphally conquered. The silk, composing the warp and weft, is stretched on frames, and picked by hand before being mounted in the loom, and in some cases every thread is passed between small cylinders, or steel rollers, and fine needle eyes, which obstruct the passage of knots, and level all inequalities. When, therefore, the silk is once in the loom, little remains to be done besides watching the shuttle. In Messrs. Smith's factory, at Manchester, I saw 64 power-looms at work on plain silks, attended to only by women and girls. The looms, however, required one person to attend to each; but in Messrs. Tootle's factory I saw power-looms employed on figured silks, with Jacquard machines, and one man attending to two looms. I went away fully convinced that the progress of improvement would enable, in a few years, a girl of 16 to attend two power-looms weaving figured silks, as efficiently as a young person of that age now attends two looms weaving plain cottons. I was informed that power-loom weaving was beginning to be applied to ribbons and bandannas; and although there are not at the present moment perhaps more than 500 power-looms in the trade, now that the chief obstacles have been removed, their increase will be very rapid. Velvet-weaving and some few other branches may, perhaps, after all, escape the competition of the power-loom. In velvet-weaving the shuttle has continually to be stopped, and a knife drawn carefully by hand, cutting the silk against the cane wire. This process is unfavourable to the extreme rapidity of movement which is the great advantage gained by the application of power. It appears however inevitable, that the power-loom will soon overtake every branch of plain silk-weaving; and the plain weavers constitute in this as in other branches the great majority of persons employed in the trade.

I have seen calculations made by weavers to prove that the power-loom will never work at a rate materially cheaper than the hand-loom in the silk trade; but, even if no saving were effected, manufacturers will prefer machinery upon equal terms to employing hand-loom weavers. The regularity, the despatch, the little trouble given by machinery, contrast unfavourably with the moral difficulties attending the management of workmen, ill-remunerated and therefore dissatisfied; and through want of education continually taking false steps to improve their condition.

But the assumption, that no additional profits are to be gained by those who will apply power to weaving silks or other fabrics besides those of cotton, I believe to be unfounded. I doubt whether, on the contrary, there is any mode in which capital can be applied with a greater certainty of profit (through the present absence of severe competition) than to power-loom weaving in fabrics, the materials of which are silk, flax, and wool. I believe that, on a large scale, it would enable a manufacturer to undersell his rivals by perhaps 10 per cent. This would give him for a time, at least, the command both of the home market and the foreign; and, upon large returns, a very small per centage of profit would pave the road to wealth.

41. The conclusion is irresistible, and as there is no real kindness in encouraging hopes that can never be realized, I do not hesitate to state at once the conviction that has forced itself upon my mind. The trade of hand-loom weaving is not only incapable of improvement, but of remaining in its present state. The best friends of the weaver are those who would advise

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and assist him to transfer his labour to other channels of industry. If he cling to the hand-loom his condition will become worse from day to day. A few of the more skilled class of weavers may indeed maintain their position, but the fate of the many (unless their own intelligence and foresight avert it by change of occupation) is decreasing employment, decreasing wages, and ultimate destitution.

42. Assuming now, as I may be permitted to do, that the trade of hand-loom weaving is in a state of transition, it will at once be perceived that several of the remedies proposed for the distressed condition of hand-loom weavers will not meet their case. I allude especially to the proposition of a law to raise wages—Boards of Trade to effect the same object, and to adjust differences—and the reduction or abolition of the stamp duty on the indenture of apprentices.

43. A law to raise wages, or to prevent, during a scarcity of employment, wages falling below a certain level, would obviously have the effect of encouraging the application of power, and of causing machinery to supersede, almost entirely, the hand-loom weaver at an earlier period than is likely at present when no such law exists.

A manufacturer unable, in a dull season, to sell at a remunerative profit, and to pay the wages fixed by law, would turn his attention to machinery. To meet this difficulty the weaver says, tax machinery. This would be to destroy our foreign trade, for we cannot tax the power-looms of the Continent, and of the United States. Boards of Trade would, of course, have the same tendency. Although they answer the purpose of some manufacturers who may have the command of a market, and do not wish to be undersold, they are serious obstacles to all who have their way to make in business, and who to do so must offer for sale a better or cheaper article than their neighbours. To whatever extent, therefore, the regulations of a Board of Trade interfered with the freedom of his operations, every manufacturer beginning trade would seek to escape from them. If they followed him from the hand-loom to the power-loom the result would probably be, that he would transfer his capital to other countries, where he could buy and sell, or manufacture, upon whatever plan he pleased.

A reduction of wages is never the act of a prosperous manufacturer trading to the full extent of his capital. It begins with those whose capital would otherwise be idle, and with the unemployed. A weaver having tried in vain to obtain work at the old standard of wages, offers his labour at a lower rate, and thereby tempts a manufacturer to make up stock for which there is no immediate demand. When the weaver does not succeed, even on these terms, in procuring employment, his next attempt is to manufacture upon a small scale on his own account. Perhaps he buys or borrows the warp and weft, and makes up a piece of silk handkerchiefs. When finished, the handkerchiefs are hawked about till a purchaser is found, generally at a price which leaves the weaver but one-half the sum which he ought to have cleared as journeyman's wages. I have often found weavers so employed who have reasoned with me upon the importance of a law to raise wages, without perceiving that the necessity of their position would compel them to be the first to break the law, and that they were then engaged in bringing down the rate of wages, by overstocking the market with a commodity for which there was no effective demand through the usual channels.

44. In Ireland, the linen-weavers are all, to a very great extent, small manufacturers. A law to raise wages could not apply to them, because their earnings are not in the form of wages. The weaver buys his warp and weft, and sells the linen, when made up, for whatever price it will fetch in the open market, exactly as a farmer's wife would sell her butter and eggs.

At Coleraine, I saw weavers bringing their linen and selling it on the market day in the public streets. The buyers had desks before them on which they examined the linen. The sellers went about from one desk to another till they found a buyer with whom they could agree. I was informed in some places the linen-dealer and weaver enter into a kind of partnership; the dealer supplies the warps and wefts, the weaver the labour of the loom; and the terms are, that whatever price the linen realises in the market, the weaver shall have a fourth. These customs, quite of a primitive character, work to the advantage of the weaver when trade is good and the demand great, but in a period of stagnation they reduce him to the extreme of want. The weaver, having no capital on which

which to fall back, cannot hold his little stock, as a large manufacturer would do, but is obliged to sell at a sacrifice, and by so doing brings down prices and the value of his labour more rapidly, and to a lower point than ever happens in this country.

In England wages although slow to rise are as slow to fall. The large manufacturer is the first to gain the advantage of an improvement in trade, but losses on stock upon which full wages have been paid in the hope of prices which cannot be realised, fall exclusively upon himself. It is true he then sets about a reduction of wages, but before he can effect it perhaps trade revives, and prices showing a tendency to advance, he is induced to go on as before.

45. The reduction or abolition of the stamp duty on apprentices is advocated by the weavers on two grounds. First, by taking a boy who is not indentured they have no means of securing his services when he has learnt enough of the trade to weave without assistance. Next, they think that if none but apprentices were taught the trade, it would not be overstocked with hands to its present extent. To these arguments there are several valid objections. If it be granted that the trade is in a state of transition, nothing would be more unjust than to take advantage of the ignorance of a lad to prevent him, by legal bonds, making his escape from some branch of weaving, already decaying, and which in seven years' time may be utterly destroyed. But the mere cheapening of indentures would not have the supposed effect of limiting the number of hands, for the influx is not from without, but from within. Every child of a weaver being useful at a loom, all are brought up to the loom, whether apprenticed or not.

46. A third objection is, that it is doubtful whether the whole system of apprenticeships ought not to be abolished. But before any fresh legislation takes place on the subject there ought at least to be a searching inquiry into the effect of compulsory labour in this form upon the industry, the morals, and the happiness of the community. One of its results is to facilitate the combination of trades, and impede the transfer of labour, by furnishing each class of operatives with a convenient test, by which every other class may be excluded employment. A machine manufacturer dares not employ a starving weaver to assist in riveting a plate of iron, for fear of a strike among his men, on the ground that the weaver was not apprenticed to the trade of a mechanic. Another effect it produces is unfavourable to the men themselves, in depressing wages. The value of an apprentice at 18 is often as great as that of a man at 30, and but for the indentures the master would be forced to give him the same amount of wages, or employ a man in his stead. The cheap labour of the apprentice, therefore, prevents wages rising, just as, in the Southern States of America, the cheap compulsory labour of the slave supersedes that of the hired labourer. This, again, is unfavourable to the morals of a community. An apprentice becomes disorderly because, at the age of 18 or 20, but for his indentures, he could obtain high wages, and the temptation often induces him to leave his master, and set the law at defiance. In addition, I would remark that a vast number of the cases of apprenticeships into which I have inquired have been gross frauds. A tradesman to whom the apprentice-fee is an object, or who wants an errand-boy, takes a lad under a promise, the performance of which is always but indifferently observed, of teaching him a trade*. During five years out

* The following is the result of an examination of nine apprentices I found locked up in the House of Correction, Middlesex, for disorderly conduct. Their statements will serve to illustrate the working of the present system. But some allowance must be made for the evidence being *ex parte*:—

T. A., age 18, parish apprentice of St. Dunstan's, West, was 13 years old when his mother died; went then to the parish, and was sent down to the farm-house at Westow (Mr. Aubin's); stayed from May till September; did not like his first master, he was only a lodger; a tailor. "Locked me out one evening, and stayed out all night himself; about six weeks afterwards was apprenticed to a boot and shoe maker; a small bespoke-master; does not keep a shop but is a housekeeper; he had 10 *l.* and two suits of clothes from the parish as an apprentice fee; we have not agreed during the last three years; he was a labourer in the East India Company's warehouse when I first knew him; afterwards he got discharged; wanted to sell his pension and go to America; since which we have often quarrelled; I applied to the magistrate to prevent his going; he is not willing to part with me now because I am of service to him.

"Was in St. Dunstan's, West, charity-school; wore a blue uniform for six years and a half; learned to read and write there; can repeat the catechism; used to read the Bible continually;

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out of the seven a youth is perhaps taught nothing but some mechanical part which he might have acquired in a month. For example, in the watch-making business the apprentice is often kept for nearly the whole of his time in polishing and cleaning: during the last two years the apprentice, looking forward to the period of being his own master, perceives the necessity of teaching himself so much of the trade as will enable him to gain a subsistence; but a thorough knowledge of his art he has rarely the opportunity of acquiring. Redress from the master, who can always defend himself by quoting some instance of misconduct on the part of his apprentice, is out of the question. If apprenticeship were abolished, the worst evil that could arise to the working classes would be, that the premium for teaching a trade would be higher than at present; but, on the other hand, the contract would be better observed on both sides.

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belongs to the Wesleyan Methodist Society, and was a teacher in Sunday-schools; is now a tract distributor."

G. B., age 15, has been apprenticed two years and a half to a cabinet-maker; the parish gave 5 *l.*, but the master has had half only of it yet, and will not have the other till I have served half my time; says his master does not use him well; knocks him about a good deal; heaved the mallet at him two or three times; "he behaved very well till he opened a beer-shop, when he made me a pot-boy;" he was in White Cross-street prison for debt; he has been there twice; boy used to have to take beer round the new cattle-market at Islington, and says his master was a passionate man, given to swearing; "I ran away altogether, and went hop-picking into Kent; came back and went to my aunt; my brother went with me to get my indentures cancelled; I was away 11 weeks, and in consequence of it the magistrate said I should have 12 weeks here; my master has not taught me the trade; I cannot do more than plane a piece of wood."

"*M. I.*, age 19; is apprenticed to a whitesmith: I applied for the situation myself; paid nothing for premium; my object was to learn the trade; have been apprentice six years, and agreed pretty well for the first five years; I am an out-door apprentice, and sometimes used to be behind time; he gives me 13 *s.* for my board; the first year I had 4 *s.*, then rose two every year: I could earn 2 *l.* per week if I were free; this is the reason we do not agree better.

"Was two years at the Whitechapel National School; I did not learn much; could not read and write when I left; taught myself chiefly."

"*G. J.*, age 17; was apprenticed by the parish of St. Luke's; was in St. Luke's workhouse about a twelvemonth; went once to a national school in Cowper-street; stayed there half a year; did not get on well there; only boys set to teach you, who cannot teach you so well as you can teach yourself; left it because I did not get on; went then to a private school, where I paid 8 *d.* per week; got on there faster; the parish paid my master 5 *l.* as my apprentice fee; 2 *l.* 10 *s.* only down, the other he has not yet had; master a watch-finisher; have agreed very well, excepting about taking two days holiday at Christmas; it was through the mistress I was sent to prison; he cannot get on without me; we work into each other's hands, but he gives me only 6 *d.* a week; once I gave him 8 *s.* 6 *d.* to buy me a hat, but he kept the money and never bought me a hat, nor nothing else.

"Master does not keep a shop, but works up stairs in a room; do not agree with the mistress; she is always quarrelling with the children; am in for six weeks; I have been at work for six years and a half, and know no more than if I had been there only one year; we all do separate parts; he has taught me to do a little in one branch, but as there is always enough to do at that, I learn no more one week than I did the week before; I am anxious to cut it altogether, for I shall never learn the trade; he makes me work all day on Sunday, and wont give me the 6 *d.* without; he has only bought me one second-hand suit of clothes since I have been there."

"*G. F.*, age 20, was apprenticed by the Bishopsgate charity school, in Peter-street, to a printer; they paid 5 *l.* as an apprentice fee; is allowed no wages; is an in-door apprentice; has 1 *s.* about once a month; could get 30 *s.* a week if he were out of his time, as a compositor; this is partly the cause we do not agree; was six or seven years at the school in Peter-street; we wore then a green dress; used to pay a penny per week; they taught nothing but reading, writing, and ciphering."

"*H. W.*, age 14, was apprenticed from Bethnal-green workhouse, to a comb-maker; was never in prison before, but says he would sooner stay there than go back to his master; has been apprenticed about nine months; he beats me about a great deal; says I am lazy and wont work; I do the best I can; have certainly skulked once or twice, never more than ten minutes together; comb-making is a very bad trade; was left on the steps of the workhouse when I was a month old, and have been on the parish ever since; was at the nursery at Edmonton till I was 12 years old; did not learn to read and write, am learning now to spell; ran away for three days, and was persuaded to go back; ran away once before, for his beating me; he threw a tool at me, and made a black mark on my forehead, which still remains; he gave me a black eye the first time I ran away."

"*R. B.*, age 17, was apprenticed by St. Dunstan's parish to a shoemaker; the apprentice fee paid was 5 *l.* and two suits of clothes; master is a journeyman shoemaker; there are four rooms in the house; three years next June with him; he has lately taken up another trade, that of an undertaker; another apprentice is teaching me a little of the trade of shoemaking; did not derive much knowledge from my master; have been in prison a month, and am going out to-day.

"Was never in a workhouse; was in the charity school of St. Mary-Axe; was there three years; learned to read and write there; used to learn the catechism, but have forgotten all about it."

"*J. C.*, age 14, was apprenticed by his father to a watch-cap maker; he paid nothing with me; in-door apprentice; he is a kind master on the whole; does not beat me much; went to Mr. Tinker's school, in York street; paid 10 *d.* per week; was there about a year; went afterwards to another private school; says he means to go back to his master, and behave as he ought to do when he gets out; is sentenced for a month."

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— No. 2. —

Effects of the Provision Laws.

47. Having established, as I consider, the fact that the weaving trade is in a state of transition, the next question is, will new channels of industry be opened sufficient to absorb the labour of the numerous body likely to be deprived of their present means of livelihood? The answer must depend upon the result of an inquiry to what extent the statements of the manufacturers petitioning for a repeal of the Corn Laws are correct, that the export trade of the Uned Kingdom is materially checked, and threatened with ultimate extinction, by foreign competition in neutral markets, and by the impossibility of effecting sales of British produce in countries from which we refuse to receive corn in payment. The inquiry is of the greatest moment, for it affects some millions of the population, exclusively dependent upon the foreign trade.

If our exports should remain stationary, or decrease in amount, so that employment shall not increase with the increase of population, but so that power-loom cotton-weavers, and Birmingham artisans, shall be thrown upon the labour market about the same time that the hand-loom weavers will be compelled to seek new resources, then is it certain that no new channel will be found for the industry of the latter, but that they will be driven to pauperism.

And again, if through the limited capabilities of the soil, or the recurrence at frequent intervals of unfavourable seasons, a scarcity of food should seriously diminish the home demand for manufactures, or prevent that demand keeping pace with the increase of population, the result must be to multitudes an extreme of privation and misery frightful to contemplate.

48. I proceed, therefore, now to note down all the facts and opinions worthy of attention, which I have collected upon the present state and future prospects of the working classes as affected by the Corn Laws. Among the weavers of all our manufacturing towns, a great degree of unanimity of opinion prevails upon this subject. A repeal of the Corn Laws is put forward as the most efficient remedial measure for their depressed condition that could be devised by the Legislature. The weavers, however, of Spitalfields, form, for the most part, an exception. Among the leading and influential persons who have expressed the greatest sympathy for the sufferings of the London silk-weavers, are several whose opinions upon the Corn Laws are decidedly opposed to all change of the present system. Every operative who has friends among the higher ranks, who may have it in their power to serve him, is necessarily influenced by his confidence in them, to assimilate his own views to their sentiments; and thus it has happened that the doctrine has been generally embraced by the metropolitan silk-weavers, that a repeal of the Corn Laws would lower wages, ruin the agriculturist, and so injure the home market. In the north of England, however, in Scotland, and in the large towns of Ireland, the opinions on the Corn Laws of the great manufacturing capitalists have been adopted very generally by the working classes. The cry for free trade in bread among them is almost universal; but in many cases they refuse to petition the House of Commons against the present system, believing the object is not to be obtained without universal suffrage. Ill informed, however, upon the most important facts connected with the trade in corn, their opinions cannot be quoted as evidence for or against the continuance of our present protective duties on the importation of grain.

49. Before we consider the question whether our prospects are bright or gloomy on this head, it is well to inquire if the Corn Laws have had any share in the privations which the working classes now suffer, or in their past sufferings.

By the Corn Laws, I do not refer exclusively to the Act of Parliament now in force (9 Geo. 4, c, 60), but to the spirit and tendency of our Legislative policy pursued for the last 200 years, avowedly with the object of maintaining the price of food above the continental level.*

This

* The first protective Corn Law was passed in 1463, (3 Edw. 4, c. 2,) when wheat was not allowed to be imported unless the price exceeded 6*s.* 8*d.* per quarter, equal in pure silver to 12*s.* 10 ¾ *d.* present

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This policy appears during the last century to have defeated itself (passing over some unfavourable seasons) by stimulating tillage, and forcing such quantities of British corn upon the market, that prices fell sufficiently low to allow of a large exportation of wheat to other nations.

The duties imposed upon the importation of foreign corn, and the bounties paid upon the exportation of British (although from 1697 to 1773, the sum paid in bounties amounted to 6,237,176*l.*) failed in their intended effect of sustaining prices. And with a thin population on a fertile soil, Corn Laws will always defeat their object in this manner, and the public consumer will have little to fear from high prices, although compelled to purchase exclusively of the home landlord.

The case, however, becomes very different when population begins to outstrip the capabilities of the soil, and this would seem to have been the fact, as far at least as wheat-growing is concerned, from the commencement of the present century.

The population of England and Wales, including the army and navy, was—

In 1700	5,134,516
1750	6,039,684
1770	7,227,586
1800	9,187,776
1831	14,174,204

The first impression produced by this reference to population returns is, that there being now double the number of persons requiring food that there were in 1770, we ought to have gradually relaxed our system for the exclusion of foreign grain, although we might not yet be prepared to throw our ports entirely open. We appear, however, to have acted upon the opposite rule. Foreign wheat has been admitted free, or at a nominal duty of 6*d.* or 1*s.* per quarter in different years, as follows:—

Free Importation Prices of Wheat.

1773, when the price was	48*s.*	per	quarter.
1790 - - ditto - -	54*s.*	-	ditto.
1804 - - ditto - -	66*s.*		ditto.
1815 - - ditto - -	80*s.*	-	ditto.
1822 - - ditto - -	80*s.*	-	ditto.
1828 - - ditto - -	73*s.*	-	ditto.

Opening our ports in seasons of scarcity is a palliation, but never an efficient remedy for the distress occasioned by the high price of food. It enables us, indeed, to receive the surplus stocks of other nations, when surplus stocks exist; but as no one willingly grows more corn than he is likely to sell, and as farmers on the Continent cannot foretell the year when they would be at liberty to dispose of their corn in the English market, no foreign corn is grown expressly for our use, and the surplus foreign stocks are often the most inconsiderable at the time of our greatest need. Thus, in 1816, when the deficiency of the harvest was, at the lowest, 3,000,000 of quarters, and the price reached, before the close of the year, 103*s.* per quarter, the quantity imported amounted to but 225,263 quarters.

What has been the general result, comparing the past with the present? We find that, during the first 38 years of the last century, the average price of the best wheat was 37*s.* per quarter, of the measure now used; since then, all manufactured commodities, with but few exceptions, have been cheapened, but food has risen in price.

The average price of wheat for each year during the same period of the present century will be seen by the following statement:—

During

sent money; but up to 1623, with some exceptions to the contrary, the chief object of the Legislature was to keep down prices by preventing the exportation of wheat. In 1623, the importation price was fixed at 32*s.* per quarter. At the Revolution of 1688, William 3, to strengthen himself on the throne by conciliating the landed interest, abolished the duties on the exportation of British wheat, and passed a law to allow a bounty on its exportation of 5*s.* per quarter.

		s.	d.	
During 4 years		112	1	per quarter.
5	—	90	4	—
7	—	74	5	—
10	—	64	4	—
8	—	55	8	—
3	—	45	10	—
*1	—	39	4	—
38 years.				

The above statement gives, for the average price of wheat during the last 38 years, 71*s.* per quarter, being nearly double the average price of wheat from 1701 to 1738.

Omitting the first 15 years of the present century, when the war and alterations in the currency are supposed to have had an effect upon prices, and taking a period of 22 years, from 1816 to 1837 inclusive, we find the average price of wheat for that period was 61*s.* per quarter. The average price of wheat in Prussia, during the same 22 years, was but 30*s.* per quarter.† Less than 100 years back, the price of wheat in this country was, for a lengthened period, nearly as low; for during 14 consecutive years, ending 1755, the average price was only 30*s.* 10*d.* per quarter of our present measure.

These figures, derived from statistical tables to which all have access, place the fact beyond doubt that the tendency of the present system (notwithstanding the encouragement it gives to tillage,) is to make bread dear. What has been its effect upon the physical state of the working population?

50. There is nothing very extravagant in the supposition that, were the arrangements of society as perfect as they might possibly be rendered, every working man, of frugal and steady habits, would obtain for himself and family a sufficiency of wheaten bread to eat, and one daily meal of animal food.

With the unlimited means we possess of commanding the resources of other countries; our great mineral wealth in coals, iron, tin, and copper; our superiority up to the present moment in the application of mechanical power to manufacturing processes; our abundant capital, and the enterprising spirit of the middle classes; we have a fair ground for assuming that every working man of sober and industrious habits ought to be well lodged, and well fed, and able to put by a sufficient sum for sickness and the infirmities of age. The fact of his present condition is a sad comment upon this theory. A large portion of the accumulated wealth of the country does indeed find its way among the working classes; many receive, in money-wages, larger sums than are paid in any other nation of the world; and a slow, but perceptible progressive improvement may be observed in the condition of the whole body; but still it must be confessed that many thousands are ill fed, ill lodged, ill clothed, and live in the habitual privation of the commonest necessaries and comforts of life.

Wheaten bread and flour, as daily food, are still beyond the reach of full one-third of the population of Great Britain and Ireland. In the north of England and Scotland, oatmeal is used as a substitute by the saving classes, because it is in the article of bread that the greatest saving can be effected. It is lamentable that this should be the encouragement of industry and frugality. By a still larger class, oatmeal is used instead of bread and wheaten flour, not from economy, with a view of forming a fund for age or sickness, but because they have no means of purchasing better food. In Ireland, even oatmeal is often too costly for common diet, and the daily food of a very large part of the population consists only of herrings and potatoes.

Mr. Scott, of Londonderry, speaking of his own weavers, and of others, explained to me the way in which the poor of Ireland (not of the lowest class) live, when the sum, to be expended per head for food, amounts to but 3*d.* per day

* 1835, a year of abundant crops. The foreign importation of wheat and flour during the year was but 28,483 quarters.

† From Tables prepared by G. R. Porter, esq. *See* his pamphlet on "Restrictions on the Importation of Corn."

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day. One pound of oatmeal, purchased for 1 ½ *d.*, makes a breakfast or supper of porridge for two persons;—for dinner, one herring, which costs a halfpenny, divided also between two persons, serves to flavour the potatoes, of which four pounds can be had for 1 ½ *d.*;—for lodging, a single person pays about 4 *d.* per week; this sum gives him the privilege of boiling his potatoes at the common fire, and sleeping in a corner of the same common room or cabin, in which, including children, perhaps a dozen persons take up their abode.

51. In Belfast I found the cotton-weavers and others living, to a great extent, upon a diet which in England would only be used as hogs' wash. It is a liquid called sowens, made in the process of manufacturing starch. I went with Mr. Muggeridge (our assistant-commissioner) to visit a starch manufactory belonging to Mr. Emerson, for the sake of learning the nature of sowens, and inquiring into the fact of its being used as an article of food.

In manufacturing starch, a quantity of wheaten meal is put into a large vat, with water, where it lies fermenting and souring for about three weeks. It is then taken out and passed through basket sieves to separate the bran; afterwards it is put into another large vat, and suffered to stand some days; in this vat the starch, being the heaviest substance, sinks to the bottom; the remaining particles of the bran and other light substances rise to the top and form a scum, and the milky-looking water, between the starch and the scum, is the sowens. The surface is then skimmed, and the sowens drawn off, the starch remaining behind in a thick pudding-like state, requiring only to be made into square blocks and dried.

The sowens is sold to the poor at the rate of a halfpenny a measure, a measure containing nearly a gallon. It is boiled and used by them chiefly as a soup or broth for breakfast and supper. Several persons came for it while we were present, and we saw it ladled out to them. We were informed that some who had attempted to live wholly upon it, had found it fatal to their health. The quantity sold in this manner, by Mr. Emerson, amounted to 6 *l.* per week, from which it would appear that upwards of 400 persons are supplied with sowens, for food, from this establishment alone, allowing seven gallons per week to each individual. A little flour held by the water in solution after the starch has been extracted, is the share of wheat, and a poor share it is, which these 400 persons obtain by all the present protective system.

52. It is so far satisfactory that this is not a picture which applies to the majority of the working classes of England. Wheaten bread and flour are used by them as daily food, but the price at which they obtain them, by absorbing the largest proportion of their wages, compels them either to go without animal food, or to confine themselves to pork. Families of factory operatives, earning collectively very high wages, and our better-paid classes of skilled artisans are exceptions. But taking the whole body of agricultural labourers, supposed to derive the greatest practical benefit from our corn laws, beef and mutton, as articles of food among them, are almost unknown from the north of England to the south.

Pork is the only description of animal food they get, and often little of that; so generally are they under-fed, that it is often very difficult to rally a constitution after an attack of fever or ague in the rural districts. I have often heard medical men say, "We give them tonic medicines, but the only physic they want is a slice of mutton or beef every day for three months, and that we cannot prescribe, for how are they to purchase meat without denying themselves bread? When 8 *s.* out of 15 *s.* must be spent in bread and flour by a family, and the greater part of the rest be expended in rent, clothing, and fuel, what is there left for animal food?"

53. To this it is replied, that wages would fall with the price of bread under a free-trade system, in which case the labourer would have no more money to spend in animal food than he has at the present moment. This opinion I found very generally prevailing both in the agricultural and manufacturing districts. Many of the manufacturers hold, that as opening our ports would probably raise the price of bread upon the Continent, it would also raise wages on the Continent. If this were true, the converse of the proposition would be true also, that wages here would fall with the price of bread.

54. Supposing

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54. Supposing this opinion well founded, all expectation of benefit to the working classes from a repeal of the corn laws would be illusory; but the doctrine assumed is a fallacy which it will be easy to expose. Food is cheap and abundant in the United States, and yet wages are higher there than in England. Wages do not fall in America with the price of bread, nor in Ireland do they rise because bread is dear. On the contrary, the tendency of dear food is to lower wages; for the same persons who, when food is cheap, can contrive to live for weeks and months without labour, when food is dear are obliged to return to work, and this produces an excess of hands at the time when there is the least demand for labour. The price of fuel and warm clothing in winter, and the necessity of obtaining them, have the same tendency. Wages, therefore, are generally lower upon an average of 10 per cent. in the winter than in summer. In summer many manufacturers suspend their operations, from the difficulty of obtaining workmen; in winter, whatever work is required to be done, more than a sufficiency of workmen can always be obtained.

55. Wages are governed solely by the demand of labour. They do not universally rise with prices, neither do they always fall with prices. Ten years of harvests as bad as that of 1816 would throw half our wheat lands out of cultivation. Farmers would give up the attempt to grow wheat in despair. Prices would rise enormously; but if wheat were 150*s.* per quarter, it would yet not pay for a total destruction of crops. Green crops would therefore be substituted for wheat crops; the plough would be partially thrown aside; and the wages of ploughmen would fall because many of them would be unemployed. On the other hand, their wages might rise when the price of wheat was at the lowest: what is called over-production, instead of ruining a farmer, often increases his prosperity. Four quarters of wheat per acre produced on his farm, is better for him at 40*s.* per quarter, than a bad crop of two quarters per acre at the price of 70*s.* per quarter. The increased quantity sold, although at a low price, increases his capital, gives him more money to employ among his labourers, and encourages his disposition to keep them employed. Others acting in the same manner, a scarcity of hands begins to be felt, and wages thus often rise when the price of wheat falls.

56. If wages always rose and fell proportionately with the price of wheat, we should find an agricultural labourer earning 10*s.* per week one year, and 15*s.* or more the next; but although wheat often fluctuates in price cent. per cent. in the same year, no such fluctuation in wages is ever seen to a corresponding extent. In dear seasons a slight difference may be observed, because a rich farmer will not let his men starve, but an advance from benevolent motives, and not because of the market price of labour, is not wages, but almsgiving.

56. In the Annals of Agriculture (page 265, vol. xxxvii.) Arthur Young says,

"There is now living (1801), in the vicinity of Bury, a person who, when he laboured for 5*s.*, could purchase with that 5*s.*—

"A bushel of wheat,
A bushel of malt,
1 lb. of butter,
1 lb. of cheese,
A pennyworth of tobacco."

To enable the same man to purchase the same articles at the present moment, his wages ought to have risen from 5*s.* to 22*s.* The present prices (February 29th, 1839), are—for

	£.	s.	d.
A bushel of wheat	–	11	–
A bushel of malt	–	9	–
1 lb. of butter	–	1	2
1 lb. of cheese	–	–	9
1 pennyworth of tobacco	–	–	1
£.	1	2	–

The present average of wages for an agricultural labourer may perhaps be assumed at 10*s.*: no other class of persons, therefore, has suffered so severely by the tendency of the existing system to make bread dear as agricultural labourers, and I do not except hand-loom weavers.

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57. Wages being influenced, like prices, by supply and demand, it follows that if a repeal of the corn law would diminish the demand for labour, wages would fall; if they increased the demand for labour here on the Continent, wages would undoubtedly rise; if the demand for labour remained the same, wages would remain stationary.

Now one thing is clear, that if a considerable quantity of corn were imported annually, heavy lands unsuitable for wheat, and which ought never to have been converted into arable lands, would be thrown into pasture. This would diminish the demand for one class of labourers; but as the imported corn would have to be paid for in manufactured goods, that would increase the demand for another class of labourers. Supposing the ratio of decrease and increase to be the same in both cases, there would be a transfer of labour, but wages would maintain on the whole the same level.

58. Another question arises, however, whether the removal of all restrictions on the importation of food, would not so stimulate trade, that the demand for labour in the many occupations connected with commerce and manufactures would not increase in a much greater ratio than the demand for labour connected with tillage cultivation would diminish.

I incline to the latter opinion. The high price of bread in the country is but one of the evils entailed upon the working classes by the corn laws. They have been met by retaliatory measures, affecting our commerce, by almost every nation in Europe, and by the United States of America. Through the influence of these retaliatory measures, our foreign trade, where it might at least have maintained itself*, has dwindled away to nothing, and where it might have been almost unlimited, has been circumscribed in its operations. Our exports to the whole of Europe with its population of nearly 200,000,000, for the five years ending 1838, were less in value than for the five years ending 1820, and are now only double the amount of our exports to the United States, with a population of but 12,000,000, and where, in a similar spirit to that of continental nations, our corn laws have been met by duties amounting in many cases to the practical exclusion of goods of British manufacture. These retaliatory measures have operated in a two-fold manner to the injury of Great Britain and Ireland: first, by closing many ports against us; secondly, by encouraging the growth of foreign manufactures.

59. That our corn laws are the apology for the high tariffs directed against British goods by foreign nations, requires here no proof. It may suffice to allude to the note written by the British Minister at Washington (Mr. Addington), on the subject of the tariff, to Mr. Canning. He said, "I have only to add, that had no restrictions on the importation of the foreign corn existed in Great Britain, the tariff would never have passed through either house of Congress, since the agricultural states, and especially Pennsylvania, would have been opposed to its enactment."

For the fact that our corn laws are the chief obstacle to favourable treaties of commerce with the nations of the Continent, the highest authority in the kingdom is necessarily that of the President of the Board of Trade, and his evidence on the subject has recently been given in the House of Commons †.

60. The

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* 1820, Cotton cloth exported to Russia, 13,203,851 yards.
1837 - - - — - - - 1,126,539 —

† Some time ago, however, Mr. M'Gregor was sent to Vienna, for the purpose of negotiating the German treaty. What was the purport of the letter which he had received from him bearing on this subject?

"April 16.—I am perpetually told that England must reduce her own tariff, before she can reasonably expect Germany to do so.

"July 1.—Foreign minister for Wurtemberg said: 'I am opposed to anything like particular protection given to any branch of industry, being convinced that such protection is a general tax on the community.

"'We have few articles besides coarse linens and natural produce, as corn and cattle, and probably some of the wool which we send by the Neckar and Rhine to Holland, that would find their way to your markets at reduced duties; but settle the preliminaries of a commercial treaty with Prussia, and I presume that there will not be much difficulty in Wurtemberg adhering to it.'

"July 9.—Mr. Kushné (the Prussian commissary) is a gentleman of intelligent views, and seems fully to comprehend the importance of a commercial treaty with England, but argues our corn laws as the supreme obstacle. He is at the same time said to be the most skilful member of the Congress.

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60. The operation of the corn laws in impeding the sale of British manufactured goods in countries willing to receive them, will be best explained by the following statement, communicated to me by letter from Mr. William Barret, a manufacturer at Newton Heath, Manchester:

In the autumn of 1819, a time when there was much distress and discontent among the hand-loom weavers, Mr. John Bell, an agent from a respectable house in Hamburgh, offered us an order for several kinds of goods which we were manufacturing. We accepted the order of course, and I said, "How do you pay?" He replied, "We pay in corn." "In corn!" I said; "but the ports are shut, we cannot enter a single bushel for home consumption." He answered, "We are aware of that, but it can be bonded, and you can ship it to the Peninsula." I said, "We have no connexion there, and it will not do for us to become foreign corn merchants; but, if you cannot pay in money, can you send us nothing else? Can you send us linen yarn, which we could use?" "No," he replied, "our warehouses are blocked up full of corn, and we have nothing else to offer, though we are much in want of goods." I then said, "We are very sorry to refuse such an order at this time, for our weavers are not fully employed; but refuse it we must, for we can do nothing with corn: however, as we have gone so far, would you please to tell us at what price you would charge it?" He then produced his memorandum of goods wanted, and written instructions, and showed us that he was authorized to offer the best Baltic wheat, free at Hull, for 30*s.* 6*d.* per quarter. The average price in the English market at this time was 64*s.*

I had some doubts before this, whether it would be proper to allow a free trade in corn; but the matter was here brought home: for we not only missed a good order, but were prevented from finding our weavers with work, and supplying them with good bread-corn at about one-half the price.

P. S.—We had done business with the agent, Mr. John Bell, in the years 1811 and 1812, when he bought many parcels of goods, for which he paid us in foreign linen yarn.

61. The statements of the manufacturers, that by maintaining the corn laws we were encouraging the growth of foreign manufactures, to an extent which threatens our own with extinction, have been brought so fully before Government by themselves, that I need not repeat here the evidence many of them submitted to me to the same effect. In some instances the manufacturers, with a view of strengthening their case, have perhaps given way to a spirit of exaggeration.

The result of all my inquiries is a belief that England, up to the present moment, is far in advance of all her rivals, in the power of manufacturing industry. Were our ports open to all the world, from no quarter have we anything to fear. No other country has the same facilities for the application of machinery to manufactures, and for working that machinery by cheap fuel, as Great Britain. Nor is there any reason, in the nature of things, that our superiority should not be maintained. But foreign restrictions on our commerce, brought about by our corn laws, and dear food at home, may work a change.

From the information I have collected, I cannot resist the conviction that the alarm of the manufacturers, that such a change is about to commence, is not without foundation. First, it is certain that English capital, aided by English skill and enterprise, is embarking more and more in establishments erected

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"Baron Smitz, the Wurtemberg minister at the Bavarian court, the projector of the Germanic Union, tells me that he can discover no objection whatever in meeting the views of foreign states to a reasonable extent in reducing the high duties in the Germanic tariff, provided that such states will act with something like reciprocity towards Germany; but he also contends that the British tariff ranges much higher than the Germanic tariff on manufactures, as 20 or 30 per cent. compared to 10 per cent.; and on linens and every article from Germany, as wood, corn, and some other natural produce, much higher.

"July 14.—M. Kuhne said, 'If any arrangements be entered into, you must begin at Berlin; and a reduction of your corn duties to a fixed rate must be preliminary to any understanding as to a reduction on our part of duties on your commodities.'

"Without saying how far such an arrangement could be effected, I alluded to the proposed reduction of the duty of timber, as such as would probably be made on some other articles, as linens, Nuremberg wares, mineral waters, &c., but he took his stand upon corn, saying the other reductions were but of little consequence [loud cries of 'hear.']"

He had letters full of the same sentiments from several gentlemen who had been employed as our ministers. They all agreed, and, indeed, it stood to reason that it should be so, in stating that foreign nations argued in this way—"How can you ask us to reduce the duties on your manufactures, when you turn round on us and say that you will not take the only article we can offer you; thus showing that no trade could be carried on with you, even if we did what you wish?" [Hear, hear.]

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erected in foreign countries, where a British manufacturer, secured by protecting duties from the competition of his rivals at home, is certain of a high rate of profit.

Many of these speculations may end in disappointment, from unforeseen causes, but I had the names given me of several who have realized large fortunes by setting up cotton spinning mills, and power-loom factories, in Germany; and their success is at the present moment inducing others to follow the example.

62. The present inferiority of foreign machinery, applicable to spinning and to power-loom weaving, will not be of long continuance. Our laws against the exportation of machinery induce capitalists to export the mechanics by whom it is manufactured, and by them the trade will be quickly taught to mechanics abroad.

But in many branches of machine-making, our superiority is more imaginary than real. It should be remembered that the Jacquard machines came from France; the circular brocading machines* used in poplin weaving were invented by the French; and Mr. Atkinson, of Dublin, informs me that by further improving upon this machinery, they are now enabled to weave an intermixture of colours, in each separate figure of the pattern; an art which has not yet been attained by any poplin weavers in the United Kingdom.

The failure of manufacturing establishments started by individuals in Belgium, and other countries, with but little practical knowledge and experience, must not be considered a proof that all similar speculations will so end. Almost all first experiments are failures, but every failure helps to ensure the success of the next attempt. When the wrong path is known, the right one is more easily found. There is no such difference between British blood and sinews, and the physical or mental organization of any other people in Europe, as to falsify the maxim, "that in every country what man has done, man is able to do."

63. Europe, moreover, is now recovering itself from the ruin of its long and sanguinary wars, by which, from our isolated position, we suffered comparatively little. Its industrial energies repressed, are recovering their elasticity. The progress, therefore, of continental nations, may be expected to be more rapid than our own, especially in Germany and Austria, from the enlightened commercial policy recently adopted by the government of those countries. No step more certain to ensure the growth of home manufactures on the Continent has been taken of late years than that of the Prussian league, which, by overturning a host of custom-house restrictions, has left trade free throughout the German states.

The following letter, which I have received from a merchant at Lubeck, will illustrate the working, in various ways, of our corn laws on the Continent. The letter is that of a German, writing in a language with which he is not perfectly familiar.

Sir, Lubeck, 15 September 1838.

The railroad from Hamburgh to this place, which there is now every reason to believe will soon be commenced, must, I am satisfied, return a large per-centage to the shareholders, but its profits would be greatly increased if your corn laws were repealed.

I remember Mr. Jacob, after he visited this part of the Continent, said in his Report, that the badness of the roads would always prevent large quantities of corn, greatly exceeding

* The contrivance is that of giving a separate shoot to every distinct figure of the pattern, by means not of a separate shuttle, but of a little wheel on which the silk bobbin is fixed. As the weft shuttle flies with the worsted thread, these little wheels revolve, working each its own figure, some in one colour, some in another. The figure so worked is like the pattern of real Indian shawls, perfect on both sides, and I entertain no doubt that the imitation of real India shawls might be brought to absolute perfection by means of circular brocading machines.

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exceeding the present, being exported from Hamburgh to England at a remunerative price; but with the facilities we are now providing of railroad communication, that difficulty would soon be got over. In fact, we want only a market for our own corn, and old roads would soon be mended, and new ones made in every part of this country.

My uncle, at Wendlesdorf, cultivated at one time 1,500 acres for corn, which have long ago been laid down in pasture. Another of my relations in Mecklenburgh has reduced his corn land, and now breeds sheep, and cultivates potatoes, in immense quantities, from which he distils spirits. I might mention many other instances of the same kind. Agriculture was at one time very flourishing in these quarters. Mecklenburgh and Holstein exported upon an average 100,000 lasts, or about 1,000,000 of quarters of wheat, which were regularly sent to England, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Portugal, &c., where it often happened the crops were inadequate.

But since your late corn laws were introduced in England (and similar restrictions of the corn trade took place in France, Holland, &c.), the sale of that produce has been uncertain, by which the landowners have been obliged to make use of their wheat fields in other ways, such as sheep and cattle breeding, growing oil plants, potatoes, &c. The consequence is, that whenever England is in want of corn, we have no provision in our corn-growing neighbourhoods, and even at high prices you could not obtain from us any considerable quantity.

Although our agricultural neighbours in Mecklenburgh and Holstein complain much about the present system of corn laws in England, yet all our manufacturers are happy to see them continued. They hope soon to be able to push the English entirely out of foreign markets, and to furnish themselves all the articles we still import from England. In this hope they are strengthened by the confederation of duties in Germany. If your corn laws remain *in statu quo*, it may be taken for granted that in 10 or 15 years there will be very little demand for English manufactures on the Continent. If a free trade, as formerly, could be re-established in corn, the landowners would soon augment their wheat fields, secure to themselves by it a constant revenue, and be able to purchase and consume a great deal of British manufactures of all kinds. Mecklenburgh and Holstein alone, with 1,000,000 inhabitants, would become important customers of England.

I cannot understand the policy of your Government, by which, while you ruin us, you injure yourselves at the same time. England is essentially a manufacturing country; we were agricultural, and were content to pay you with our corn for your manufactures; now you refuse to take our corn, and as we have nothing else with which to buy, you compel us to manufacture for ourselves. The policy you are pursuing is making the whole German people your rivals instead of your customers. Cloth manufactories, hemp and flax spinning works, iron foundries, and hardware manufacture, are increasing rapidly among us, and your cotton trade must expect to compete more and more with continental establishments. Every year adds to the number of steam-mills in Germany; and every acre laid down in pasture transfers some of our cheap labour, by which you might be fed, to manufactures, which, ultimately driving yours out of the market, will cause a large portion of your industrial population to starve.

To your corn laws must be attributed the Prussian League, by which your manufactures are already excluded the greater portion of the German States. By-and-by you will not have a market left in Europe. At present, however, not only the Hanse Towns of Hamburgh, Lubeck, and Bremen, but the large provinces of Holstein, Mecklenburgh, and Lauenburgh, admit all British manufactures free of duty. But of what avail is it that we are ready to receive your manufactures, when our farmers and peasants have nothing to buy them with but the produce of the soil. Receive our corn, and we will in a year or two receive thrice the quantity of goods we do at present. Besides coal, slates, salt, cutlery, earthenware, for which we have always a ready market, there are many articles we should be glad to purchase with corn from Great Britain and Ireland, which we can obtain from other countries only for gold.

What a strange anomaly is it to see immense cargoes of bone-dust daily shipped from Hamburgh, to fertilize your exhausted fields, when by keeping it at home we might (if you were willing) grow corn for you at half the cost.

The price of wheat at Lubeck and Hamburgh is, at the present moment, in English money, 40*s.* per quarter, whilst I see the price at Mark-lane is 72*s.* per quarter. The average price of wheat at Lubeck and Hamburgh for the last 10 years has been between 28*s.* and 33*s.* per quarter. Bread, however, with us, is not equally cheap, in proportion to the price of grain. The reason is, a monopoly amongst our bakers, who are fenced round with corporation privileges. You ask why it is that our peasantry do not get wheaten bread to eat, which they might bake at home, seeing corn is so cheap; the reason is the want of employment. The farmer having no market for his own corn (for the market created by our home manufactures is as yet but limited), he has no money for his labourers, and hence the wages of labour are unnaturally depressed. A farm labourer here is paid at the rate of 10*s.* to 12*s.* currency, or 9*d.* to 11*d.* sterling per day. The women labourers earn

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earn in English money 5½*d.* to 7*d.* per day; carpenters, shoemakers, joiners, and other journeymen, earn from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* per day.

Wishing that your Government may soon adopt a more natural and liberal policy as to the corn laws,

I remain, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
Emilius Muller.

64. Perhaps the most formidable competition we have to anticipate, is from the United States of America. By diverting their attention from agriculture, we have made a manufacturing and commercial nation of a people of the same habits of industry, the same spirit of enterprise, with ourselves. Already has their progress been so great, that the export trade of America is increasing in a ratio four times greater than our own*. I see nothing to prevent their foreign commerce exceeding that of the United Kingdom within less than another 20 years. With the great advantage of cheap food, the current of emigration will constantly be directed thither. America is regarded by many of our artisans as their second home. There many of their friends are settled, and our best workmen are at all times much more easily induced to follow a capitalist to America, where their own language is spoken, than to France or Germany. High wages in the United States, it is supposed, will be an obstacle to manufacturing progress; but this is really a very slight impediment where machinery is employed in manufactures. Nor is the difference between the wages of skilled artisans here and in America very great; they are high in both countries. The difference in America is less in favour of the mechanic than of the day labourer; and for working cotton-spinning and power-loom machinery physical strength is not required, and the labour of women and children can be obtained as cheaply in America as in Lancashire. Miss Martineau states, that in Boston the earnings of young women, at needle-work, are but 9*d.* per day.

The progress already made in power-loom weaving in the United States proves that, in this respect, they have encountered no difficulties which cannot be overcome. Mr. Galbreath, of the firm of Johnstone & Galbreath, Glasgow, told me that he was informed upon authority upon which he could depend, that already there were at Lowel 4,800 power-looms in full operation. Mr. Galbreath had been led to inquire into the subject, finding American cotton cloth competing with his own at Canton; and at Valparaiso, monopolising nearly the whole of the trade. He was in the habit of exporting largely, but foreign competition was fast gaining upon him in every third or neutral market.

65. The few facts I have named, indicate very clearly the danger to be apprehended by the continuance of our present policy. They enable us also to see, that the removal of the corn laws, by leading to a relaxation of the restrictions on our commerce, imposed by foreign nations, would, in all probability, stimulate manufacturing and commercial industry in a much greater degree than it could possibly depress the agricultural interest; and that were the system changed, not only hand-loom weavers, but the whole of our unemployed classes would soon be absorbed by some one or other of the new and profitable channels of industry that would then be opened. It is important to consider, however, to what

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* Foreign Trade of

	England.	France.	U. States.
Average annual exports during the five years from 1820 to 1824 - - - - - -	£. 36,781,423	£. 16,609,182	£. 10,126,438
Average annual exports during the five years from 1832 to 1836 - - - - - -	43,428,453	31,784,016	17,607,710

Increase in the English exports, 18 per cent.
„ French d° 91 „
„ American d° 74 „

what extent, if any, the agriculturists in this country would suffer by the removal of the corn laws.

66. And here it is as well to remember, that the corn growers really represent but a small section of the landed interest. The hilly countries of Wales, Cumberland, Westmoreland, and the Highlands of Scotland never were, and never will be, adapted for corn crops. The question is one which chiefly concerns the midland counties;—some parts of Ireland, and a few level spots in the north of England, being only exceptions to the general rule.

From statements furnished in 1827 to the Agricultural Committee, it appears that out of nearly 78,000,000 of statute acres of land in the United Kingdom, the number of acres cultivated, by the spade and plough, is under 20,000,000; and in this number it need hardly be said, that there are many thousand acres unfit for wheat-crops*.

Three-fourths, therefore, of the landed interest clearly gain no benefit by the corn laws, whatever may be the case with the other fourth. It is true, that were the trade open, some quantity of arable land might be laid down in pasture, and there might then be an increased competition among grazing farmers; but, on the other hand, oats would be cheaper, and an increased demand for animal food, which would unquestionably arise with the improvement of trade, would render cattle-breeding at least as profitable a business as it is at present.

67. The question is therefore brought within a very narrow compass. The class of persons whom we may suppose for a moment would suffer are the landlords of 20,000,000 of acres, who now possess the exclusive right of supplying 25,000,000 of human beings with bread. The farmer would not be injured if the rents fell with the price of corn; and if rents did not fall with the price of corn, the landlord would not be injured. The labourer would not be injured if an increased export of manufactured goods sustained or increased the demand for labour; and if there were no increase of exports he would not be injured, because the importation of corn would, in that case, be very inconsiderable. Foreign corn, in large quantities, must always be purchased, not with gold but with manufactures. All the bullion in the country going out (the dread of some persons) would be insufficient to purchase corn for half a year's consumption†. Only one class therefore, if any, could be very seriously affected by the importation of foreign corn, and that we may presume would be the landlord class. To what extent would the landlords be injured? or would they, instead of being injured, share in the general prosperity produced by a change of system?

68. It is not to be denied that, with a free trade in corn, a farmer could not pay, in order to grow wheat, a heavy rent for stiff clay-lands of expensive tillage; but wheat is not the only thing for which such lands are adapted. Suppose

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	Arable and Garden.	Meadows, Pastures, and Marshes.	Wastes capable of Improvement.	Annual Value of Wastes in their present State.	Incapable of Improvement.	Summary.
	Statute Acres.	Statute Acres.	Statute Acres.	Sterl. Pounds.	Statute Acres.	Stat. Acres.
England	10,252,800	15,379,200	3,454,000	1,700,000	3,256,400	32,342,400
Wales	890,570	2,226,430	5,530,000	200,000	1,105,000	4,752,000
Scotland	2,493,950	2,771,050	5,950,000	1,680,000	8,523,930	19,738,930
Ireland	5,389,040	6,736,240	4,900,000	1,395,000	2,416,664	19,441,944
British Islands	109,630	274,000	166,000	25,000	569,469	1,119,159
	19,135,990	27,386,980	15,000,000	5,000,000	15,871,463	77,394,443

† One year's consumption is estimated by Mr. M'Culloch at 52,000,000 of quarters: this, at 40 *s.* per quarter, is 104,000,000 *l.* The amount of gold and silver, circulated in the country, is under 40,000,000 *l.* From returns furnished by the Bank of England, Mr. Horsley Palmer estimated the quantity of gold in circulation (15 Feb. 1833) in the United Kingdom, at 30,000,000 *l.* All the silver coined from 1790 to 1811, amounted but to 9,183,259 *l.*

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Suppose an increased demand for hops, or for ash-poles for hop-gardens; both may be grown upon the same land, and so profitably as to enable the landlord to secure as high a rent as if the produce were confined to corn at the present prices. Upon lighter lands, oats might in some parts cease to be grown; but suppose an increased demand for flax through an improvement in the linen manufacture. Why should not the flax-grower be willing, in some cases, to pay as high a rent as the grower of oats pays at the present moment? Suppose further, that the improvement of trade and the cheapness of bread greatly increased the demand for animal food; would not inferior lands, laid down in pasture, or applied to the growth of artificial grasses—sainfoin, lucern, &c.—yield as high a rent as they do now, when confined to wheat, oats, and barley? Even at the present moment a field of lucern, cut four times in the year, or a heavy crop of mangel-wurzel, pays better than a crop of wheat sold at present prices; and it is meadow-lands, and not corn-lands, that yield the highest rent.

69. In travelling through Ireland, I noticed that bog-land which in some parts would not let for a shilling an acre, in others was worth five guineas an acre. This was the price it fetched in the neighbourhood of Armagh, on account of the value of peat-turf for fuel. But my attention was most arrested by the changed face of the country, whenever I came within 20 miles of a large manufacturing or commercial town. Thus, in travelling from Larne to Belfast, a distance of 17 Irish miles, I missed the wretched cabins of the peasantry, and found instead neat lime-washed slated cottages, large farms in the place of small ones, good hedges, and brick-walls for fences, instead of a few loose stones piled up, merely to mark the boundary, and a state of cultivation resembling the best parts of England, rather than anything I had previously seen in Ireland. What made the difference? The secret was, the vicinity of a great market for agricultural produce, and the accessibility from the same port of the two other great markets of Glasgow and Liverpool.

70. And here I will make an observation upon the subject of small farms, to which much of the misery of Ireland has often been attributed. Instead of being the cause of their misfortunes, they are merely an effect of other causes, which have prevented the growth of manufactures, and retarded the progress of commercial prosperity. All countries, purely agricultural, that is to say, not in an uncivilized state, but without trade and manufactures, are necessarily covered with small farms. England and Scotland were covered with small farms within a very recent period. Every part of the Continent, remote from great cities, abounds with them. The French Canadians, and the American backwoodsmen, are small farmers. The reason is, farming upon a large scale is impracticable, until trade or manufactures have created a market accessible for the farmer's produce. No one grows oats to exchange for oats, or potatoes to exchange for potatoes; and where all are producers of oats and potatoes, each must act upon the principle of producing only that which he requires for his own consumption. The farmer's market must be his own family. When other markets rise, in which he can dispose of surplus produce to advantage, it answers his purpose to rent more land. Thus farms have a tendency to increase in size, up to a certain limit, with the prosperity of trade and manufactures, and to diminish as they decline. Should the time come when England shall lose her manufacturing and commercial ascendancy, a time when Manchester and Liverpool shall be deserted, and the principal seat of commerce transferred to the United States, the ruin of all our large farmers will follow, and the population, left to obtain the means of subsistence, will again be scattered over the country in small farms, as in the time of the Edwards and Henrys.

In Ireland, at the present, the small farming system is the only means by which the greater part of the population can exist. A consolidation of farms, in many parts of the country, would be ruin to the landlord, and death to the occupiers of the small holdings. To render large farming profitable, markets must not only exist, but they must be near at hand, or accessible by water. Fifty miles of land-carriage, on indifferent roads, is often sufficient to double the expense of the finest crops.

71. These remarks show how intimately the prosperity of landlords is connected with the manufacturing and commercial interest of the country. Were every agri-

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cultural village converted into a market-town, whatever might be the importation of foreign corn, rents would necessarily rise. The worst grass-land, within a few miles of Edinburgh, is of more value to the owner than the best corn-land in a rural district. Mr. Porter observes, that through the growth of manufactures, the revenue drawn in the form of rent from the ownerships of the soil has been, with scarcely an exception, doubled in every part of Great Britain since 1790.* Should the same progress continue, instead of experiencing, as there is but too much reason to anticipate, a sudden check, the increased value of land, in situations adapted for building, would alone be a more than sufficient compensation for any loss the landholder might sustain in the rent of arable farms.

72. There is another important consideration; as far as rents are dependent upon the quantity of bullion circulating as coin in a country, it is not to agriculture, but to commerce and manufactures, that the landlord is indebted. The action of the currency has been greatly over-rated, and Mr. Tooke has demonstrated, in his valuable history of high and low prices, that extreme fluctuations are not to be traced to the effect of changes in our monetary system; but no one entertains any doubt that prices are affected, equally and uniformly, by the state of the circulating medium, including in the term our paper issues, as well as gold and silver. A sheep is now worth 40*s.*, which, in the time of Henry II., would have sold for 1*s.*; not because sheep are so much more rare, but because silver, and all that is usually called money, are so much more abundant. Imagine any cause which should quadruple the gold and silver circulation of the country, other things remaining the same, and wages, prices and rents would invariably rise, though to what extent is uncertain. Now, agriculture is not bringing, and will not bring, a single ounce of silver and gold into this country. We are not exporters of food, and all the bullion we import is therefore payment for our manufactured goods. Check our exports, and we check the import of bullion; destroy our exports, and we destroy our bullion; for the quantity left in the country in a few years would be exhausted by wear.

73. In Ireland, although the hand-loom weavers of the large towns were generally against the Corn Laws, I found, as was naturally to be expected, among other classes a strong feeling in their favour. I was told by landowners and corn-factors, "See the wretched state in which the country now is with a monopoly of the English corn-market, and imagine what it would be if this, our sole dependence, were taken away."

Having thought upon the subject, my belief is, that the result would be greatly in favour of Ireland, and not to her disadvantage.

In Ireland the encouragement of manufactures is of much more importance than the extension of agriculture. Her misfortune is, that she has no wealthy manufacturing population to consume the produce now raised. A free trade in corn would stimulate the linen trade, and force an improvement in the mode of farming. The monopoly of the English market protects the most slovenly system of tillage to be seen in the world. The soil of Ireland is much better adapted for the growth of flax than of wheat. The humidity of the climate, shown by the number of bogs and lakes, is against wheat cultivation. The grain is never thoroughly ripened; the harvest is always late. I was surprised to find, in September, the Connaught reapers returning home in time to reap their own crops, after the English harvest had been gathered in. The consequence is, that every grain of wheat which is shipped to Liverpool, or ground for flour for exportation, has first to be kiln-dried. This was mentioned to me by Messrs. Crosthwaite, of Dublin, corn and flour dealers, as an argument against the repeal of the Corn Laws; it is one in favour of their repeal. The kiln-dried wheat of Ireland is among the most inferior qualities sold in our markets. Why should the people of England eat secondary wheat, when they might obtain the best grain, ripened by the hot suns of the south of Europe? Suppose a bad kind of rice were grown in Ireland, would that be a reason for excluding rice of the East

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* It was recently stated at a public meeting, by the Hon. J. Murray, that the rental of Clackmannanshire, ten miles square, which, fifty years ago, was but 50,000*l.*, is now, through the introduction of manufactures, 150,000*l.*

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or West Indies? How little Ireland is fitted for the growth of wheat, as compared with other grain, is seen by the following statement of the quantities of wheat and oats imported into Great Britain from Ireland since 1807, when the two countries were first placed upon an equal footing.

Imports from Ireland.

	Wheat and Wheat-Flour. Quarters.	Oats and Oatmeal. Quarters.
1807	44,900	389,649
1820	403,407	916,250
1832	790,293	2,051,867
1833	844,211	1,762,520
1834	779,505	1,769,503
1835	661,776	2,822,767
1836	598,757	2,132,138
1837	534,465	2,274,675
1838	542,583	2,742,807

From this statement we may conclude, that although Ireland would fail in wheat, she would be enabled to maintain a successful competition with the south of Europe in growing the lighter kinds of grain, and in artificial grasses for cattle-breeding. Every country has some natural advantages which it possesses over every other, which a free trade would develope in the way most conducive to the interest of all.

74. The Corn Laws unquestionably aggravate the misery of the Irish poor. They force the consolidation of farms before the country is ripe for them. On an estate of 100 acres, 20 families are perhaps located. To grow wheat economically for the export trade, on the large farming principle, 17 of these families must be ejected. The labour of three men with a plough and horse are sufficient, upon an average of the year, for the cultivation of 100 acres of wheat land. What becomes of the 17 ejected families in a country almost destitute of manufactures? In most cases they are driven to Liverpool, Manchester, or other of our great towns, and there the Corn Laws meet them with dear bread and a straitened commerce. The improvements of agriculture in England, instead of providing more work for the field labourer, excepting when waste lands are taken into cultivation, have only a tendency to enable a farmer to cultivate a given number of acres with fewer hands than before. The thrashers, for example, superseded by thrashing-machines, seek employment in towns. In rural districts, therefore, population increases only at the expense of the poor-rate. The proportion of persons employed in agriculture in England has fallen, since 1811, from 35 per cent. to 28 per cent. Four families of agricultural labourers are now sufficient for the production of the same quantity of food which formerly required the labour of five families. The agricultural classes, notwithstanding the number of new inclosures, have increased at the rate of only $7\frac{1}{5}$ per cent., while the manufacturing classes were, in 1831, more numerous in 1811 by 27 per cent.

75. The transfer of labour from agriculture to manufacturing industry would not be an evil, but a benefit to all classes, were there no Custom-house restrictions to repress the expansive energies of trade. The most pauperized counties of England are not the manufacturing but the agricultural counties, and it is remarkable that our best corn lands are more pauperized than the grazing districts. In the corn-growing counties of Bedford, Buckingham, Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk and Hertfordshire, the poor's-rate for the year ending March 25th, 1837, averaged 8*s.* $6\frac{1}{2}$*d.* per head. In manufacturing Lancashire the poor's-rate amounted to but 2*s.* 9*d.* per head, although Lancashire had not, up to that time, enjoyed the benefits of the economical arrangements of the Poor Law Amendment Bill, which had been carried into effect in the agricultural counties. Lancashire, moreover, supports a population of 1,336,854 persons, equal to the combined population of the whole of the six counties named.—*See* Table in the following page.

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Counties in which the Population was, in 1831, chiefly agricultural; arranged in their numerical order of proportion.	Poor's-rate, per Head, for the Year ending March 25, 1837.	Population, 1831.	Manufacturing, Mining, and Trading Counties; arranged in their numerical order of proportion.	Poor's-rate, per Head, for the Year ending March 25, 1837.	Population, 1831.
	s. *d.*			*s.* *d.*	
1. Bedford	8 –	95,483	1. Middlesex	5 4	1,358,330
2. Huntingdonshire	8 1	53,192	2. Lancashire	2 9	1,336,854
3. Rutlandshire	6 5	19,385	3. Surrey	6 3	486,334
4. Herefordshire	7 1	111,211	4. Durham	4 9	253,910
5. Lincolnshire	7 –	317,465	5. York, West Riding	3 8	976,350
6. Cambridgeshire	8 9	143,955	6. Northumberland	5 4	222,912
7. Buckinghamshire	8 8	146,529	7. Staffordshire	4 1	410,512
8. Essex	9 4	317,507	8. Warwickshire	5 11	336,610
9. Suffolk	9 3	296,317	9. Cheshire	4 1	334,391
10. Wiltshire	8 9	240,156	10. Gloucestershire	5 5	387,019
11. Oxfordshire	8 9	152,156	11. Derbyshire	4 1	237,170
12. Northamptonshire	8 3	179,336	12. Monmouthshire	4 –	98,130
13. Hertfordshire	6 11	143,341	13. Nottinghamshire	4 2	225,327
14. Berkshire	7 9	145,389	14. Leicestershire	5 7	197,003
15. Norfolk	9 1	390,054	15. Cumberland	3 10	169,681
16. York, North Riding	5 10	190,756	16. Cornwall	4 8	300,938
17. Dorsetshire	7 4	159,252	17. Worcestershire	5 2	211,365
18. Sussex	8 7	272,340	18. Kent	7 9	479,155
19. Westmoreland	5 10	55,041	19. Devonshire	6 7	494,478
20. Salop	5 1	222,933	20. York, East Riding	6 6	204,253
21. Somersetshire	6 2	404,200	21. Southampton	6 2	314,280
				106 1	13,091,005

	s. *d.*
Average Poor's-rate for each individual of the population in the above 21 Agricultural Counties	7 8
Average in the above 21 Manufacturing, Mining and Trading Counties	5 –
Average Poor's-rate, per head, for the whole of England	5 10

No class equally numerous earn less money in the shape of wages than families of agricultural labourers. In answer to queries addressed, in 1834, by the Poor Law Commissioners of Inquiry to parish officers in various parts of England, the earnings of a family of agricultural labourers, upon the average of 668 parishes, was stated to be 41*l.* 17*s.* 8*d.*

	£.	*s.*	*d.*
For the men	27	17	10
Wife and children	13	19	10
	£. 41	17	8

I believe this estimate is too high, and that due allowance is not made for the many weeks during which field-labourers, who are no longer hired by the year, are deprived of work by the weather; but taking the statement as it is, let us compare it with that of the Factory Inspectors, of the wages earned by factory operatives in cotton-mills.

From returns from the owners of 225 cotton-mills in Lancashire, it appears that there were employed in these mills 22,442 persons, including men, women and children, and that the amount of their net earnings for the month ending 4th May 1833, was 45,164*l.* 9*s.* 5*d.* an average of 10*s.* 6*d.* per week. Reckoning four persons only to constitute a family, in order to omit very young children who do not work, this would show that the average collective earnings of a family of cotton-factory operatives are 2*l.* 2*s.* per week; more than double the amount of the earnings of a family of agricultural labourers. A family of six persons, all able to work (the man perhaps a spinner, earning 25*s.* per week, and the rest earning from 5*s.* to 15*s.* as piecers, rollers, &c.), will often receive on a pay-night upwards of three guineas. Were it not for the tax on food, this class of persons would in fact be enabled to command as large a portion of the comforts and luxuries of life as the majority of the middle classes.*

76. Restrictions

* In the township of Hyde, Cheshire, the poor's-rate, in 1800, was 12*s.* per head per annum; through the introduction of large cotton-spinning and power-loom factories, the poor's-rates are now

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76. Restrictions upon the importation of foreign corn form the most important part of our subject, but the laws relating to the supply of animal food are still more obnoxious in principle than the Corn Laws. Fresh meat, live cattle, fish of foreign taking, are prohibited altogether. Were it not forbidden for our merchants to import the stall-fed oxen of Belgium and Holland, or carcases of fresh meat, which might be as easily imported in London, from Antwerp, as from Perth or Dundee, our grazing farmers would soon learn the more economical principle of fattening beasts adopted in those countries, and meat would be so cheapened in price that the poorest operative would not be confined to a potatoe or oatmeal diet.*

77. I subjoin, for the convenience of reference, a list of Custom-house restrictions and duties upon various articles of provision, for the present year, 1839, with which I shall conclude this part of the subject. But, before quitting it, I would make one further observation upon the state in which a large portion of our population live, or rather exist. The meagre diet of some of the most industrious and deserving members of the community, the failure of their strength before they have fairly attained the middle age of life, the misery into which they are plunged by a lengthened illness, even when members of a sick club, ought to make us feel how serious a responsibility we incur when we pass laws to restrict the supply of food for a population of 25,000,000 to a mere spot of our common earth. Be it for good or evil, it is a fearful risk to run, to shut out the supplies which Nature offers us from the abundance of other countries, in the belief that we are doing more wisely by depending entirely upon our own resources.

78. Among the signs of the times may be mentioned a work published during the past year, of which a copy was put into my hands by a member of the Working Man's Association, propounding a theory of "painless extinction;" or, in other words, a scheme for quietly putting out of the world the new-born infant whom its parents are unable to support. The remarkable point to be noticed is, that the work is evidently written in sober earnestness, by a man of classical attainments, and apparently from benevolent impulses. The style is obscure and defective, but the object is stated with sufficient clearness to be understood. The author defends infanticide as preferable to the lingering death by disease and want, to which many thousand children among the poor are now annually condemned. His arguments, although revolting, recalled to my mind a conversation with a weaver at Manchester, who told me that although he had had 12 children, he had not been able to rear one, and all were dead. It is time to change our system when such doctrines as those of "Marcus" are beginning to find advocates; and yet condemn them as we may, I have heard the question asked,— "Which is most contrary to the will of God, to extinguish the life of a child before it has arrived at the knowledge of good and evil, or to give a nominal consent to its existence, and say, Eat, if you can find food, in the spot where you were born, but for the rest of the world, the earth for you shall not yield its increase, nor shall the trees of the earth bear fruit each after its kind?"

Provision

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now but 6*d.* per head per annum. In Mr. Thomas Ashton's establishment, employing 1,600 hands, the average earnings of men, women and children, are 12*s.* 6*d.* per week. A considerable proportion of the men employed earn 30*s.* per week. The average earnings of 120 families was found to be 100*l.* per annum. Some families, much larger than the rest, had earned upwards of 200*l.* per annum.

* Supposing the total quantity of corn produced in Great Britain and Ireland to amount to 52,000,000 of quarters. Every shilling that is added to its price by the Corn Laws is equivalent to a tax on corn of 2,600,000*l.*, and estimating the average rise on all sorts of grain at 7*s.* per quarter, the total sum would be 18,200,000*l.* So great a quantity of corn is, however, consumed by the agriculturists themselves as food, in seed, of crops, of horses, &c., though not more than half perhaps of the whole quantity produced is brought to market; and if we are nearly right in this hypothesis, and in the previous estimate, it will follow that the restrictions cost the classes not engaged in agriculture no less than 9,100,000*l.* exclusive of their own pernicious consequences. Of this sum, a fifth probably, or 1,800,000*l.* may go to the landlord as rent. And this is all that the agriculturists can be said to gain by the system; for the additional price received by the farmer on that portion of the produce, exclusive of rent, is no more than the ordinary return for the capital and labour.—"J. K. McCulloch's Dictionary of Commerce," page 414, vol. ii.

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Provision Laws relating to the Importation of various Articles of Food.

The following are ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED to be imported, on penalty of forfeiture :—

Beef, fresh or corned, or slightly salted.

Live cattle, excepting only live creatures illustrative of natural history, which are admitted free of duty.

Ground corn, excepting wheat, meal, wheat-flour, and oatmeal, which may be imported into Great Britain, but not into Ireland.

Fish of foreign taking or curing, excepting turbots, lobsters, stock-fish, live eels, anchovies, sturgeon, botargo and caviare.

Lamb.

Mutton.

Pork, fresh or corned, or slightly salted.

Sheep.

Swine.

Duties payable on the Importation of various Articles of Food allowed to be introduced from Foreign Countries.

	£.	s.	d.
Anchovies, per lb.	–	–	2
Apples, raw, 5*l.* per cwt. *ad valorem.*			
——— dried, per bushel	–	2	–
Arrow-root, per lb.	–	–	2
——— Colonial, per cwt.	–	1	–
Bacon, per cwt.	1	8	–
Beans, kidney or French, per bushel	–	–	10
Beef, fully salted, per cwt.	–	12	–
Butter, per cwt.	1	–	–
Caviare, per cwt.	–	12	–
Cheese, per cwt.	–	10	6
Cherries, raw, 5*l.* per cwt. *ad valorem.*			
——— dried, per lb.	–	–	8
Cocoa, per lb.	–	–	6
——— Colonial, per lb.	–	–	2
Coffee, per lb.	–	1	3
——— Colonial, per lb.	–	–	6
Corn (Wheat); when the price of British is 40*s.* per quarter, duty per quarter	2	6	8
—— ——— The duty decreases as the price rises; when at 73*s.* and above, the duty is	–	1	–
—— ——— Colonial wheat, when the price of British is under 67*s.* per quarter	–	5	–
—— ——— At or above 67*s.*	–	–	6
—— ——— Meal and flour, per barrel of 196 lbs., when wheat is 40*s.* per quarter (196 lbs. being estimated as equal to 38½ gallons of wheat)	1	8	–$\frac{1}{8}$
—— ——— ——— per cwt.	–	16	–$\frac{1}{2}$
—— ——— Colonial, per cwt.	–	1	3$\frac{5}{8}$
—— (Barley, Indian corn, buckwheat, beer or bigg); when the price (British) is 20*s.* per quarter, the duty is	1	11	10
—— ——— When 41*s.* per quarter	–	1	–
—— ——— Colonial, at and under 34*s.* per quarter	–	2	6
—— ——— Above 34*s.* per quarter	–	–	6
—— (Oats); when the price of British is 13*s.* per quarter	1	7	3
—— ——— When the price is 31*s.*	–	1	–
—— ——— Colonial, when under 25*s.*	–	2	–
——— above 25*s.*	–	–	6
—— (Rye, peas and beans); when the British price is 20*s.*	1	19	3
—— ——— when 46*s.*	–	1	–
Cucumbers, pickled, 20*l.* per cwt. *ad valorem.*			
Currants, per cwt.	1	2	2
Dates, per cwt.	–	10	–
Eels, the ship's lading	13	1	3
Eggs, the 120	–	–	10
Figs, per cwt.	–	15	–
Fish, of British taking (only), free.			
Lobsters, free.			
Oysters, per bushel	–	1	6
Stock-fish, the 120	–	5	–
Sturgeon, the keg of 5 gallons	–	9	–
Turbots, free.			
Fruit, raw, not before enumerated, 5*l.* per cwt. *ad valorem.*			
Grapes, 5*l.* per cwt. *ad valorem.*			
——— pressed, 20*l.* per cwt.			
Hams, 3*d.* per lb., per cwt.	1	8	–
Hay, the load, containing 36 trusses, each truss 56 lbs.	1	4	–
Honey, per cwt.	–	15	–
——— Colonial, per cwt.	–	5	–
Isinglass, per cwt.	2	7	6
——— Colonial, per cwt.	–	15	10
Lard, per cwt.	–	8	–
Maccaroni, per lb.	–	–	2
Medlars, per bushel	–	1	–
Nuts; Cashew nuts and kernels, per cwt.	–	10	–
——— Chesnuts, per bushel	–	2	–
——— Cocoa-nuts, from British possessions, the 1,200	–	1	–
——— Various nuts, 20*l.* per cwt. *ad valorem.*			
Onions, per bushel	–	3	–
Oranges and lemons, if loose, per 1,000	–	15	–
——— for the largest chest allowed by law	–	7	6
Pearl-barley, per cwt.	–	17	6
Pickles, per gallon	–	1	6
Plums, dried or preserved, the cwt.	1	7	6
——— French plums and prunelloes, the cwt.	1	–	–
Pork, salted, not being hams or bacon, the cwt.	–	12	–
Potatoes, per cwt.	–	2	–
Prunes, per cwt.	–	7	–
Raisins, per cwt.	–	15	–
——— Colonial	–	7	6
Rice, per cwt.	–	15	–
—— Colonial, per cwt.	–	1	–
Sago, per cwt.	–	1	–
Sausages or puddings, per lb.	–	–	4
Succades, sweetmeats and preserved fruits, per lb.	–	–	6
——— Colonial	–	–	1
Sugar, not refined, per cwt.	3	3	–
—— Colonial, per cwt.	1	4	–
—— East India, per cwt.	1	12	–
Tapioca, per cwt.	–	1	–
Tea, per lb.	–	2	1
Tongues, the dozen	–	3	–

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—No. 3.—

Tendencies of Manufacturing and Commercial Industry.

67. So long as we continue to discourage the importation of food, it will be impossible not to indulge the most serious apprehensions respecting the future prospects of the working classes of this country. Population is increasing at the rate of 1,000 souls per day. Every acre of our best corn lands is already cultivated. To grow additional supplies of wheat, we must drain swamps, till the mountain's side, cover sand-hills with clay, and sink capital to an immense amount, to force barrenness into fertility. When we have done this, it is still not very probable that the powers of production, on our limited extent of soil, will outstrip the progress of population; and, unless that advance be checked by a well-devised scheme of emigration, the pressure of population on the means of subsistence will become every day more severe. Corn Laws, however, cannot be maintained against the growing influence of public opinion, aided by the recurrence of a succession of bad harvests, which, at intervals, may always be looked for in this northern climate. It has been shown by Mr. Tooke that, from 1793 to 1816, there were no less than 12 years of deficient crops from unfavourable seasons, some of them of the most desolating character. On Lady-day 1801, the price of wheat rose to 177*s.* per quarter. Let this be the price again in the midst of another American panic like that of 1837, and during a hard winter like that which followed the panic, and the total repeal of our provision laws will probably be the result. May it then have influence enough over millions, urged to desperation by want, to avert a national convulsion!

68. Taking a favourable view of the subject, and supposing our provision laws repealed, and with them all laws which, under the name of protecting duties, are continually forcing trade into wrong channels, nothing would then interfere with the march of industry; and but one question remains to be answered, which is, whether, after all, the happiness of the people would not be better promoted by emigration than by encouraging trade and manufactures, and so increasing the density of our population at home.

The superior advantages of a pastoral or agricultural life, and the evils supposed to be inseparable from manufacturing communities, have been so frequently insisted upon, that it becomes important to inquire to what extent they are real.

69. All agricultural countries are poor in money wealth. It is not the export of raw materials, but of manufactured commodities, that commands an importation of precious metals from the countries producing them. Manufactures have, therefore, the advantage in all cases where fixed money payments are to be made in rates, taxes or rents, by supplying the means of payment. But there is another view to be taken of the subject. In a newly-settled country an abundance of food will not command manufactured commodities, while manufactured commodities, all over the world, where commercial restrictions do not interfere, will command food. It is the interest of a country, therefore, rather to be without agriculture than without manufactures. Again, were there no gold and silver in the world, it would be at once seen that the wealth of a rich man consists not so much in having more food, and of a better quality, to eat, than another, as in his enjoying the use of a greater number of manufactured commodities. Take from the wealthiest nobleman in England his furniture, his wardrobe, his plate, his carriages, books, pictures, &c., in short, every article contributed by the journeyman, the artizan, or the mechanic, and leave him nothing but the raw materials of food supplied by his peasantry, and we at once reduce him to the level of an Indian chief in the back woods of America. Manufactures therefore are wealth—that part of wealth which constitutes the comforts and luxuries of life; and, as far as these are essential to our happiness, it is better to have cheap food brought to the place where we can command them, than to abandon those comforts and luxuries for cheap food in a newly-settled country, in which manufactures are unknown.

70. The evils of close alleys, narrow streets, impure air, unhealthful employments, and a demoralized population, are far from being inseparable from manufacturing industry. The causes of these evils are easily traced, and, if proper steps were taken, easily removed. The tendency of trade and manufactures is to cluster a population in towns; but by judicious regulations, Government might cause

cause all towns to be well built, with streets well drained, and sufficiently wide to allow a free circulation of air, and with open spaces for gardens, or places of exercise and healthful recreation.

71. One of the most practicable, and at the same time one of the most beneficial, measures that could be originated by Government, would be a good Building Act, applicable to every town in the United Kingdom; and it is highly important that the attention of the Legislature should be immediately called to this subject.

The wretched state of the habitations of the poor, in the neighbourhoods where they congregate together in our large towns, is a disgrace to a civilized community. In some parts of Bethnal-green and Spitalfields, inhabited by weavers, every house ought long ago to have been condemned and razed to the ground. Ruinous buildings, streets without sewers, overflowing privies and cesspools, and open ditches, filled with a black putrifying mass of corruption, infecting the air for miles round, render the district the abode of disease and death. There are streets and alleys from which typhus fever is never absent the year round; and yet the unfortunate weaver, partly from ignorance of the importance of ventilation, and partly to prevent the loss of weight in his silk by evaporation, nails down his windows, and pastes over with paper every crevice that would admit a breath of wind to blow on his debilitated frame. The wretched cabin of the Irish peasant is a very secondary evil, as compared with such a state of things in the midst of a dense population. The Irish peasant breathes the pure air of heaven. The inhabitant of a close court, filled with decaying vegetable matter, breathes a poisonous miasma, which may become the nucleus of a plague.

72. It is deplorable that these evils should exist, when the remedy is simple. Every municipality, properly organized, should have the power to rate itself for public local improvements; and, without applying for a special Act of Parliament, the power to purchase all private property, necessary for the object, within a given circuit. In addition to this, nothing more is required than a law to prevent streets being formed until sewers have first been provided: a law regulating the distances at which houses should be built; and carrying out other precautionary principles which are already enforced in London to some extent, but confined chiefly to party-walls and parapet roofs.

73. The wretched hovels in which the poor are compelled to reside—for they must take up their abode wherever they can get bread—have a much more powerful influence over their habits and moral condition than would at first appear. A man who is provided by his employer with a cheerful room, in which the sun shines, and in a decent neighbourhood, insensibly acquires something of the character of the place. He becomes cleanly and decent in his person, attached to his home, and an orderly member of society. Another, forced by necessity to take up his abode in a gloomy cellar or garret, in the midst of dirt and discomfort, becomes careless of his personal appearance, and reckless in his habits. To such a man, who may be said to be without a home, the temptation at night of a well-lighted room, with a cheerful fire and society, in a beer-shop or public-house, becomes irresistible, even when the excitement of liquor is not a further inducement.

74. A great mistake prevails in the minds of many persons as to the extent to which factory labour, which is now becoming the characteristic feature of manufacturing employment, is unfavourable to the health or morals of a community, or the happiness of domestic life. With regard to health, having seen the domestic weaver in his miserable apartments, and the power-loom weaver in the factory, I do not hesitate to say that the advantages are all on the side of the latter. The one, if a steady workman, confines himself to a single room, in which he eats, drinks and sleeps, and breathes throughout the day an impure air. The other has not only the exercise of walking to and from the factory, but, when there, lives and breathes in a large roomy apartment, in which the air is constantly changed. Some of the factories I have visited are models of neatness, cleanliness and perfect ventilation; and there is no reason all should not be the same.

With regard to morals, I was told by Mr. W. Williams, Broad-cloth manufacturer, of Dublin, that having tried the effect of both modes of employment, he was convinced that factory labour was more favourable to the moral state of the labouring population than piece-work at home. The reason was, regularity of hours; regularity, therefore, of habits, and constant superintendence through the

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the great part of the day. I believe the opinion to be well founded; and that journeymen tailors, journeymen shoemakers, domestic weavers, and all classes employed at piece-work, at their own homes, will be found to yield more readily to the temptations of idleness and intemperance than the classes who have to attend a warehouse or shop, or to work in a factory, and who give up for the time the right of being their own masters. Mr. Cobden is of opinion that the factory system, by its regularity, is working a marked and decided improvement in the character of the Irish population, with which Manchester is inundated. Mr. Thomas Ashton assured me that in the village of Hyde, where his mills are situated, and where he now employs 1,600 hands, he had been concerned in but three prosecutions during a period of 40 years; and the only instance of open prostitution he had known in the town was of a woman who had emigrated from some agricultural village in Suffolk. She was got rid of by the voluntary act of the factory hands, who assembled and drummed her out of the place. This superiority may be partly accounted for by the fact that Mr. Ashton, having the land in his own hands, keeps beer-shops and public-houses at a distance. The factory operatives in the great towns are far from being in a state equally satisfactory, but yet they are superior to the classes who prefer lower wages and freedom from restraint.

75. It has been said that factory labour is unfavourable to the happiness of a community, as far as it depends upon domesticity. But domestic happiness is not promoted, but impaired, by all the members of a family muddling together and jostling each other constantly in the same room. The usual and the better course, adopted by the middle and higher classes, is that of separating for the day, and assembling only at meal-times and in the evening. This the factory weaver can do; and, as his hours of labour terminate generally at seven o'clock, he has a long evening, besides the half of Saturday, and the whole of Sunday, to spend exclusively with his family.

76. One of the greatest advantages resulting from the progress of manufacturing industry, and from severe manual labour being superseded by machinery, is its tendency to raise the condition of women. Education only is wanting to place the women of Lancashire higher in the social scale than in any other part of the world. The great drawback to female happiness, among the middle and working classes is, their complete dependence and almost helplessness in securing the means of subsistence. The want of other employment than the needle cheapens their labour, in ordinary cases, until it is almost valueless. In Lancashire profitable employment for females is abundant. Domestic servants are in consequence so scarce, that they can only be obtained from the neighbouring counties. A young woman, prudent and careful, and living with her parents, from the age of 16 to 25, may, in that time, by factory employment, save 100*l.* as a wedding portion. I believe it to be the interest of the community that every young woman should have this in her power. She is not then driven into an early marriage by the necessity of seeking a home; and the consciousness of independence, in being able to earn her own living, is favourable to the development of her best moral energies. It is a great error in our views of social economy to suppose that the interest of either sex requires that the other should be restricted in the right of acquiring or holding property.

—No. 4.—

Influence of Machinery upon skilled Labour and Education.—Working of the Factory Regulation Bill.—Measures required to protect Children from the consequences of an increasing Value given to their Labour.

77. A serious evil, however, arises out of the application of machinery to the useful arts, in its tendency to make mere machines of human beings. The principle of the division of labour is carried out to an extent prejudicial to the individual. A spinner is required to do but one thing throughout his whole life; to watch a pair of wheels, and to walk three steps forward and three steps backward, so that if employment fails him in that capacity, he is unfitted for every other. The fingers of a child, with the aid of machinery, are gradually superseding among the great body of the people the highest amount of skilled labour.

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78. This evil is chiefly manifested in the diminished value and importance attached to education among factory operatives. A tradesman who wants an apprentice will not take one who has not been taught to read and write, because a lad would be of little use to him, even for an errand boy, if unable to read the direction of a parcel. His parents, knowing this, send the boy to school at an early age. In the factory districts, a boy who can read and write is seldom of more value to a mill-owner than one who cannot. His ignorance is no obstacle to his employment. He is not required to do any thing that would exercise his intellectual powers, but to be a mere cog in one of the wheels of the steam-engine by which the works are driven. The parents do not, therefore, provide for his education. Their cupidity prevails over their regard for his future welfare. Hence it is quite clear, that unless means are adopted, and quickly, to counteract this tendency, the rising generation in the manufacturing districts will grow up in a state of more blindfold ignorance than the present. Most important it is that the means we devise should be effective, and that in taking steps to effect our object, we should not confound names with things. Here it will be necessary for me to make some remarks upon the Factory Regulation Bill.

79. Several circumstances drew my attention to the operation of the Factory Regulation Bill, as connected with the interests of the hand-loom weavers. The first was a statement made to me, in several instances, by weavers, that the Bill had aggravated their distress by depriving their children of employment in factories. I was induced sometimes to say to the weaver, "You tell me that your children are of little use to you at the loom, and that their earnings at picking and winding are a mere trifle; why do you not get employment for them in the factories?" The answer generally was, "There is now no such employment to be obtained." This at first I did not believe, because the number of factories I saw was every day increasing, and I could not understand why the demand for the labour of children did not increase in a corresponding ratio. It was necessary, however, to inquire into the fact, and there were other reasons which led me to think it desirable to ascertain, from my own personal observation, what had been the working of the Factory Regulation Bill, and especially of the school clauses.

80. One was, that the factory system is beginning to be extensively applied to the labour of hand-loom weaving, and that the weavers who now maintain, and may continue to maintain, a successful competition with the power-loom, will not be *domestic weavers*, but weavers assembled in factories to work under the eye of a master. There are now many fabrics woven by power at a somewhat dearer rate than the productions of the hand-loom (taking into consideration the cost of machinery, repairs, and the wages of the workers); but the power-loom manufacturer, as before explained, can execute an order with certainty and despatch, from the regularity of his process; while the employer of domestic weavers can never tell within a fortnight or three weeks when every web sent out to the neighbouring villages will be returned. This disadvantage is partly overcome by assembling the weavers in factories, and requiring them to work under superintendence. The system is also favourable to a large manufacturer, in protecting him, to some extent, against the embezzlement of yarn. His property is safe in his own possession, and he runs no risk of the work being taken out of the loom to be sold or pawned by a dishonest weaver. The subjects of wrangling and dispute between his foreman and the men are also less numerous upon the factory than upon the out-door system. The men have not to lose hours and days in dancing attendance upon the foreman's leisure; and the daily inspection of the master enables him to see that his directions are understood and followed by all parties. On this account, whether a factory life be more favourable to the happiness of the hand-loom weaver than domestic weaving or not, there is decidedly ground to anticipate an increase in the number of hand-loom factories, already (under various names) very considerable. Many of those which I visited I found ill-contrived, ill-ventilated buildings, the walls rarely purified by lime, and in some of them a large proportion of children and young persons. It therefore becomes a question whether, in a well-digested Factory Regulation Bill provision ought not to be made for the case of factories employing hand-loom weavers.

81. The reason I felt anxious to ascertain the operation of the school clauses in the Factory Regulation Bill, was a doubt I have long entertained whether the benefit of education can ever be widely extended to the working classes without

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without the instruction of children being in some form or other made obligatory upon the parents, or the employers of labour, or upon both.

82. With these views, I devoted as much time as I could spare to visiting as many as possible of the factories I met with in the weaving districts of Manchester, Preston, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Belfast and Dublin, including silk factories, cotton factories, woollen factories, and flax and linen factories; and the conclusion at which I arrived was, that, while some parts of the Bill are working well, and affording proof that a good system of inspection may be rendered a means of counteracting or checking many of the evils apt to arise from the tendency of trade and manufacturers to congregate human beings together in dense masses, the school clauses, from which I at one time anticipated much good, had not only failed in the object for which they were introduced in the Bill, but had been on the whole prejudicial in their effects.

83. The principal design of the Factory Regulation Bill was to prevent young children being over-worked, and the intention of the school clauses was, that all under 13 should be sent, for not less than two hours a day, to school; in both these objects the Bill has failed, with a few exceptions only, too immaterial to be taken into the account. The evidence of this is the universal testimony of the proprietors of factories, and the data furnished by the factory inspectors.

84. In every cotton-spinning factory I visited, I was struck with the absence of young children, of whom I expected to find a considerable number. I asked, "Where are the children about whom the sympathy of Government and of the country has been excited?" In at least 19 instances out of 20 I was told in reply,—"We now employ no children under 13 years of age. The regulations of the inspectors for enforcing the attendance of the children at school are so impracticable, and subject us to so many annoyances, that we no longer allow our spinners to employ piecers of an age rendering us liable to this vexatious interference." The instances I met with to the contrary were of a few liberal and benevolent mill-owners, such as Mr. Thomas Ashton and Alderman Cobden, who, taking a great interest in the subject of education, were willing to make large sacrifices of time and money to secure the desired end. But I met with no case of the prescribed regulations being deemed suitable to the circumstances of the children by either employer, or the employed.

85. In order to establish the fact to which I am adverting, instead of quoting at length from my notes of the various conversations I had with factory owners, I shall adopt the more conclusive course of showing the statements made to me on this head to be well founded, from data furnished by the factory inspectors.

86. R. J. Saunders, Esq., in his report, dated July 1st, 1837, speaking of children under the age of 13, says:—

"The operation of the school clauses has induced most mill occupiers to make their first reduction of hands from among this class."

The extent to which this reduction has been carried is not placed in a very clear light by the inspectors; but by a careful analysis of their reports, I have been enabled to obtain the following results. From the report of Leonard Horner, Esq., dated May 4th, 1835, it appears that there were then in Scotland 425 factories, employing 21,545 persons, of whom 6,752 were under 13 years of age.

SUMMARY of the FACTORIES in *Scotland*, employing Power; May 4th, 1835.

Factories.		Total Number of Persons employed.	Of whom were under 13,
Cotton - - -	159	36,945	4,082
Wool - - -	90	3,505	723
Flax - - - -	170	13,409	1,806
	419	53,859	6,611
Silk - - - -	6	686	141
	425	54,545	6,752

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From the report of J. Steuart, Esq., dated December 30th, 1837, it appears that there were then in Scotland—

Factories.	Total Number of Persons employed.	Of whom were under 13,
462	55,159	1,571

From a comparison of these statements we find that, in two years, the number of children under 13 years of age employed in factories in Scotland had diminished to the extent of 5,181, or five-sixths of the whole number formerly employed, although the number of factories had increased. The school clauses not affecting silk-mills, the reduction has been confined to cotton, wool and flax-mills: it would appear to have been greatest in cotton and flax-mills. On the 31st March 1837 (see the report of J. Steuart, Esq.), there were, in 98 factories in Glasgow, but 130 children under 13 years of age (but little more than one to each factory). In his report, dated 30th December 1837, speaking of the large flax factories at Dundee, employing in all nearly 5,000 workers, he says:—"No children under 13 years of age are now employed at Dundee." According to the same report, Ireland contains in all 112 factories employing 12,814 persons, of whom 99 *only are under* 13 *years of age*,—less than one child to each factory. Although no figures are given in the reports of the other inspectors, these facts show, that we are quite safe in assuming that, for the whole of the United Kingdom, the reduction of hands under 13 years of age has not been less than it has been in Scotland. Deducting, then, five-sixths from the number of children under 13, formerly employed, the result we obtain is, that the number of young children employed in cotton, flax and woollen factories is now less, by 39,844, than in the year 1835.

SUMMARY, showing the Number of CHILDREN, under Thirteen Years of Age, employed in Cotton, Flax and Woollen Factories, in the United Kingdom, from the Returns of the Factory Inspectors.

Factories.		Employing Workers.	Of whom were under 13,
Cotton - - -	1,262	220,134	28,771
Flax - - -	347	33,283	5,288
Woollen - - -	1,313	71,274	13,322
			47,381
	Deduct five-sixths - - -		39,484
	Present number supposed to be employed		7,897

To these may be added the children under 13 employed in silk-mills, which, not being affected by the Factories Regulation Bill, have probably increased since 1835.

Number of silk-mills in 1835 - - - - - -	238
Employing workers - - - - - - -	30,682
Under 13 - - - - - - - - -	9,074

87. In round numbers, then, it may be stated that the operation of the present law has been practically to exclude from factory labour 40,000 young children (perhaps a much larger number), who would now have been employed, but for the change of system. The cause is a very simple one. It is not that mill-owners are either better or worse than other persons with their attention wholly absorbed in business; but that it is practically impossible to force a child, without any co-operation on the part of its parents, to sit for two hours over a column of spelling, when it might be playing in the fields. I was told by the mill-owners, "It is our own fault if the children work over-hours; but when they leave the mill we cannot prevent their playing truant. We cannot make the schoolmaster

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produce a voucher of attendance if the children have been absent; and yet we are made liable to a fine if we do not dismiss them when the voucher is not forthcoming." To compel a mill-owner to establish schools of so superior a character that the children should attend them voluntarily, would be to impose upon him a task for which he is often morally unfit, and to burthen him with an expense quite disproportionate to the object;* since the average of children under 13 to each mill, even in 1835, was but 23 (boys and girls); and I incline altogether to the opinion, that, unless the school clauses of the bill are modified, even those mill-owners who have established schools at their own cost will ultimately give up the employment of children. One such instance I met with at Preston. The children had been dismissed, the school abandoned, and the children deprived at once both of employment and instruction.

88. Few evils are unmixed with good; and one good attending the practical exclusion of young children from the factories referred to is, that it has created a greater demand than before for the labour of boys and girls above the exceptionable age. This demand has been so great as to have raised their wages in several of the mills I visited 2 *s.* per week. A boy of 14, who before could obtain as a piecer but 3*s.*, now often obtains 5*s.*, and in some cases 7*s.*; and, besides, a greater number between the ages of 13 and 15 are employed than before; not a number equal to that of the young children formerly engaged (for a boy of 14 is usually considered equal to the labour of two children aged 10 years), but still a large proportion.

89. Now, if it were certain that the 40,000 young children practically excluded from factories, as I have described, were receiving at the present moment sound instruction in useful knowledge, the preponderance of good would be so great that no friend of education would care to interfere with the present Bill; but unfortunately the fact is, that not one in a hundred of these children is ever sent to school. Their parents first endeavour to get employment for them in other factories, or in collieries, which are not under the operation of the Act; and if they fail in that, the children are seen running wild about the streets. To send a child to a day-school rarely enters the minds of the parents. The child not contributing now to its own support, the parents can less afford to pay school fees than before, and they know that at the age of 14 the factory will be open, and no questions asked whether the child has been to school or not.

90. The mischief then produced is of a two-fold character. First, the child loses the benefit of that industrial training which the Bill contemplated, by proposing to combine short hours of light labour with education; and in the next place (and this is a very serious evil, to be traced to the Bill not having been rendered general in its application), the children employed in silk-mills, cotton-printing factories, hand-loom factories, all other factories, and collieries, suddenly find, competing with them for employment, cheapening their labour by the competition, and depriving them of their bread, this host of children excluded from cotton, flax and woollen-factories. Instead, therefore, of a well-digested, comprehensive measure, which might have been beneficial to all, we have a Bill failing altogether in its main object, that of protection to little children; a Bill which has given some pecuniary and other advantages to the youth of both sexes of an age to struggle for themselves, but which has placed the great body of young children under 13 in a more unfavourable position, morally and physically, than they were in before the passing of the Act.

91. The necessity of embracing all factories employing children in the provisions of a Bill designed for the protection of children, appears to me so obvious, that it was with great surprise I learned that children in silk-mills were exempt from the operation of the school clauses of the Act in question. I know not how to account for this omission. Children in silk-mills require education as much as the children of flax-mills; and the proportion of young children to adults

* This difficulty may be met in some districts by establishing schools supported at the joint expense of several factories.

In many cases, however, the factories are too much isolated to render it convenient for all the children to attend the same school; and there can be no valid reason why the burthen of supporting the school should not be shared by the inhabitants generally. It is desirable that the inspectors should have power to ratify voluntary agreements to establish schools, but in the present state of the law the number would not be great.

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adults in flax-mills, in 1835, was but three per cent., while in silk-mills it was 20 per cent.

The actual proportions of ages, in different factories, in the year 1835, were the following:—

Ages.	Cotton.	Woollen.	Flax.	Silk.
Under - 13	12 : 10	18 : 7	15 : 9	28 : 16
13 - to - 18	29 : 8	29 : 8	36 : 1	30 : 8
Above - 18	57 : 2	51 : 5	48 : 0	39 : 6
	100	100	100	100

But besides factories of the above class, there are many others to which the provisions of the Bill should have been extended or abandoned altogether. Passing over hand-loom factories, which I have already noticed, I may mention particularly cotton printing factories, in which a large number of children are employed. I went over one establishment of this description near Glossop, in which I found 120 children under 13 years of age. The greater number, in fact, under 11. The labour was light and agreeable, the children appeared in health and contented, but no provision whatever was made for their education.

92. While in the north of England, I took some pains to inquire into the fact which I had heard asserted in several quarters, that one effect of the Factory Regulation Bill had been to send many of the children formerly employed in factories to work in coal-pits. I found the statement correct, but to what extent I have of course no means of judging. The number of children and young persons employed in collieries has always been great. I found in some instances, out of about 400 hands employed one-half under 20 years of age, and of that number about 50 under the age of 13. Among the children employed there are almost always some mere infants; and although I was assured by Miss Martineau, that Lord Durham, in the mines with which he is connected, had exerted himself to check the evil, the practice of employing children only six and seven years of age to work in mines is all but universal, *and there are no short hours for them.* The children go down with the men usually at 4 o'clock in the morning, and remain in the pit between 11 and 12 hours. When they come up they are allowed to play about for a little while by their parents, but are sent early to bed that they may rise again at the same early hour the next morning. I was much struck with the enormity of this evil; I could not conceive of circumstances more prejudicial to animal existence than shutting up a little child throughout the day in subterraneous confinement, at the very period when air and light are as necessary to its growth as to a young and tender plant. One pit-man told me, that his brother went to work in a coal-mine when but five years of age. I inquired what effect it had produced on his health; the reply was, "Why, he is a poor stunted fellow, sure enough." At one of the collieries I visited, a crowd of pit-men gathered round me while making these inquiries, and I endeavoured to ascertain their feelings on the subject. Some who had children in the mine of their own, were evidently influenced by the wages the children earned to disregard all other considerations, but an old man among them said, with an air of deep earnestness, "Sir, the practice is shameful; the children are sacrificed, and they ought not to be allowed to go down so young."

93. To ascertain the nature of the employment of these young children, I embraced an opportunity of visiting a pit in the neighbourhood of Newcastle. Descending a shaft 600 feet deep, I went some distance along a subterraneous road, which, I was told, was three miles in length (the overman going before me with a Davy lamp in one hand, and, as if to neutralize the precaution, a lighted candle in the other). To the right and left of one of these roads, or "ways," are low galleries, called "*workings*," in which the "*hewers*" are employed in a state of almost perfect nudity (on account of the great heat), digging out the coal. To these galleries there are traps or doors, which are kept shut, to guard against the

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the ingress or egress of inflammable air, and to prevent counter-currents disturbing the ventilation. The use of a child of six years of age is to open and shut one of these doors when the loaded corves, or coal-trucks, pass or repass. For this object the child is trained to sit by itself in a dark gallery for the number of hours I have described. The older boys drive horses, and load the corves, but the little children are always trap-keepers. When first taken down they have a candle given them, but gradually getting accustomed to the gloom of the place, they learn to do without, and sit, therefore, literally in the dark the whole time of their confinement. It is impossible to imagine a more monotonous and dismal occupation for a child; and yet I was told the children were not unhappy, although it was generally admitted, "they did fret a good deal at first." The truth is, that by blunting the sensibilities and deadening the faculties, the mind may be rendered callous to a lot which would otherwise be too bitter for human endurance. The poor children are not the less to be pitied on that account. I have seen *men* living on the diet of swine, clothed in rags, and wallowing in filth, and yet their miserable circumstances did not excite my commiseration so much as the recklessness with which they regarded their state, and the utter prostration of mental energy, which deprived them almost of the wish, and certainly of the power, of making a single effort to better their condition.

94. In some of the collieries young girls, as well as boys, appear to be employed; but I had no opportunity of verifying the fact from my own personal observation; and I should not have known it, had not my attention been called to an account which appeared in the "Yorkshire Herald," about the time of which I am speaking, of an accident attended with loss of life, through an inundation which occurred in one of the Silkston collieries. When the water burst in there were in the mine 44 children, of whom 18 escaped and 26 were drowned; of these 11 were girls, and the rest boys; and nine out of the number were under 10 years of age. It is singular that none of the pit-men were drowned with the children; but the fact strengthens the statement made to me in several collieries, that when the men are working short shifts, the lads are not allowed to leave with the men, but work full time. Subsequently to meeting with this account I took some pains to obtain the names of the sufferers.* I subjoin them in a note.

95. Poverty of the parents is not the cause of this immolation of infancy. The pit-men of the north of England collieries are a better paid class of operatives than any body of working-men equally numerous. I found their average earnings to be 24*s.* a week; and when a colliery is not limited in the quantity of coal allowed to be raised (which by agreement among the coal-owners is sometimes done to keep up prices), a pit-man often earns 30*s.*, and even 40*s.* in a week. Besides this amount of money wages, he is allowed a cottage rent-free, or at a mere nominal rent of sixpence a fortnight; the cottage frequently containing four good rooms. He has also a bit of garden-ground rent-free, sufficient for the growth of his vegetables; and, moreover, another important advantage, for which he may well be envied by London operatives,—as much coal as he wishes to burn the year round, free of charge. All I have observed, however, only strengthens my conviction that high wages and corresponding benefits are thrown away upon those who have received no moral culture, and are incapable of self-guidance. I went among the colliers the day following that on which they had received a fortnight's wages, and found every cottage deserted, and every public-house filled. I went into a beer-shop at two o'clock in the day, in which I counted 15 pit-men drinking, and found among them only one sufficiently sober to answer intelligently the questions I put to him. Drunkenness and quarrels are much more frequent among Newcastle colliers than among the miners of Cornwall. Comparing the one class with the other, the Cornish miners

* Isaac Wright 12, and Abraham Wright 8, were found locked in each other's arms. Their father died in May 1837, in consequence of an accident from fire-damp in the same pit, and the two deceased brothers were the chief support of their mother. Eliz. Can 13, Ellen Parker 15, Francis Heyland 13, George Lamb, Catherine Garnett 11, Jno. Goddard 8, Hannah Webster 13, Sarah Jewkes 10, Hannah Taylor 17, Jas. Clarkson 16, Eliz. Clarkson 11, Eliz. Holling 15, Geo. Birkenshaw 10, Joseph Birkenshaw 7, Sarah Newton 8, Ann Moss 9, Jas. Tenton 10, William Wormley 8, Mary Sellers 10, George Gamett 9, John Simpson, 9, William Atack 12, Samuel Atack 10, and Eliz. Hutchinson 9.

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miners are far superior in intelligence and morals; but of neither class could I paint a very flattering picture.

96. It is pleasing to be able to make an honourable exception in favour of the Govan-hill colliery, near Glasgow. The benevolent proprietor, Mr. William Dixon, has not only exerted himself to form among his men habits of association for mutual benefit, but, at an expense of little short of 1,000*l.*, has erected a building for their use, which is at once a school and mechanics' institute. The school, containing 200 children, is conducted on the Glasgow model (the salary of the schoolmaster being paid in part by Mr. Dixon), and the library and reading-room are well stocked with books and newspapers. Here it was satisfactory to find the signs of a marked improvement, and in the care taken of the children the evidence of a well-ordered population rising to supply the place of the present.

97. The employer of a large body of workmen living together on one spot, and not scattered about in the streets and alleys of a large town, has a power stronger than that of the most despotic governments in enforcing rules and regulations which he may deem essential for their moral benefit. But to prevent his being frustrated by the indifference and passive resistance of those who do not appreciate his kindness, he must exercise a degree of vigilance greater than that which is necessary for the conduct of his business, and far greater, therefore, than ought to be expected of the employers of labour generally, independent of the large pecuniary sacrifices necessary, in the absence of Government aid, to effect the object. No expectation can be well more visionary than that the time will come when every mill-owner and coal-owner of the United Kingdom will deserve the reputation of Mr. William Dixon.

98. Many, however, who have tried to benefit their workmen have failed of success; and I have seen so much waste of time and energies in the benevolent efforts of private individuals, that the causes of failure have been with me a subject of attentive study. When I hear it said that the poor appreciate the advantages of education, and would most gladly avail themselves of superior schools for their children if placed within their reach, I ask myself the question, of whom this is true? No doubt of many thousands; for among working men there are some not inferior in honesty and shrewd intelligence to the best-educated classes: but is it true of the class, in fact, for whom education is the most needed? Is it true of the thousands who pass through our prisons? Is it true of the vagrant and able-bodied pauper? Is it true of the great body of dram-drinkers and beer-drinkers? Of those who spend in one week, out of their wages, in a public-house, the price of a quarter's schooling; or of any individual parent who, while pleading poverty as an excuse for not sending his children to school, yet allows himself the one glass of gin per day, which would pay for the expense? Unless this question can be answered in the affirmative (and I cannot so answer it), other means of effecting the object must be sought than merely supplying the want of schools.

99. In Bethnal-green-road (the neighbourhood of Spitalfields) there is held, every Monday and Tuesday morning, between the hours of six and eight, a children's labour-market,—that is to say, there is an open space, to which children of both sexes, from the age of seven and upwards, resort to be hired by the week or month by any person who may require their services. When trade is slack as many as 300 children may be found in this market, seeking employment, but when trade is brisk there will not be more than from 50 to 100. These children are chiefly hired by weavers; the boys as substitutes for apprentices at the loom, or for winding, and the girls as little domestic servants or maids of all work. Many of the girls who accept these situations are between seven and nine years of age, and are paid from 1*s.* 8*d.* to 2*s.* per week. In a weaver's family where the wife is employed at the loom, she requires a servant to nurse the child, make the beds, and help cook the victuals; and as a strong girl of 15 would be too expensive for the purpose, a mere child of seven, nine, ten and eleven is hired instead. A child thus hired comes to work before eight in the morning, having had her breakfast, returns home to dinner, and at night again returns to sleep. On Saturday night she receives the 20*d.* she has earned, and gives it to her parents. I embraced an opportunity of visiting this children's labour-market, for the purpose of inquiring more minutely into the circumstances of which I had heard from report. I found about 70 children assembled, many of them with their parents. I was immediately assailed with the question,—"Do you want a

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boy, sir? A little girl, sir, for the house," &c. Out of the number present, I do not think there were half-a-dozen who had received the slightest education; for when I gave them to understand that it was of no use applying to me if they could not read and write, I was soon left almost alone. Among the parents there were many who had no appearance of distress; and one mother, who acknowledged that she had never sent her child to school, although 11 years of age, I took to be the wife of a respectable shopkeeper. One boy waiting to be hired, and who had never been at school, belonged to a family of velvet weavers, in full work, and earning high wages. No doubt extreme poverty is often the cause of parents sending their children out at this early age to work, instead of keeping them at school; but in a neighbourhood where a public-house exists in every street, and where the quantity of spirits drank is a never-failing thermometer of the state of trade in the district, it is impossible to believe that the sacrifice of a few months of a child's earnings, for the sake of its education, would not very often be made, if the disposition were not wanting on the part of the parents.

100. An evil still more serious exists in the practice of sending children out into streets to get their living. In the metropolis and in all large towns, the number of street trades carried on by children of both sexes is very great, and minute examinations of juvenile delinquents in prisons have convinced me, that these street trades all lead to acts of vagrancy and theft. A boy is told to follow a gentleman on horseback or in a gig till he stops and requires some one to hold his horse; another has a basket of oranges or nuts put into his hands, or, perhaps, a bundle of children's story books to sell; a third has a besom given him to sweep a crossing; a fourth, with larger capital, sets up a dog and cart, and becomes a vendor of cats'-meat.* All are modes of earning money, and even considerable sums, but all unfavourable to habits of steady industry; and, by bringing a child in contact with the young vagrants of the streets, render him quickly familiar with the more expeditious but dishonest modes of obtaining bread. Better a thousand times a child should be employed the whole day in a cotton factory, than that the parent should be allowed to substitute this mode of turning its labour to profitable account. Many of the juvenile delinquents in prison have told me, that they owed their first dishonest courses to the acquaintances they formed when selling oranges in the streets.

101. When the labour of children can in no other way be made profitable to the parents, they are often employed as mendicants. The use of children to beggars carrying on the ostensible calling of match vendors, &c., in exciting the compassion of the charitable is so strongly felt, that those who have no children of their own often hire them of others. An old vagrant, calling himself the grandfather of a boy under seven years of age, in the workhouse school of the West London Union, carried him away by main force, against the will of the guardians, with no other object than that of forcing the child to beg in the streets by his side. A few days afterwards, I saw the child so employed, and those who would have refused if the man had been alone, were induced to give by the youth and innocent looks of the child. A girl in the Penitentiary at Millbank described to me how she had been regularly trained by her own father to go to gentlemen's houses in the country with a fabricated story of her mother and three sisters being seized with the small-pox, and a brother lying dead in the house. Sometimes she was followed, and the falsehood of the story proved; but in most cases she was successful, the parties not caring to give themselves trouble; and she had received as much as 10*s.* at a time under these false pretences. In Belfast, I saw in the streets a boy of 12, in a state of almost perfect nudity: a few rags were tied round his waist, but his legs and the upper part of his body were perfectly bare. On inquiry, I found this boy had been repeatedly clothed by charitable persons; but their kindness had been thrown away: the boy was stripped

* I received the following information from the master of St. Sepulchre's Workhouse, Middlesex, Mr. J. Palmer:—

"Our workhouse is situated in the centre of the cats'-meat trade, by means of which great numbers of children in the metropolis earn a living. Mr. Ford, in Sharp's-alley, slaughters not less than 100 horses every week. This congregates to the spot a large proportion of the dog and cats'-meat vendors. The money they get is astonishing. Children of 9 and 10 years of age will earn 8*s.* per week, and a whole family will often clear from £2. to £4. A boy of 12, if he can procure a dog and cart, sets up for himself and sells meat on his own account.

stripped by his parents and sent out as before. With good clothes on his back, no one would give him a farthing; but when decency was violated by his nakedness, all who had the means considered themselves bound to administer relief.

102. These instances will suffice to show, that if we wish education to be extended to the class for whom it is more especially needed, *the most demoralized class*, we must not calculate upon the co-operation of parents. In the light in which they view their interest, education requires a sacrifice which they are unwilling to make for the future benefit of their children. This class of persons (unfortunately too numerous) can only be reached by means of bribes or presents in the shape of clothing given to their children in charity schools, or by a law throwing upon them the obligation of education, and treating the neglect of the means of instruction, when offered for their children, as a misdemeanor.

103. The failure of the school clauses of the Factory Regulation Bill must not be considered as a proof that a wise law might not be formed, dividing the responsibility of education between parents and employers of labour so as to secure the desired end. The present law releases the parent from all obligation, and seeks to impose the duty of a parent upon a stranger, whose only connexion with the children is that of giving them employment. Moreover, it supplies no motive to the mind of the child for application when at school. All that the law requires is, that it shall spend there two hours of every day; no one inquires whether profitably or not; and, at the age of 13, although the child may still remain as ignorant as a Hottentot, no questions are asked, and the school attendance ceases. What other results than failure could follow from such a system?

104. The plans adopted by Mr. Cobden and his partner at the Sabden cotton-printing works are obviously much better calculated to effect the object than the law as it now stands. First, to obviate every excuse on the part of the parents, these gentlemen established schools at their own charge, and then they laid down the following rules, which came into operation the 1st January 1838:

1st. With the exception of existing engagements, no young person can in future be permitted to learn the respective businesses of pattern-drawing, block-cutting, block-printing or machine-printing, who may not be able to read and write with tolerable correctness, and who may not also know something of accounts.

2d. As a motive to self-improvement in those young men that are already employed in the above businesses, any one of them that may complete his term of seven years after December 1838, and who may not have in the meantime gained for himself a tolerably correct knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic, cannot have the promise of employment after the expiration of his term of seven years, except in such cases where the attainment of such knowledge can be proved to have been impossible.

When in Londonderry, I met a gentleman who has recently established in that city some extensive works for flax-spinning. He had laid down the regulation, and acted upon it for the last 12 months, that neither child nor adult should be employed on his works who could not read and write. I asked him whether the rule had not operated harshly in some cases: he said, "Not at all; it had sent many to school (and there were plenty of schools in the neighbourhood) who would otherwise never have gone to one; and when there, the prospect of employment operating upon their minds as a powerful stimulus, they had learned in a few months that which, without this stimulus, would have perhaps occupied them as many years."

In Sweden, the law authorizes a clergyman to refuse to solemnize a marriage between parties who have neglected an opportunity of learning to read; and I learn from a gentleman who has spent six years in Sweden, that the effect of the law has been so salutary, that such a case as that of a person unable to read is but rarely met with.*

105. These

* Translated extract from Colonel Forsell's Statistics of Sweden:—

"Public instruction has in former times been the subject of particular attention, and the most glorious epochs of Sweden's past history are essentially characterised by exertions for the spread of enlightenment, on the part of Gustavus Wasa, from 1527 to 1560; of Charles the 9th, from 1597 to 1611, and of Gustavus Adolphus, from that time until 1632, successively. John 3d ordained in 1574 that every nobleman who was not versed in literary arts should forfeit his nobility. Charles 11th, in 1684, that *every one of his* subjects ought to be able to read; wherefore it was incumbent on the clergyman of the parish to test his religious knowledge, before he was permitted to receive the sacrament, nor could any one enter into the married state without having been previously confirmed."

Note. "In Sweden there is scarcely one person in a thousand who cannot read."—See Forsell's Statistics of Sweden, 3d edition, pp. 336–7.

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105. These modes of enforcing the duty of education appear to me far superior to that of a compulsory attendance at school for a series of years, even if other and more effectual means were taken to attain the object.

I have seen, in a workhouse school in London, a boy, entirely ignorant when he came into the school, learn, under a good master, to read and write with fluency in the space of nine months. The object so far being effected, why should such a lad be detained for a longer period in a school where nothing but reading and writing is taught?* In a school in which instruction is carried beyond reading and writing, he might indeed, with great advantage, spend his time in pursuing many branches of knowledge of practical usefulness; but such schools for the poor have yet to be created, and even were they in existence, there is a point at which the attendance of a sharp lad, who quickly learns all that his masters are willing to teach, ceases to be a benefit.

106. The facts stated will perhaps be deemed sufficient to entitle the following suggestions to consideration:—

1st. That the school clauses of the Factory Regulation Act should be abandoned, and an educational qualification substituted for compulsory attendance at school.

2d. The qualification to be, that no child under 15 shall be employed in a factory without a certificate of ability to read and write, and proficiency in the first four rules of arithmetic.

3d. That the rule should be suspended in those districts where no school exists, until schools can be provided by the New Educational Board, or through powers given to the factory inspectors.

4th. That the short hours' system for children under 13 should be continued.

5th. That the educational qualification and the short hours' system should be extended to factories of hand-loom weavers, silk-mills, cotton-printing factories, and all factories in which steam power is employed, and to collieries and all mines in which children are employed under-ground.

107. An educational qualification would secure the regular and constant attendance of a child at school, upon an average, for two years. After that period, through the short hours' system, he would still be enabled to attend for two hours in the day, or of an evening, and would do so, of his own accord, if the schoolmaster knew how to interest the mind of his pupils in their pursuits. Mill-owners would also have a motive to assist in establishing efficient schools, in order the sooner thereby to obtain the services of children in their factories.

Perhaps a still more comprehensive measure would be the best of all. One that should forbid any parents making a profit of the labour of a child, until their duty to that child had been discharged to the extent required for its elementary instruction. Nor would such a law be injurious to the working classes in a pecuniary sense, for, as we have seen, if all young children were abstracted from the labour-market, the wages of older children would rise in a corresponding degree. It may be objected, however, that the public mind is not prepared for a measure of this universal character; and there is some force in this objection. With regard, however, to factories, the principle of interference having been already sanctioned, no obstacle exists to a measure of education universal at least in its application to them. And if the collieries were included in the same enactment, I am satisfied, from my own observation, such a measure would be supported by public opinion.

108. The

* Speaking of the inferiority of the factory schools, Mr. Horner says, "It is not at all an unusual thing to have certificates presented to us subscribed by the teacher with his or her *mark*. This generally happens in the case of female teachers; but they are held to be equal in qualification to the majority of those who keep 'Dame Schools.' In the last quarter I had a school voucher presented to me with a *mark*, and when I called upon the schoolmaster to read it for me he could not. It had been written out by the clerk of the factory, and the schoolmaster had been called to put his mark to it. I have had to reject the school voucher of the fireman, the children having been schooled in the coal hole. In one case, I actually found them there, and being made to say a lesson from books nearly as black as the fuel, in the intervals between his feeding and stirring the fire of the engine boiler. It may be supposed that such a thing could only happen at the mill of some poor ignorant man, but that I am sorry to say was not the case. It occurred at factories where a large capital must be embarked."

108. The machinery for enforcing an education qualification need be very simple. The present factory inspectors might be authorized to appoint in every district a schoolmaster of competent ability, to grant certificates, and further empowered to examine the children themselves, and disallow all certificates unwarrantably obtained or granted. A higher qualification than that of a knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic, would be desirable, but in the present state of our common schools it could not be enforced.

—No. 5.—

How far Education would be a Remedy for the Moral Evils which affect the Working Classes.

109. In connexion with this subject arises, also, the question, how far education, if rendered national, would be an efficient means of raising the condition of the great body of the people. The evils which the working classes suffer are to a great extent moral evils. Imprudence, intemperance, vicious indulgences, criminal pursuits, have perhaps as large a share in the misery endured by the poor as any of the causes to which we have alluded. That they are all to be removed by education it would be foolish to assert, least of all by such a meagre and defective education as the working classes now receive, when it reaches them in any form: but a well-digested system of moral, religious, industrial, and intellectual training, calculated to form right habits of mind and conduct, would do much; and what remained to be done might, to a great extent, be effected by various administrative improvements, which are greatly needed in the state of our police, the machinery of our courts of justice, and system of local government. It is worth while to analyse the benefits that would accrue to the working classes generally, and to society at large, if proper means were adopted of giving to every child in the community an early training, really adapted to the wants of its nature, and its probable future destiny in life.

110. First, there are no means of facilitating the transfer of labour equal to the growth of intelligence among the people. Ignorance believes itself to be fated to remain in the spot where it was born, and to follow throughout life the occupation to which it was bred: its vision is confined to a narrow circle of observation, beyond which it is afraid to move. Hence it is that thousands, who might better their condition if they would rouse themselves to make the effort, only do so when driven to it by extreme necessity. This is the case among a large class of weavers. There are multitudes whom no evidence of the decaying state of the trade will induce to quit the loom, nor will they do so until want overtakes them in its most frightful form. A man accustomed to reflect on his position, and who has read of, or noted in his experience, the many resources of which industry and ingenuity have availed themselves in similar circumstances, does not wait to be overwhelmed in the common storm, and finds, in time, a port of refuge. This is one reason why the weavers now appear as a body less intelligent than those of former years. The educated portion have left the trade; those among them who have not done so are either in good circumstances, or the old, to whom the idea of change comes too late. I have conversed with many of this class,—men who, having enjoyed the benefit of instruction, have appreciated its advantages, and given it to their children. *Their children had not been brought up to the hand-loom.* From all I have seen, I am led to believe that one-half, or perhaps the majority of weavers of plain fabrics, even in this country, are either Irish, or persons descended from Irish parents, and they constitute the least-educated part of the community. I omit from consideration the case of the secretaries of weavers' associations, and the members of their trade-committees, often men of superior ability, but who, being supported partly by contributions from the general body, follow rather the profession of solicitors than the trade of hand-loom weavers.

111. Second, the tendency of education to foster a spirit of enterprise is favourable to *emigration*, in circumstances in which emigration may be viewed as the best remedy for a redundant labour-market. And here I think it important to observe, that emigration is not a remedy for the distress of the most destitute class, or of those who are lowest in the scale of morals and intelligence. Such persons consist chiefly of those whom it is most difficult to help, because incapable of helping themselves; and the helpless here would be equally helpless abroad.

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abroad. Parish paupers sent to America have pauperized the United States to such an extent, that the authorities of New York now refuse to allow them to land without security being given that they shall not become chargeable to the city. Men given to occasional habits of intemperance, have become confirmed drunkards in countries where spirits are almost as cheap as water. The transportation of the vicious and criminal to New South Wales has created there a population more demoralized than in any other part of the world; and weavers of sickly frames and broken-down constitutions, landing at Montreal, in Lower Canada, have speedily sunk under hardships with which they were unable to contend, because of a kind for which they were not fitted. Young men and women in the prime of life are the only class among whom emigration should be encouraged, and, to fit them for it, it is necessary that they should be trained in habits of industry, sobriety and frugality; they require to be made acquainted with the nature and capabilities of the country to which they are going, and to be put in possession of a fund of general information, which may be useful to them in the new and unforeseen circumstances in which they may be thrown. The emigrant should not be a person sent out of the country in a desponding spirit, careless of what becomes of himself, but one animated with hope, full of confidence in the prudence of the course he is pursuing, and with a little capital formed out of his accumulated savings, which, in a new country, will give him time to look about him.

112. Improvidence exists in both extremes of society, but the tendency of education to check it among the poor is greater than it is among the rich, for the following reason: the rich man has a fortune to spend; he has not, therefore, the same motive for economy with one who has his fortune to make. Education strengthens this motive in the poor man, by inspiring him with the wish to improve his condition, and by suggesting the means by which that object may be attained. It has been objected to education that it makes the poor dissatisfied with their condition: this is not an evil but a good, when education is carried far enough to show the remedy. The misfortune of the Irish cotter is, that he is too content with his situation, too content with the rags which an English beggar would not pick up in the street, too content with his potatoe diet, and the filth which accumulates in his cabin by sharing it with his pigs; and hence when in England, earning perhaps 18*s.* per week as a bricklayer's labourer, his condition, in a cellar in St. Giles's or Saffron Hill, scarcely seems changed for the better. To raise him in the social scale, the desire of decent comforts must first be awakened in his breast, and this education has a tendency to effect. In passing through County Leitrim, where I saw perhaps the worst specimens of human habitations I had ever beheld (hovels which made me shudder to reflect that large families living in them had no other home), I was struck with the pleasing sight of a neat lime-washed cottage with a slated roof, on which were inscribed the words "National School." I felt at the time that the cottage was in itself a lesson more useful perhaps than any taught within its walls, and that a child attending there for instruction, and enjoying for two or three years the comfort of a neat and clean apartment, with a boarded floor, could not return every day to its parents without constantly remarking the difference between its school and their cabin, and without forming a determination to obtain, if possible, a home like the cottage school at some future period.

113. I have had many opportunities of observing how much improvidence and irregularity of habits are the cause of the extreme suffering in which the family of a working man are plunged, when, by sickness or slackness of trade, he is deprived of his accustomed earnings. Among the hand-loom factory weavers employed by Messrs. Bailey & Co., at Preston, where, as I have before stated, the weavers employed can earn, when they please, much more than the common average of the trade, the disposition to make the best of their opportunities, and to put by a trifle for age or sickness, exists but in a very slight degree. The overlooker stated—

"There was a great difference between what a hand-loom weaver could earn, and what he did earn. Although there were many who might earn from 16*s.* to 18*s.* per week, the number who did so was inconsiderable. It was impossible to make the hand-loom weaver, even in a factory, observe the same hours of labour as the mill hands. Monday morning, besides Saturday afternoon, were almost invariably lost. To check this irregularity, he imposed fines. If a certain number of yards were not finished in a given time, the fine was 3*d.* The fines went to a sick fund, of which every weaver who chose to subscribe 1*d.* per week had the benefit. These fines, as well as the earnings of the weavers, had been much misrepresented to Mr. Muggeridge, when sitting at the Town Hall, and receiving evidence in open

open court. In a case of sickness 4*s.* per week was allowed from this fund, and as much as 7*l.* had been paid out of the fund to one individual during the lengthened illness."

I inquired how many of the weavers subscribed the small sum of 1*d.* per week, in order to have the advantage of the sick fund. I found that out of 88 weavers employed in two rooms, each room containing 44 looms, there were only 15 subscribers to the fund.

114. There is no part of the whole world in which money, in the shape of wages, circulates to so large amount, in proportion to the population, as in Lancashire. And it is a striking evidence of the low state of education in that county (using the word education in its proper sense), that habits of saving exist among the Lancashire operatives to a less extent than among the ill-paid labourers of counties chiefly agricultural. Thus, in Devonshire, where a farm labourer receives but 9*s.* per week, the number of depositors in savings banks is, in proportion to its population, more than four times greater than in Lancashire.

Depositors of Sums not exceeding £.20 to November 20, 1837.

Devonshire.		Lancashire.	
Depositors.	Population, 1831.	Depositors.	Population, 1831.
20,410	494,478.	19,807	1,336,854.

Although the number of depositors in savings banks throughout the country is steadily, but slowly, on the increase, how much remains to be done in improving the habits of the people may be inferred from the following comparison between the total number of depositors, and the number of heads of families in the United Kingdom, making whatever allowance may be deemed necessary for the number really too poor and destitute to put by a single shilling from one month to another.

Heads of Families in the United Kingdom (from the Population Returns of 1831)	4,799,241
Total Number of Depositors in Savings Banks, excluding Societies and Charitable Institutions, November 20, 1837	624,560

115. Further, education would diminish the number of early improvident marriages. Nothing is now more common among the working classes, especially in Ireland, than for a young couple to marry when they are obliged even to borrow the money to pay the marriage fees. The state of misery in which they find themselves, in a few years, with a family of young children, whom they are unable to support, is but the consequence of their own imprudence. Ignorance and improvidence are companions, and the earliest marriages are among those who sign their names with their own mark. But for early and improvident marriages, population would not, as in Ireland, outstrip the growth of capital. Education would, undoubtedly, check the evil. A young couple acquiring, from reading or from observation, the idea of bettering their condition, would postpone their union till they had a certain prospect before them of success in the pursuit they intend to follow. A young man, accustomed to a certain degree of comfort in his father's home, will not (if he has been taught to think at all of the future) marry to sacrifice those comforts, by expenses he would be unable to meet. Hence marriages are always later among the middle classes than among the working classes, and latest of all, perhaps, among the most educated part of the community, those who follow the profession of the law. I believe, that among barristers a greater number of persons lead a single life, or marry late, than among any other class.

116. It is to education we must look for the cure of intemperance, the vice to which the working classes of the United Kingdom are the most addicted. Although I am satisfied that good would result from putting beer-shops and spirit houses under a stricter system of police surveillance than at present, I am of opinion that the habit of drinking to excess will never be put down by other than moral agency. Human nature requires and will seek after some kind of pleasurable excitement to relieve the monotony of a life of labour. The slave requires it and will have it, or he dies, and so escapes his task-master. We have not the power to withhold, if we desired it, every means of enjoyment, but we have the power to determine the form it shall assume. The question then is simply this, whether we shall enable the people to appreciate, and place within their reach, rational pleasures, or allow them, while in a low moral state, to choose

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choose for themselves their own sources of gratification, knowing that while in that state their standard of enjoyment will be governed by mere sensual or animal propensities.

In the case of the middle and higher classes, books and an improved tone of conversation have to a great extent superseded drinking. No gentleman now considers it his duty to intoxicate his guests to prove his hospitality, as was once the custom throughout England. Why should not education work a similar reform in the manners of the poor? A day-labourer who could be made to take pleasure in reading after work, to his family, of an evening, that admirably conducted periodical, "Chambers' Edinburgh Journal," would not be easily led to muddle his intellect with spirits in a public-house, or to spend all his earnings in a beer-shop. But, with reading, other means of innocent and pleasurable relaxation might be taught the people, if education were properly directed. In some of the states in Germany, intemperance, as a means of enjoyment, has almost entirely disappeared by the simple expedient of causing every peasant's son to be instructed in the practice of choral music.

117. In this country, intemperance is an evil of frightful magnitude. It is necessary to glance at its extent to show how little has yet been effected to raise the mass of the people from a state of mere animal existence. The following information was given me by J. Dunlop, Esq., respecting one class of hand-loom weavers.

"When a weaver, employed in raised or flowered work, changes his pattern, he requires the assistance of six or eight fellow workmen, to tie the harness. This, in order to save time, is often performed at night. A large allowance of whiskey is ready, and before commencing work, a glass is handed round to each. This dose is repeated at every 50 cords that are tied, and at the conclusion, wives, drawer-boys, and others, are admitted to what frequently turns out to be an absolute revel. Most of those engaged can work but little the next day, and the more dissipated make a three days' ramble of it."

118. Hand-loom weavers, as a class, are by no means more given to drinking than other trades. The vice is common to all trades, and to some more than others, only from peculiar circumstances connected with the mode of getting employment. It is extraordinary the number of drinking usages among the working classes to which custom has given the force of an irresistible law. It is to these usages, more than the temptation of liquor, that the sober and industrious are led, imperceptibly, to form habits of intemperance. Among the chief of these is the usage of exacting entry money, or *footing*, when a new journeyman enters a factory, or when a new apprentice is bound to a trade. The money thus raised is, with a few solitary exceptions, always spent in drink. The sum exacted from a cotton-spinner on getting his first wheels is 1*l.* 1*s.*; on changing from one room to another, a further sum is exacted by his shopmates of 10*s.* Power-loom dressers, on getting their first machine, pay a footing of 1*l.* Shipwrights' apprentices pay a footing of 2*l.* 2*s.*, and the penalty for non-payment is flogging with a hand-saw. Engineers' apprentices, a footing of 2*l.* 2*s.* Curriers' apprentices, a footing of from 10*s.* 6*d.* to 21*s.* Tailors' apprentices, 7*s.* 6*d.* to 20*s.* Joiners' and carpenters' apprentices, from 1*l.* to 30*s.* And besides these footings, fines are exacted from each other on all imaginable occasions that may furnish a fair pretext for raising drink-money. Thus, among the printers, the apprentice footing is 2*s.* 6*d.*; end of first year, 1*s.*; half time being out, 2*s.*; end of apprenticeship, 2*s.*; marriage, 2*s.* 6*d.*; child, 6*d.* to 1*s.*; obtaining a situation, 2*s.* 6*d.* to 10*s.*; introducing a friend to the office, 1*s.*; any piece of good luck, 1*s.*; going a journey, 1*s.*; when wife first comes to office, 6*d.*; speaking to a female in the street, 1*s.*; coming of age, 1*s.*; first time of a youth being shaved, 1*s.* Among sailors, coalheavers and others, publicans are the accustomed medium of obtaining employment, and it is well understood that those who drink the most are recommended to the first job.*

For

* Charles Saunders, a coalheaver, in his evidence before the Parliamentary Committee of 1834, says, "I go to a public-house and sit down, and if I have 2*d.* in my pocket of course I am obliged to spend it, with a view of getting a job, and, probably, by the time two or three hours have elapsed, there are 50 or 60 people coming on the same errand to the same person. The publican keeps us three or four hours there, and then he comes out and looks round amongst us; and as he knows those well who can drink the most, those are the people who obtain employment first."

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For a single individual to oppose himself to these customs is only to subject himself to serious annoyances, and sometimes to personal injury.* The drinking usages of trades can only be broken down by a strong combination of intelligent operatives determining to stand by each other, and education is wanting to give them the will and the moral courage necessary for the attempt.

119. The following data will give some idea of the money actually expended in fermented liquors. The calculation of the quantity of beer and spirits sold in the adulterated form in which they reach the public, is of course but an approximation to the truth. Proof gin is often reduced by water 75 per cent.; rum 20 per cent.; and publicans frequently manufacture three butts of beer out of two.

NET PRODUCE of the Custom and Excise Duties, relating to the Trade in FERMENTED LIQUORS, for the Year commencing January 5, 1836.

	ENGLAND.	SCOTLAND.	IRELAND.	
	£.	£.	£.	£.
Rum	1,437,718	47,197	11,238	
Brandy	1,353,762	39,535	20,287	
Geneva and other Spirits	39,724	7,339	1,921	
British Spirits	2,390,888	1,594,554	1,518,038	
Spirit Licenses	276,352	56,161	72,185	
£.	5,498,444	1,744,786	1,623,669	8,866,899
Malt	5,116,112	425,785	307,052	
Hops	402,290	—	—	
Beer Licenses	305,075	21,688	27,977	
£.	5,823,477	447,473	335,029	6,605,979
Wines	1,484,894	116,090	190,049	1,791,033
			£.	17,263,911

As whiskey is distilled from malt, part of the produce of the malt duty must be considered as belonging to the spirit trade. The duties received upon wine, beer and spirits amount to more than one-third of the total revenue of Great Britain and Ireland. The net public income of the United Kingdom was, for 1836, 48,702,653*l.*

120. ESTIMATED

* An extraordinary attempt, which was very nearly successful, was made at Manchester on the 4th of July 1837, to deprive a fellow-creature of life, under circumstances of savage atrocity seldom surpassed in the annals of crime. A man, named Joseph Armitage, having gone to visit a friend employed with other stone-masons in flagging Mr. Knox's factory, situate in what is called Little Ireland, from its being mostly inhabited by the lower order of Irish, was importuned by the workmen in question to pay his footing, as they had in the afternoon been drinking liquor supplied in that way by others. Armitage expostulated, said he had no money, and, besides, that he was not employed there. After some considerable altercation, they threatened his life, if he refused to comply. He again stated his inability, and urged their having no claim upon him; but they continued to insist on their demand. At length one of the ruffians proposed to hang him, and the suggestion was immediately acted upon. Two or three seized upon him, and endeavoured to place a rope round his neck; when, finding his life really in danger (for at first he thought them only in jest), he made a desperate effort to free himself, and succeeded in drawing a knife from his pocket to defend himself. A violent struggle ensued, when the rest of the party, consisting of eight or nine, closed upon him, and obtained possession of the knife, but not before he had received some severe wounds in the hands. They then dragged him to a post, to which they attached him by passing a rope about his neck and shoulders, and next, by taking his feet from the ground, and binding them up behind him, placed him in a most agonizing state of strangulation. In this miserable condition they kept him for about half an hour, they standing by to enjoy his agony, mocking and jeering at him; and they eventually left him to perish, or be rescued as he might. Fortunately for him and his cowardly assailants a family residing on the premises had partially witnessed the transaction; but whether they had kept aloof from fear or criminal indifference, remains yet to be proved. Be that as it may, one of them told some neighbours of the circumstance, and numbers speedily made their way to the spot. They found the poor fellow almost at the last extremity; and when released it was for some time doubtful whether he would survive or not.—*Isle of Man Guardian.*

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120. Estimated Quantity of Beer and Spirits * consumed in the United Kingdom during the Year 1836.

		£.	s.	d.
Spirits (chiefly Gin) distilled in England for Home-consumption:				
Duty paid on - - - - - - -	7,875,702 Gal.			
Reduced for retailing 50 per cent. - - -	11,813,553 at 8s.	4,725,421	4	–
Spirits (chiefly Whiskey) distilled in Scotland for Home-consumption:				
Duty paid on - - - - - - -	6,620,826			
Reduced for retailing 15 per cent. - -	7,613,950 14s.	5,329,765	–	–
Spirits (chiefly Whiskey) distilled in Ireland for Home-consumption:				
Duty paid on - - - - - - -	12,248,722			
Reduced for retailing 15 per cent. - - -	14,086,077 14s.	9,860,260	18	–
Rum: Duty paid on - - - - -	3,324,749			
Reduced for retailing 15 per cent. - - -	3,823,461 14s.	2,676,422	14	–
Brandy: Duty paid on - - - -	1,292,271			
Reduced for retailing 15 per cent. - -	1,486,111 30s.	2,229,166	10	–
Malt used by Brewers and Licensed Victuallers: †				
4,279,468 Quarters, producing of Ale and Beer, at 108 gallons to the quarter - - - - - -	462,182,544 Gal. 1s. 4d.	30,812,169	12	–
		55,633,205	18	–
Average expenditure in Beer and Spirits per family, on 5,000,000 families, 11 l. 2 s. 6¼ d.				
Wine (not included) - - - -	6,809,212 Gal. 20s.	6,809,212	–	–

† The quantity used by private families brewing beer for their own use may be considered about equal to the quantity used in beer brewed for exportation.

121. I am led here to speak of the efforts making by many philanthropic individuals to abate this great and growing evil by means of temperance societies. When

* It is a satisfaction, although but a poor one, to find that the consumption of beer and spirits is not increasing in a ratio greater than that of the increase of population. The contrary statements that have been made, have been founded in error. Previous to 1823, the heavy duty on all kinds of spirits held out the temptation of such enormous profits to the contraband trade, that the greater quantity consumed in the United Kingdom, in Ireland and Scotland especially, never paid duty, but was either smuggled into the country or obtained from illicit stills. Indeed, at that time, as it was supposed the Scotch Highlanders could not exist without whiskey, they were not placed under the Excise. In the Lowlands of Scotland a duty was claimed; but of course most of the whiskey drank was supplied by smuggling from the Highlands. In 1823 and 1825 the duties were reduced, and the privilege of the Highlanders abolished. The result was, as will be seen from the following statement, a great increase in the quantity of spirits paying duty; but not, as there is every reason to believe, an increase in the quantity actually consumed. In 1830, the impolitic measure of raising the duties (although but slightly) multiplied the number of private stills, and decreased the quantity paying duty. The duties were, therefore, again lowered in 1834, and are now as follows:—

		s.	d.
British spirits	Ireland	2	4
	Scotland	3	4
	England	7	6

Colonial spirits, 9s. Foreign spirits, 22s. 6d.

Quantities of Foreign, Colonial and British spirits on which consumption duties were paid:—

Year commencing 5 January 1821	England	- -	6,995,930	Imp. Gal.
	Scotland	- -	2,402,225	
	Ireland	- -	2,678,180	
			12,036,335	
Ditto - - -	1830 England	- -	12,502,639	
	Scotland	- -	6,184,404	
	Ireland	- -	9,032,946	
			27,719,989	
Ditto - - -	1833 England	- -	12,382,131	
	Scotland	- -	6,159,611	
	Ireland	- -	8,212,746	
			26,754,488	
Ditto - - -	1838 England.			
	Scotland.			
	Ireland.			

It

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When in Glasgow I was introduced to Mr. Dunlop, the founder of the system in Scotland of total abstinence from all fermented liquors, the members of which are known by the name of te-totallers.* I attended one of their evening meetings or *soirées*, at Glasgow, and partook, with about 200 persons of both sexes, of tea and coffee. I never saw so large an assembly of the working classes more neat and respectable in their appearance, and a meeting more orderly and well conducted. After a variety of speeches, detailing the progress of the society, and setting forth its advantages, the evening concluded with music: glees were sung, and some comic songs, ridiculing the vice of drunkenness, which were listened to with much pleasure by the audience. Music is, in fact, half the secret of the success which has attended the exertions of the friends of temperance; and I was gratified to find they had made this discovery. Converts may be easily gained to a new theory, but they are only to be secured by the substitution of innocent means of pleasurable relaxation for that which they are induced to abandon. Musical *soirées* are now given in different parts of Glasgow, on Saturday evenings, attended, as I was informed, by upwards of 1,500 persons, who are admitted at the cheap rate of twopence per head. In the course of the evening a lecture is frequently delivered; and thus a large number of persons, with a week's wages in their pockets, are kept away from public-houses, amused in a rational manner, and instructed at the same time. Although temperance societies will never succeed in weaning the whole population of the United Kingdom from the use of fermented liquors, they are unquestionably affecting a large amount of good. Strengthened by their influence, the sober part of many a "shop's meeting" have succeeded in inducing their shopmates to abandon the drinking usages connected with the trades to which I have alluded, and this is of itself a great step. The number of members enrolled in the total-abstinence societies of the United Kingdom, was, at the last anniversary, in 1838, stated to be upwards of half-a-million.

122. It is to education we must look to remove the evils growing out of combinations among the working classes, and the disposition to resort to physical force or violence to redress their real or imaginary grievances. First, however, our schools must be reformed; and the disciples of brute force must not be appointed schoolmasters. To the principle of combinations there can be no objection; for combination is nothing but union, and union may be for good objects as well as bad. Unfortunately, the objects proposed by trades' unions are often unattainable, and are attempted to be effected by the most objectionable means. In Ireland the means adopted with a view of keeping up the wages of skilled labour above the level of the English market, is one of the chief causes of its depressed state in that country. The trade of plain silk-weaving has entirely left Dublin, and the poplin trade will soon follow. The combination of ships' carpenters has succeeded in entirely depriving the city of all the ship-building trade it formerly enjoyed; not a single ship was on the stocks, notwithstanding the new patent slip, when I was last in Dublin. A gentleman of unimpeachable veracity assured me that, a few years back, he had seen with his own eyes two ships' carpenters knocked on the head and killed, in the open street, for working under price. In the hospital at Sligo I saw a man who showed me his wrist, laid bare to the bone with a sickle by a party of combinators, because he refused to leave his work at their bidding, to compel his master to give higher wages. It was melancholy to meet with instances of barges sunk in the canals, or set on fire, starch manufactories destroyed, riots occasioned by the exportation of potatoes, vitriol thrown upon the person; all indications of the same disposition to effect an object by violent means that could not be attained by any other. Brute force has ever been the only weapon of ignorance, and will so ever remain. An efficient police would prevent its breaking out in overt acts; but education alone will reach the root of the evil, which lies in the state of the mind.

123. In

It is an important subject for serious consideration, whether the tendency of all duties on spirits is not to give them an artificial value, which they would never otherwise have possessed, and so to increase demoralization, by causing them to be more eagerly sought after. It is deserving of notice, that in countries where spirits are almost as cheap as water they are comparatively little prized by the natives: and the great body of habitual drunkards are emigrants from the United Kingdom.

* So called from a stuttering speaker at Preston, who, in advocating the principle of total abstinence, pronounced the word total "te-te-total."

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123. In making these remarks upon Irish operatives, I would not deny the assertion, that there are not in some parts of England and Scotland classes in a more vicious and demoralized state than any that can be found in the sister kingdom; but, comparing the mass of the Irish population with that of Great Britain, there cannot be a doubt of the present state of moral inferiority of the former, and of the fact, that the emigration of the Irish to this country has a most deteriorating influence upon the character of the population of our large towns.

I differ with those who consider that this inferiority is to be traced to difference of race or to the influence of the Roman Catholic religion.

In the history of that country we may easily discover causes sufficient to account for the effect, without assuming that human nature is not everywhere the same, or without forgetting that our own ancestors were Roman Catholics, and that virtue, wisdom and piety yet existed in the land.

We want little more to explain the present state of Ireland than the simple fact, that the whole of the landed property of that country has been repeatedly confiscated, and that, in the same spirit which led the disciples of Christ to say, "Shall we not call down fire from heaven to destroy them?" we have been engaged in a war of extirpation with the whole Irish people on account of their religion.* Sixty years only have elapsed since no Irishman was allowed by law to inhabit or hold landed property, unless he abandoned the religion of his forefathers. A son could turn his father out of house and home, and take possession of his property by becoming a Protestant. Nothing further is required to explain the Agrarian outrages which still prevail, although diminishing in number and violence from day to day, and which were originally but a species of guerilla warfare, by which the peasantry were driven to defend their "tenant rights." The same cause explains much of the *simulated* poverty of Ireland; the rags worn, often not from destitution, but policy; the suspicion excited in the mind of an Irish peasant by the simplest inquiries; his attempts to deceive, until fully satisfied that the truth will not bring him into trouble. These are but the petty arts with which the weak in all ages have sought to protect themselves against the strong, when the strong have used their power, not to protect but to oppress.

124. The policy we are now pursuing towards that country is happily changed, but we still owe a heavy debt to Ireland, and the first part of our duty is to educate her people. By excluding, until a very late period, the Irish peasantry from all schools but those established to promote the Protestant religion, and prohibiting, under heavy penalties, the profession of a Roman Catholic schoolmaster, we have left one half, at least, of the Irish population in a state of semi-barbarism that is not exceeded, or perhaps equalled, in the whole of Europe. Having been told that there was no want of education in Ireland, I directed my attention very closely to the subject. I soon ascertained, from personal observations, that the Irish are not a reading people. In Inniskillen, the capital of the county of Fermanagh, and the seat of military head-quarters, I inquired in the solitary bookseller's shop of that town for any cheap periodical circulating among

* The history of Ireland, till the year 1768, is confined to the efforts made to extirpate the Catholic religion by penal laws, and to the petty struggles of the newly-formed Protestant aristocracy to assert a position of national independence with respect to their parliamentary connexion with Great Britain.

By a succession of Acts, passed during the reign of Geo. I. and II., Popish fathers were prohibited from being guardians to their own children, conforming, however young, to the Protestant religion. No Protestant could marry a Papist having an estate in Ireland. Papists could not purchase lands, nor hold them by lease for a term longer than 31 years; and if such lease produced a profit greater than one-third of the rate, the rate when it ceased was passed over to the Protestant who discovered such increased profits. Papists were excluded from residence in Galway and Limerick. Voters at elections were obliged to take the oaths of allegiance, abrogation and supremacy. No Papists could take an annuity for life. Papists, teaching either publicly or privately, were to be prosecuted as Popish regular convicts. Rewards of from 10*l.* to 50*l.* were offered for discovering Popish clergymen and schoolmasters. No Papists were to take more than two apprentices, except in the linen trade. Papists were prohibited from being on grand juries; Papists were to find Protestant substitutes for the militia, and to pay double; they were prohibited from being high or petty constables. Marriages between Protestants and Papists, or those celebrated by Popish priests, were annulled. Popish priests celebrating marriages between Protestants and Catholics were to be punished capitally. Such are the principal clauses of the Anti-Catholic penal code.—*From J. R. McCulloch's Statistical Account of the British Empire.*

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among the people, and found there was none whatever. Such publications as the "Penny Magazine," or "Chambers's Journal," were unknown. It was asserted, however, on my return, that they were great readers of newspapers. As newspapers are a certain test of an advanced state of civilization, I examined the Stamp Office returns to determine the fact. The following statement will show that the proportion of readers of newspapers is greater in England than in Ireland, in proportion to the population, by more than five to one. The politics of the papers are taken from lists compiled by the newspaper agents for the information of advertisers.

TABLE showing the NUMBER of NEWSPAPER STAMPS issued during the Five Months from the 1st July to the 30th November 1837, both inclusive, distinguishing their Political Opinions; also showing the NUMBER of STAMPS issued to Literary, Commercial, Religious and other Non-political Stamped Periodicals.

	Conservative.	Reform.	Non-Political Periodicals.
London - - - - -	4,513,075	7,056,093	722,915
Provincial - - - - -	2,096,460	3,815,795	287,350
Scotch - - - - - -	658,700	708,400	278,130
Welsh - - - - - -	56,600	100,300	5,200
Great Britain - - -	7,322,835	11,680,588	1,293,595
Irish - - - - - -	1,106,917	840,805	244,550
Total - - -	8,429,752	12,521,393	1,538,145

TOTAL NUMBER of NEWSPAPERS circulated in the United Kingdom during the above Five Months of 1837, and compared with the Population.

	Newspapers.	Population, 1831.	Proportion of Newspapers to the Population, omitting Fractional Parts.
England - -	18,491,688	- - 13,086,675	141 to every 100 persons.
Wales - - -	162,100	- - 803,000	20 „ „
Scotland - -	1,645,230	- - 2,365,930	69 „ „
Ireland - - -	2,192,272	- - 7,734,365	28 „ „
		Army and Navy 320,000	
Total - - -	22,491,290	- - 24,309,970	

125. The instruction of children of Irish Roman Catholic parents, here and in Ireland, appears to me so essential to the interests of the whole community, that I regard the exclusive principles laid down by the new Diocesan Societies, although advocated from the most conscientious motives, as a national calamity.

Education is most of all needed for the Irish population of our great towns, consisting entirely of Roman Catholics. In the three towns of Manchester, Liverpool and Glasgow, there are not less than 100,000 Roman Catholics, Irish or the descendants of Irish parents, of whom the majority are in the lowest and most demoralized condition. In England and Scotland the number of Roman Catholics amount at least to 1,500,000 persons; the greater part of whom are too poor to provide the means of education. I was assured, on good authority, that out of 40,000 Roman Catholics, chiefly Irish, in Glasgow and its vicinity, there were not more than three persons in a situation in life to ask a clergyman to dine with them at their own tables. It is here, then, where Government assistance for education is most needed, and needed not more for the sake of the Roman Catholic than for all who may be influenced by his example. The

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Protestant portion of the community can best afford to wait for a national provision for education, for they are, comparatively at least, wealthy and intelligent; poverty and ignorance are with the Roman Catholics, and it is with them education should commence, if we would begin at the beginning.

126. It would be much to the interest of protestantism that common schools, as far as mere secular instruction is concerned, should be provided for the children of both communions. To the Roman Catholic it would be a lesson of charity and good-will, which would soften his prejudices against the reformed religion, if it did not convince him of its superiority. If such schools should be impracticable, I have reason to believe the fault will not rest with the Roman Catholic clergy. With some exceptions, they are willing to meet our own clergy in the spirit of mutual concession. Their views are no longer those of the middle ages; and in many of their schools they allow the authorized version of the Bible to be used as a class-book. This is the case in four large Catholic schools in Glasgow, one of which I visited to verify the fact. It was a school in the "Gorbals," attended by 250 Roman Catholic children, and when I entered the room they were engaged in reading, not from Scripture extracts, but from the authorized version of the Bible, which they held in their hands. This was done with the permission of the Roman Catholic bishop, Dr. Murdo, who told me that the objection of the Roman Catholic clergy, generally, was not to the Bible, as a school-book, but to the schoolmaster (especially if a Protestant schoolmaster) being made to take the place of the divine as an interpreter of the Bible to children.*

127. The comparative failure of the Irish Board of Education in obtaining the support, equally, of both parties to a system of common instruction, may be traced to causes partly of a political nature which will ultimately cease to operate; but it was stated to me while in Ireland, by a clergyman of the Church of England, that the opposition to the board would have been much less violent, had it interfered less with religion in the preparation of Scripture extracts, and given to the clergy of both churches the entire direction of the religious instruction, permitting them to appoint *catechists*, in some cases, with a small salary, to visit daily or weekly, at stated times, every national school in which Protestants and Roman Catholic children were educated together. This plan was acted upon by the late Richard Lovell Edgeworth, and at Edgeworth Town he had a school attended by 200 Protestant and Roman Catholic children. Saturday was devoted to the duty of religious instruction, and on that day the priest attended in one room and the Protestant clergyman in another, and the schoolmaster resigned his office into their hands.

128. Upon the fitness of ministers of religion to direct the religious instruction of children, there cannot be two opinions; and, among the ministers of all denominations there is so much intelligence and Christian feeling, that if the subject were fairly left in their hands in every local district, they would soon come to an understanding as to the mode in which religion should be taught in a district school, making perhaps special arrangements for special differences in forms and creeds. To place the entire direction of religious instruction of children under the control of the clergy of the Established Church, however desirable, is as impracticable as it would be to place the religious instruction of children belonging to the Church of England under the control of Roman Catholics or Dissenters. Roman Catholics and Dissenters will not permit their children to go to schools refusing to tolerate their religious scruples; and, if the tables were turned, Church of England parents would act precisely in the same manner. We have the choice of three things:—To establish common schools for the children of all denominations, or, failing in that, separate schools for each denomination, by which the sectarian spirit would be perpetuated to our latest posterity; or to abandon altogether the principle of national education, which means education

* Those among them who take a different view of the subject support their opinion in the following manner:—"The Holy Bible—the book of books—instead of being abused to the purpose of teaching children to read at school, and thereby rendered ordinary and common-place, should be preserved for their reading and meditation when arrived at years of discretion. This book should be preserved as a sacred work; and, seeing that it abounds with all the various beauties of the Greek and Roman classics, it should be read, and considered, and understood as the first and best of standard classics."—*The Catholic Child's Monitor, or Sunday School Manual.*

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education for all classes, and leave the poorest and most ignorant class destitute of either moral, religious or intellectual culture.

129. In Scotland, although the great body of the people have the same religious creed, and almost the only ground of dissent is the question of separating church and state, the parochial schools, being placed under the exclusive direction of the established Church of Scotland, their utility is greatly impaired. The "Seceders" or "Voluntaries," now exceedingly numerous, regard the parochial schools with great jealousy. The parochial schoolmaster is generally a person aspiring to the ministry, and therefore attached to the establishment, and those who have seceded from it keep their children away, lest they should become its supporters.*

130. This question set at rest, there arises one of even greater moment,—how the schools established for the poorer classes are to be made efficient for objects really useful, and calculated to raise the condition of the population. At present there is but little education given to any class deserving of the name. After having visited a greater number of schools provided for the poorer classes than most persons who take an interest in education, I have been forced to the conclusion, not hastily formed nor adopted without consideration, that a very large proportion of these schools are rather doing harm than good: schools in which religion is not taught, or taught only as so much conventional formality, neither affecting the heart nor reaching the understanding; schools in which moral training is neglected altogether, or in which, instead of attempting to mould the disposition of a child, the master, by employing a severe and injudicious discipline, degrades a lad in his own eyes, sours his temper, crushes his affections, and renders him churlish, spiteful or sullen; schools in which the favouritism of monitors, and the caprices of incompetent masters, create habits of dissimulation and lying; schools in which, in regard to intellectual instruction, children are shut up, in order, as it would almost seem, that knowledge might be shut out; in which writing and arithmetic are often forbidden to girls, the geography, even of their own country, to boys, and none of the principles of any of the mechanical processes

* The following extract from the "Scotch Reformers' Gazette" will serve to illustrate the view entertained by a numerous party in Scotland of the system upon which the Scotch parochial schools is established. I am bound, however, to remark that these schools, with all their defects, are far superior to the charity schools of England. In Scotland a schoolmaster has always some knowledge of books, being usually a classical scholar; in England he is a broken-down tradesman, knowing nothing but the machinery of the Bell and Lancasterian systems:—

"By the existing law, the parochial schoolmasters are selected and appointed by the heritors and minister of the parish; but the presbyteries of the Established Church are the sole judges of their qualifications, and have unlimited power of rejecting them, even when thus appointed. The presbyteries, moreover, have power to prescribe the *mode of teaching, and the things to be taught* in all parochial schools; they have unlimited control over the whole conduct of the schoolmasters; they may censure them, suspend them, and remove them at their pleasure, and the Bill now introduced not only confirms all these powers, but declares their decisions to be '*final, without appeal to, or review, by any court, civil or ecclesiastical.*'

"The salaries being derived from the taxes, are contributed by dissenters as well as by churchmen, yet the schools are placed so thoroughly under the control of the established clergy as to put it in their power to render them inaccessible to dissenters.

"The clergy of the Established Church have grievously neglected the parochial schools of Scotland for more than a century past. Generally speaking, these schools are far inferior in efficiency to the private schools which have been established by persons beyond the church's control; and there is no valid reason for presuming that they will discharge their duty in this respect better hereafter. The pamphlet, entitled 'Scotland a Half-educated Nation, by the Editor of the *Scottish Guardian*,' is most instructive on this point.

"The parochial school system, we say, cannot possibly exist for any lengthened period, because it is inefficient, full of abuses, and unsuited to the spirit of the age. Its inefficiency is so notorious that we do not dwell on it: its abuses consist in the petty and annoying superintendence which the clergyman of each parish, wherever he interferes at all, exercises over the unhappy being who stands in the subordinate condition of his schoolmaster. The schoolmaster is his slave and bondsman; he must be obsequious and crouching; he must have no opinions in politics, religion or philosophy, which his minister does not approve of; and he must advance no faster in the path, even of improvement in teaching, than his superior pleases to permit. The schoolmaster may, it is true, appeal to the presbytery against the decrees of his own tyrant, but the presbytery is a congress of tyrants, each one of whom has his own schoolmaster to torment, and no more unsuitable court of appeal for the schoolmaster could have been devised by the wits of man, especially as the decisions of this congress are final, and subject to no review. This is no exaggerated picture. A man of talent, placed in the condition of a Scotch parochial schoolmaster, under the control of a clergyman of limited capacity and attainments, and of indifferent temper, is like a soul in purgatory. No language can be too strong to express his degradation and misery."

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processes taught by which they may have to get their living; schools from which all that has a tendency to refine the tastes or soften the manners of the rising generation are excluded altogether, and in which no attempt (beyond that of teaching sewing) is made to form habits of industrious application.

131. Education may be for good or it may be for evil, according to the nature of the education given, and the manner of imparting it. It is a great error that four walls are sufficient to constitute a school, and any broken-down tradesman or discarded servant a schoolmaster. Although in my visits to prisons I did not find that, upon an average, more than one-third of their inmates are able to read with sufficient fluency to derive enjoyment from reading, I was sometimes startled by the amount of schooling many professed to have received.

TABLE showing the Result of an Examination of One Hundred Men and Boys received into the GENERAL PENITENTIARY, MILLBANK, between the Months of January and October 1836.

MEN AND BOYS.

No.	Offence.	Age.	Education.
1	Theft - -	16	Sunday-school, 4 years.
2	Ditto - -	16	Some time in a charity school, of Lady Dacre's.
3	Ditto - -	16	Sunday and day-schools, 1 year.
4	Attempt to rape	61	Private schools.
5	Stealing tracts -	23	Day-school, Union-street, Southwark, 5 years.
6	Theft - -	22	5 years at Mr. M'Knight's school.
7	Ditto - -	18	1 year at a day-school at Dartford.
8	Burglary - -	20	3 years at a day-school in Brownlow-street.
9	Ditto - -	22	5 years at St. Ann's charity school.
10	Receiving stolen goods.	46	Day-school at Shrewsbury.
11	Forgery - -	52	5 years at a day-school near Holytown.
12	Stealing notes -	20	5 years at Grammar school at Bolton.
13	Theft - -	23	5 years at a day-school at Birmingham.
14	Assault - -	36	4 years at a boarding-school.
15	Assault, with intent to commit an unnatural offence.	51	Various schools.
16	Ditto - -	36	2 years in the College House School, Hackney-road.
17	Ditto - -	43	5 years at Kingston day-school.
18	Theft - -	13	Day-school, 1 year.
19	Burglary - -	19	2½ years at a charity-school at Newton.
20	Theft - -	16	Sunday-school, 1 year at Shrewsbury.
21	Sheep-stealing -	16	Sunday-school, 6 months.
22	Stealing 300*l.* -	15	Day-schools at Andover and Southampton.
23	Horse-stealing -	15	7 years at a day-school at Ashwick.
24	Ditto - -	18	No school.
25	Burglary - -	28	4 years at a day-school at Loughborough.
26	Horse-stealing -	18	2 years at a Sunday-school at Macclesfield.
27	Theft - -	20	5 years at Mr. Tubbs's day-school, Oxford.
28	Stealing a watch	15	2½ years at day-school near Edinburgh.
29	Stealing tills -	23	4 years at a charity-school.
30	Burglary - -	43	3 years at a charity-school at Ashby.
31	Ditto - -	42	7 years at day-school.
32	Assault with intent to commit an unnatural offence.	51	4 years at a day-school at Yeovil.
33	Ditto - -	46	Day-school and Sunday-school at Honiton.
34	Ditto - -	46	5 years at day-schools.
35	Ditto - -	38	5 years at boarding-schools.
36	Poaching - -	18	3 years at a day-school.
37	Assault, with intent to commit an unnatural offence.	20	7 years at a boarding-school at Wickham Market.
38	Theft - -	38	Self-taught to read.
39	Attempt to murder.	25	6 years at a day-school in Dundee.
40	Theft - -	45	7 years at a free grammar-school at Macclesfield.
41	Forgery - -	40	4 years in Christ-church Blue-coat school.
42	Burglary - -	19	6 years at a day-school at Devonport.
43	Forgery - -	21	5 years at a day-school at Taunton.
44	Burglary - -	35	6 years at a boarding-school at Athlone.
45	Theft - -	16	6 years in Aldgate Ward charity-school.
46	Ditto - -	13	3 years in charity schools and workhouses.
47	Ditto - -	13	4 years at a day-school in Long lane, Southwark.
48	Stabbing - -	39	3 years at a day-school at Dessington.
49	Sheep-stealing -	22	No school.
50	Receiving stolen goods.	24	3 years at St. Mary's charity-schools, and at Sunday-schools.
51	Theft - -	20	3 months at a charity-school. A parish apprentice.
52	Ditto - -	15	6 months at a day-school.
53	Burglary - -	19	No school.
54	Theft - -	48	6 months at a day-school.
55	Manslaughter -	28	4 years at a day-school at Norwich.
56	Burglary - -	48	2 years at a dame's school.
57	Ditto - -	20	2½ years at Rotherhithe charity-school.
58	Assault with fire arms.	61	7 years at a day-school at Urr.
59	Theft - -	15	3 years at day-school in Scotland.
60	Ditto - -	19	2 years at a Lancasterian-school, Northampton.
61	Ditto - -	27	8 years at day-schools at Whitchurch.
62	Receiving stolen goods.	37	6 years at a day-school in Essex.
63	Assault - -	29	No school.
64	Donkey-stealing	17	Ditto.
65	Theft - -	21	9 years at a day-school at Folsham.
66	Horse-stealing -	25	3 years at a day-school at Folsham.
67	Forgery - -	19	3 years at a boarding-school kept by the Rev. M. May, at Stanstead, in Essex.
68	Theft - -	17	No school. A parish apprentice.
69	Ditto -	17	1 year at Warwick day-school.
70	Ditto -	14	No school.

No.	Offence.	Age.	Education.
71	Theft - -	17	1½ years at a day-school at Perth.
72	Ditto - -	15	4 years at a day and boarding school at Westbury.
73	Ditto - -	15	4 years at different boarding-schools.
74	Horse-stealing -	16	3 years at a Sunday-school at Chedder.
75	Theft - -	14	7 years at the Tabernacle school in the Greenwich road.
76	Ditto - -	17	6 years at a national-school in White-street, Finsbury.
77	Ditto - -	16	Sunday-school for a few weeks.
78	Ditto - -	25	6 years at day and boarding schools at Wisboro'-green.
79	Ditto - -	21	3 years at day and Sunday schools at Lisson Grove.
80	Ditto -	18	2 years at charity-schools.
81	Ditto - -	30	Day-school at Brighton a short time.
82	Ditto - -	16	1 year at a day-school at Oxford, but learnt nothing.
83	Ditto - -	16	No school.
84	Ditto - -	14	2 years at day and Sunday schools in Wolverhampton.
85	Ditto - -	16	1½ year at dame and Sunday schools.
86	Publishing obscene libels.	29	Has received a liberal education.
87	Horse-stealing -	18	2 years at a day-school at Westley.
88	Theft - -	29	7 years at a day-school at Birmingham.
89	Ditto - -	22	Sunday-school a short time.
90	Assault with intent to commit an unnatural offence.	66	Some time at a day-school at Wissensett.
91	Ditto - -	17	1 year at a day-school at Chipping Norton.
92	Attempting to excite lechery by medicine.	44	3 years at day and boarding schools at Blackheath.
93	Theft - -	17	1 year at charity-school at Chigwell.
94	Ditto - -	10	No school.
95	Ditto - -	16	Ditto.
96	Ditto - -	22	2 years at a boarding-school in Southampton.
97	Ditto - -	18	7 years at different schools.
98	Horse-stealing -	20	5 years at a day-school at Margate.
99	Theft - -	12	4 years at a day-school in Stanhope-street.
100	Ditto - -	15	3 years at a Roman Catholic charity-school in Moorfields.

Although the above list includes a large proportion of prisoners of a superior class to those who are every year sent to the penal settlements, and although, as will be seen by this statement, most of them had been at some school, only 51 were able to read and write when admitted into the Penitentiary. Of these a very small number appear to have read any books besides the Bibles or tracts used at school. One only is described in the governor's book as having received "a liberal education." Besides the 51, however, able to read and write, there were 33 able to read a little; but as this little had in many cases been acquired in prisons through which they had passed previous to their being received into the Penitentiary, it is not to be considered evidence of the extent of their attainments when first committed. Nearly all the prisoners who could read were able to repeat the Church Catechism, the Creed, and Lord's Prayer when admitted; but in this case, also, their memories appear to have been refreshed by the chaplains or schoolmasters of other prisons.

132. Common day-schools, boarding-schools and charity-schools, appear all alike to need the benefit of better examples than have hitherto been held up to them for imitation; and in a letter which I felt it to be my duty to address to the Bishop of London on the subject, I urged, to the best of my ability, the importance of that example being set in the model-school of the National School Society.*

133. At

* My Lord, 12, Park-lane, June 8, 1838.

Having been present last week at the examination of the children belonging to the model school of the National Society, and having great opportunities of knowing what the real necessities of the poorer classes are, with respect to education, I take the liberty to address your Lordship on the subject.

It was impossible not to be struck with the interest evidently felt in the proceedings, and the benevolence of intention displayed by many persons present, but I was the most pleased with a paragraph in the report, admitting the system to be one susceptible of improvement, and announcing the formation of a committee to consider what improvements are required. It has led me to conclude that perhaps a few suggestions at the present moment would be useful, and I do not doubt that, in the friendly spirit in which they are offered, they will be received.

The first suggestion is, that a *model school* should be the very best possible of its kind. Mediocrity ought not to suffice, and, for this reason, the majority of schools will always be far behind in inefficiency the example held out to them for imitation. If it were possible to convey too much useful knowledge, or to employ methods of instruction too efficient in a model school, there is no fear that it would be done to the same extent in any other, for an approximation is all that is aimed at; but if the example of the model school be indifferent, the majority of schools will be absolutely bad.

My second suggestion is, that in the model and normal schools, suited for working population of this great commercial and manufacturing country, *every branch* of knowledge connected with the useful arts and manufactures should be taught, and well taught. Not that every branch of knowledge would be required for every school, but that teachers might be provided fit to engage in any branch of the business of instruction required by the especial or peculiar circumstances of a neighbourhood. For example, a knowledge of the use of the compass, and the mysteries of latitude and longitude, is not of much practical importance for an agricultural village in Hertfordshire; but in a school for the children of sailors, in a sea-port town, something of navigation should

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133. At the present moment the model and normal schools of the Glasgow Educational Society are unquestionably at the head of our educational institutions. The great merit of Mr. Wood's sessional school at Edinburgh, which I also visited, is chiefly confined to making the children thoroughly understand the meaning of words by tracing them to their roots, and to a critical comprehension of the Scriptures. In the Glasgow normal school, religious, moral, and intellectual instruction were combined upon a better plan than any I had before seen. It is, I believe, the first public institution in Great Britain which connected infant schools with schools for older children under the same roof; carried out efficiently the system of simultaneous teaching (by conversational lectures); and made the play-ground subservient to the business of moral instruction.

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should be taught, for in the merchant service common sailors frequently rise to the rank of captains, and ships are continually wrecked through the ignorance of those in command.

The great defect of the National School system appears to me, that its supporters regard the children too exclusively as destined for household servants, and hence a desire to limit the amount of knowledge communicated to that which is absolutely essential for such situations. They forget that even the nursery-maid and foot-boy do not remain in similar capacities all their lives;—that every boy and girl may become the head of a family of their own;—that there is no boy so poor but what he may rise at least to the rank of a shopkeeper, a rate-payer, and an elector. They forget also that a very large proportion of these children, if not a majority, will have to gain their living in mechanical employments, in many of which some knowledge of the elementary principles of various sciences is almost indispensable.

Now, what I remarked in the case of the model school of the National Society was, first, that beyond a knowledge of the Scriptures (which is very important), the instruction appeared wholly confined to reading, writing and arithmetic, and that the latter of these was very ill taught.

I do not see why a clever boy, who may have an opportunity of getting a clerk's place in a tradesman's counting-house, should not be carried beyond Practice in arithmetic, although I know some schools in which this is positively forbidden; but one great defect appears to me that the children are not exercised in mental arithmetic, or the art of making quick calculations in the head. A boy who cannot reckon up a simple addition sum without pen or pencil is of little use as an assistant in a shop, and in these kind of calculations the boys in the Borough-road school are very expert.

The next thing that I noticed was, that although various maps were hung round the walls of the room, they were never once referred to during the examination; and as the master told me, on one occasion, that little use was made of them, I was led to conclude that the study of geography is not encouraged.

Now, in my inquiries as a commissioner, embracing the present actual state, directly or indirectly, of nearly a million of the population, it was quite deplorable to see the multitude of persons there are starving upon the most miserably insufficient wages, without apparently having the slightest idea that by shifting their quarters, and turning their attention to other employments, they might benefit their condition.

The really wretched condition of vast portions of our population, utterly devoid of the energy to help themselves, renders me extremely anxious to see a spirit of enterprise and honourable ambition encouraged in the humbler class of schools; and to this end I would have every child taught that his own village, or his own parish, or his own neighbourhood, is not the whole world, and that the world is wide enough for all who will take the trouble to find out what channels of industry are the most productive, and where labour can be turned to the best account.

Geographical or statistical information, therefore, connected with our own country and our colonies, peculiarities of climate, manufacture, rate of wages, &c., appear to me of vital importance to the interests of the working classes. The intense ignorance of the peasantry upon all these matters is now the great obstacle to emigration, or even to their removal from one part of their own country to another.

With regard to the arts of design, we find the silk-weavers of Spitalfields complaining that they are beaten out of the field of competition by the superiority of French silks; not in quality, but in the beauty of the patterns: and in many mechanical trades the difficulty of finding a workman who can make a plan upon paper of the work he is to execute, or understand a plan given to him, is often attended with serious loss and inconvenience. This arises from the working classes among us never learning the use of the pencil, which is very commonly taught on the Continent. I am glad to find that, awakening to a sense of the importance of this branch of instruction, linear drawing is now taught in the model school of the British and Foreign School Society, and I trust it will not be long before it is introduced into our national schools.

Again, with respect to machinery. In this age of steam-engines and rail-roads there is scarcely an individual whose life may not be put in jeopardy by the extreme ignorance (and the carelessness consequent upon it) of some of the workmen employed in our large manufactories, or in our means of transit. But what are we doing in any one of our national schools to teach even the principles of the five mechanical powers, with a view of training up a class of skilled and intelligent mechanics, for whom the demand is constantly increasing? Absolutely nothing: and with regard to a steam-engine, I have never even heard of an allusion to one in a national school.

Further, as to the means of rooting out the gross superstitions and extraordinary delusions which prevail so universally among the common people. Look at the Kentish peasantry following the madman Courtney! Would it be possible to find a parallel example among the Indians of North America? Yet are we doing anything to raise them from such a state to that of an inquiring, observing population? Are we taking any pains, by teaching them the philosophy of common things, to give them useful and improving subjects of meditation or conversation? I looked in

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The Dublin model school of the Irish Board is following in the same path. It contained, at the time of my visit, 1,000 children, and 300 were waiting for admission when vacancies occurred. In one respect the Irish Board have made a forward movement in establishing, in connexion with the normal school, an agricultural school and model farm. All the teachers training in the normal school are required to spend some portion of their time at the model farm, to make themselves acquainted with the latest improvements in agriculture. Model schools of manufacturing industry, which are of more importance in Ireland than agricultural schools, in the present state of that country, were contemplated, but had not yet been formed. In England the only attempt upon a large scale to place education for the poor upon a footing of practical usefulness, is that made by the poor law commissioners in remodelling Mr. Aubin's school at Norwood for parish children. Through the indefatigable exertions of Dr. Kay, the assistant commissioner, and his great zeal in the cause, this school will, I anticipate, in a short time, far excel any other in the United Kingdom in carrying out every branch of instruction connected with industrial, moral, religious and intellectual training.

134. The subject is now in the hands of a Government Board of Education, by whom it will not be neglected. I shall leave it with one suggestion of practical importance—that in planning schools for large towns, or thickly-peopled districts, the same building might be so architecturally designed as to embrace the advantages of lyceums and mechanics' institutions. Mechanics' institutions for the working classes are never frequented in the day-time. During the day, therefore, the building might be used for children; in the evening the largest school-room, if properly built, might be a theatre for lectures, and the class-rooms might be made, as reading or conversation-rooms, to supersede the tap-room and parlour of a beer-shop and public-house, the only places in which the working classes can now assemble. In these class-rooms, also, evening instruction might be carried on, so that education need not be abruptly terminated at the age of 14, but be continued in all needful branches until proficiency was attained.

—No. 6.—

Administrative Improvements.

135. While I believe that a well-devised scheme of education for the working classes would be one of the most powerful levers for improving their condition, I am also of opinion that various alterations required in the administrative and judicial functions of government, if made, would tend almost as effectually to the same end; and that, without them, the object of education will ever be to a great extent frustrated. Without a law to render education obligatory on the part of the parents, schools will not be attended by the class for whom they are most needed—the most demoralized class; and, in the absence of such a law, perhaps the popular measure of a penny post, by enabling the poor to correspond with their friends at a distance, will do more to encourage education, by bringing home to them the practical advantages of reading and writing, than opening

vain at the national school at Westminster for some evidence that a glimpse had been afforded the children by means of lessons on objects, or of the simultaneous plan of teaching, of the wonders of the vegetable, animal and mineral kingdoms. Even a brief explanation of the revolution of the earth in its orbit, and of the planetary system, does not appear to be given.

I hail, however, the prospect of improvement with much pleasure. I trust it will not be a slight improvement. Why should not the National Society put itself at the head of our educational institutions? Why should it not become a burning and shining light? It is now far behind the example of the Glasgow normal school; why should it not be far before it? My Lord, upon you (from your well-known energy and influence in the Church) will depend, to a great extent, the answer of this question.

I am, with great respect,

Your Lordship's most obedient Servant,

To the Bishop of London. (signed) *W. E. Hickson.*

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opening a school in every village and leaving them without a motive to send their children to receive its benefits.

136. But among administrative reforms, few are more important to the people than those which are yet needed for the suppression of mendicancy, pauperism, and crime. The easiest transfer of labour which a man can make who is unable to command, by working at his trade, the comforts and a reasonable portion of the luxuries of life, is from industry to begging in the streets. The first feeling of shame overcome, the change is easy from an imploring tone to that of threatening importunity, and thence it is but a step to thieving by profession. I have had various opportunities of discovering that it is not so much distress as the facility of obtaining money which tempts the majority of thieves and beggars, by whom society is infested, from the paths of honesty. In Ireland the travelling mendicants obtain, in food and money, at least twice the amount of the earnings of the agricultural peasantry; and many a female beggar supports, by her calling, not only herself, but the family of the cottier by whom she is accommodated with a lodging. In England a street-beggar will obtain in a week as much as the highest sums earned by the best paid artisans. This is an evil which, if permitted to increase (and it is a growing evil), will in time sap the foundations of society.

To put it down, what is most required is an efficient police for the whole country, supported by magistrates who will not, from a false humanity or a love of popularity, hesitate to discharge their duty. That it can be put down has been shown even in Ireland, in the instance of several of the best-regulated towns; and at the present moment, although there is not in the metropolis a single workhouse the inmates of which are not fed every day with the best wheaten bread, with beef or mutton at least three times in the week, besides out-door relief given to a great extent, there is more mendicancy in any one parish in London than in the city of Londonderry.

137. Before, however, vagrancy can be wholly suppressed, an extensive reform in our prison discipline must be effected. I am alluding now to the distinction made between the common gaol and houses of correction. In the latter the silent system and the tread-mill are efficient punishments, of which no one wishes a second experience; but the common gaol is viewed without dread, and a more demoralizing school cannot be conceived. The common gaol is the prison of those who are unable to pay the fines imposed by the magistrates for their offences, and the prison of criminals who cannot procure bail and who wait their trial. The governor is not allowed to put either of these classes to hard labour, and they usually sit together in wards, a dozen or twenty of them together, over a cheerful fire in winter, talking of their exploits, or eating the provisions sent them by their friends. Those who are detained from inability to find securities, are commonly confined only from session to session (a period of about six weeks), when they are discharged by proclamation. I was informed by Lieutenant Tracy, Governor of the Tothill-fields prison, Westminster, that in this manner 130 are sometimes discharged at a time. The common gaol, instead of being shunned, is looked upon by a certain class as a place of good winter quarters; and many hundred vagrants and disorderly characters throw themselves designedly into prison rather than be passed home to their parishes. The remedy would be the separate system of confinement adopted in the general Penitentiary, and, for various offences, a more summary jurisdiction.

138. The popular opinion, that the slightest offences should be tried before a jury, and that summary jurisdiction should be rarely given to a stipendiary magistrate, is an error which, by being adopted in our judicial system, has led to very serious consequences. The impunity with which a thief practises his profession is occasioned chiefly by the reluctance of the public to prosecute. To attend a magistrate who has power only to commit for trial, then to attend with the same witnesses a grand jury, and afterwards a petty jury, before a conviction can be obtained, leads to so much personal annoyance, delay and loss of time, that, except in very serious cases, the delinquent is suffered to escape, perhaps in nine cases out of ten.

139. Another defect in the system which has fallen under my observation is, the manner of discharging a prisoner after his term of confinement has expired. A lad is turned out into the streets without money, without character, and without friends, except those by whom he was led to commit the crime for which he

was

was punished. No one will employ him direct from a prison, and he has therefore, in many cases, literally no alternative but to starve or steal. He goes back at once, from necessity, to his old haunts, joins his old companions, and in a few weeks is again in prison. In the Brixton house of correction I found one boy, about 15 years of age, who had been committed not less than nine times. This evil might be met by appointing to every prison an officer to act as an out-door superintendent, whose express business should be to seek out and provide temporary employment for discharged prisoners, until they could get into some permanent occupation, and to keep a record of their conduct until it was quite certain that they had betaken themselves to an honest course of life.

140. I should not now discharge my duty if I refrained from noticing the existing state of political discontent among the people, a fact which has been forced upon my attention at every step in this inquiry. Among the foremost remedies proposed by the hand-loom weavers for their depressed condition, is universal suffrage; not because they consider that giving every man a vote would in itself benefit his condition, but because they believe, very generally, that without it, as a means to an end, the grievances, real or imaginary, of which they complain, will never be redressed. This notion is now becoming so widely diffused and so deeply rooted in the minds of the working classes, that I much doubt whether any means could be adopted to restore the harmony which should exist between the governed and those who govern while it remains. The disposition now manifested on the part of the working classes to stand aloof from the middle classes, and to refuse to make common cause with them for any object in which both have a mutual interest, and not to allow themselves to be diverted from the one object of universal suffrage, is a symptom in the public mind not to be disregarded or treated lightly. The tide of public opinion may soon be too strong to be successfully resisted. For the first time the advocates of this doctrine have put forth their theory in a clear and defined form, instead of as an abstraction about which no two persons could agree; and in the People's Charter the working classes have a rallying-cry which has given, and will continue to give, to an unknown extent, energy and concentration to their efforts.

The Chartists consist of two parties—one intemperate and ignorant, the advocates of physical force, disowned by the other part of the body, and from whom little danger is to be apprehended, because they are making enemies of all the wealth and influence of the country; the other composed of men of moderate views, who would respect property and the rights of capital, and who are simply seeking to carry their object by agitation. Among the latter are not an inconsiderable number of the middle classes, some of them men of well-known talents and ability. And the Charter itself, which is a very methodical and carefully drawn-up production, is chiefly the work of a well-known reformer of superior intelligence and great influence among the people—one whose uprightness of character and consistency of conduct, during a long public life, deservedly entitle him to respect.

141. With these facts before me, it would be most unwise to treat the demand of the people for universal suffrage as an idle clamour, which, if left to itself, will soon die away. It will not die away; but, on the contrary, will continue to augment in force until, not the noisy speakers at public meetings, but the real leaders of the people, who exert a quieter influence in their closets, begin to doubt and distrust the opinions which they now confidently put forth, and to which they are daily making proselytes.

142. The People's Charter proceeds upon the assumption that there are in the United Kingdom 6,000,000 of adult males, who ought to be entitled to vote; and, to enable them to do so, it proposes to divide the country into 300 electoral districts, each district to contain 20,000 electors, to return but one man. The other principles embodied in the Charter are, vote by ballot and annual Parliaments. The rest is merely the machinery by which these principles are to be carried out.

143. It is worth while to devote a moment's consideration to the materials of which the majority of the constituency would consist, if, through some miracle or unforeseen convulsion, the People's Charter were suddenly to be realized.

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The following statement is from the population returns of 1831:—

Males above Twenty Years of Age.

Great Britain	Labourers employed in agriculture	887,167	
	Occupiers of land not employing labourers	168,815	
	Labourers employed in labour not agricultural	608,712	
	Male servants	78,669	
			1,743,363
Ireland	Labourers in agriculture	567,441	
	Occupiers of land not employing labourers	564,274	
	Labourers not agricultural	89,876	
	Male servants	54,142	
			1,275,733
			3,019,096

This statement shows, that under the People's Charter, the majority would be composed, not of journeymen engaged in manufactures, or skilled artisans—not, in fact, of those who are the most forward in the present movement—nor of shopkeepers and professional men,—but of the class the lowest in the scale of education and intelligence, of whom one-half at least are not able to read and write: Irish cottiers, small farmers, farm-servants, bricklayers' labourers, navigators, sailors, boatmen, footmen, and others of no higher rank in life.

144. The question is, whether a majority thus composed of unskilled labourers would, if left to itself, be competent to sit in judgment upon the qualifications of Parliamentary candidates, or certain to select the fittest men in the community to be Members of the House of Commons. No one believes this; but it is thought by many that even such a majority might be influenced to vote right by the educated class and the popularity of their most intelligent leaders. If, however, with universal suffrage, elections are, after all, to be determined, not by the cool judgment of the electors, but by the influence of one class over another, whatever be its nature, the simpler course would be to restrict the franchise to the class possessing such influence. It would be a mere delusion to give to one class a suffrage which, in point of fact, would be exercised by another, although in a most troublesome and inconvenient form. But would the educated class of the community have that influence over a majority of unskilled labourers which is supposed? Perhaps they would in the end, but whether this would be the case in the beginning is exceedingly doubtful; and one year of government in the hands of some politicians might do more mischief to the country than the ablest statesman could remedy in a century.

In the present frame of the public mind, we may be certain that one measure of a national convention would be the abolition of the workhouse test of destitution, and the adoption of a liberal system of out-door relief; another would probably be a tax upon machinery and capital employed in trade; a third, a plan for raising wages by legislative enactment, instead of leaving them to the natural laws of supply and demand; a fourth, a scheme for weakening the executive by depriving it of all control over the police force; a fifth, a tariff of universal high protecting duties, for the principles of free trade have as yet made but little progress among the working classes. The effect of such measures would be, to break up the whole frame-work of society. Capital would leave the country; commercial and manufacturing establishments would be closed; multitudes would be deprived of employment, and, by want and desperation, would commence a career of plunder and violence no government could put down but a military despotism like that established by Napoleon after the first French revolution.

145. The agitation of the People's Charter will do good, if it sets men's minds thinking upon a subject which ought to be much better understood than it is at present, before we have any fresh legislation upon it. I allude to the principle of *direct representation* as contra-distinguished from that of intermediate elections founded upon a representative basis. Universal suffrage will never be conceded by the middle and upper classes; but it is a question of immediate interest to what extent they may permit themselves to travel in that direction.

The points for inquiry are these; first, as in the choice of legislators there is minimum of electors to which it would not be safe to intrust the return of a representative,

representative, is there not also a maximum which it would be equally dangerous to exceed? Would a body of 10,000 electors, the majority of whom could have no personal knowledge of a candidate, be equally competent to sift his pretensions as a thousand to whom he might be familiarly known? Would 20,000 be as well able to form a right conclusion in the matter as 10,000? and, if the population were doubled or quadrupled, would neither 40,000 nor 80,000 in one electoral district be too large a number to determine the moral and intellectual fitness of a candidate? Does it not in fact appear, that when a certain maximum is exceeded, the success of a candidate must depend upon one of the most fallacious of all tests—his ability to make a popular harangue at a public meeting, or, failing in that, upon the organization of committees and canvassers, entailing an enormous expense? Again, do we not, whenever we exceed the maximum sufficient to prevent corrupt influence being used to any extent, diminish in the same proportion the importance of every individual vote, and thereby produce a practical indifference to the result, which, by preventing many from voting, would enable a minority to govern? The problem to be solved is this, not what contrivance will be the best for giving immediate effect to all the prejudices and impulses of the multitude, but what machinery can be devised for placing at the head of affairs, with the consent of the entire people, the most intelligent, honest and able men society possesses. This object has not been attained in America by giving to the people a direct control over the House of Representatives,* although even there universal suffrage in the strict sense of the term is not carried out. Are there any other means by which it could be accomplished?

146. Among organic reforms the most important that could be effected in this country appears to me one that should perfect a good system of local organization, for all purposes connected with local government. The Municipal Reform Amendment Bill and the Poor Law Amendment Bill were two important steps towards this object, but made more with a view of reforming existing abuses, than of supplying some simple, comprehensive, and uniform machinery for the general local business of a country, by which the people might be enabled to take a part in affairs in which they are most immediately concerned.

The distinction however which ought to be made between matters of local administration and the legislative duties of a central government is yet but imperfectly understood. Time is lost upon details, which ought to be confined to principles. For example, were the principles first settled by which the money should be raised and property purchased necessary for all local improvements, such as making sewers, building bridges, digging canals, or making roads, the question where a sewer is required, or a bridge, canal, or road is wanted, would be much better left in the hands of local representatives, by whom the subject would be understood, than referred, as now, to the Imperial Parliament. The reformed town-councils, and those newly established, have so little power placed in their hands for useful objects, that they are almost nugatory for good or evil, and the great part of the United Kingdom is still without any kind of local

* De Tocqueville observes, "On my arrival in the United States I was struck with surprise on discovering how common were intelligence and talent among the governed, and how rare among those by whom the government was conducted. It is an invariable fact at the present time in the United States, that the most remarkable men are seldom called to fill the office of public functionaries, and one is obliged to confess that it has been so in proportion as democracy has passed all its ancient limits. I admit, without difficulty, that the mass of citizens desire very sincerely the good of their country; I go even further, and say, that the lower classes of society seem to me to confound this desire less with questions of sectional and personal interests than the higher classes. But what they always fail in, more or less, is the art of applying the right means, however sincerely they may wish the end. What length of study and observation are necessary to enable one to form an exact idea of the character of a single individual?—It is an art in which men of the greatest genius have failed, and yet the multitude are to succeed! The people will never find the time and opportunity necessary for this work; they are obliged to form hasty judgments; frame their conclusions upon the points which first fixed their attention. Hence it is that all sorts of charlatans understand so well the secret of pleasing the people, while their best friends are often deceived."

An American writer of celebrity, Kent, observes, in the spirit of the same remarks,—

"It is probable, in fact, that the fittest men to fill public situations will always be men of reserved manners and severe principles, who will never succeed in carrying the majority at an election depending upon universal suffrage."

The suffrage, after all, is limited in America; blacks are generally excluded, and the usual qualification is citizenship, payment of taxes, and 6 or 12 months' residence.

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local government, deserving of the name, in which the people would have confidence.

147. Supposing the whole country were divided into districts of nearly equal extent, every district, including its towns and hamlets, might be placed under a provincial council, elected annually, like a board of guardians, from the people; and in fact a board of guardians might be merely a standing committee of the provincial council. To these provincial councils might be given (under the superintendence of the central government, reserving to itself the power of annulling their acts) not only the paving and lighting the streets, and watch and ward, but the following duties—that of superintending and directing generally all that relates to internal communication, and the traffic along the highways; all that relates to public health, including draining, sewers, and sanatory regulations; all that relates to public buildings, such as hospitals, churches, town-halls, and public assembly-rooms; all that relates to public amusements, as theatres, public gardens, and other places of exercise and recreation; all that relates to education, in the shape of schools, colleges, or mechanics' institutes; and (subject to the same control as at present) the relief of the poor, the suppression of mendicity, and the administration of public charities.

148. I am of opinion that it would be perfectly safe to give this large share of power to the people (meaning thereby all rate-payers), to be exercised by local representatives of their own appointment. The same class of persons who would not be competent judges of the fitness of a candidate to engage in the task of codifying the laws, or settling the affairs of Canada, or negotiating a treaty with Runjeet Sing, would be at no loss to discover the most capable man in their own district for local business; and, if they sometimes made a mistake for a twelve-month, the consequence being felt immediately in their own pockets, the error would soon be rectified, while, not affecting the country at large, it would not be of a very serious nature during the time it endured.

149. Now, supposing that for the United Kingdom there were 1,000 of these provincial councils, each board consisting of 50 members; they would form collectively a large body possessing among them a higher amount of intelligence, capacity for business, and tried character, than could possibly be found among the average of 10*l*., 20*l*., or 50*l*. householders; and the question might then arise, after some experience of the working of such a body, whether the end in view would not be most effectually attained by leaving the task of selecting the members of a central government to these local representatives of the people, instead of giving to the people a direct and immediate control over the supreme legislature of the country.

150. The plan suggested is not that of electoral colleges constituted for the sole object of returning a member, and dissolving when that duty is performed. Such a plan would be but a slight improvement upon the principle of a direct return, in fact, almost identical with it, and one which in the United States, as applied to the election of President, produces every five years a party conflict which arrays one half the nation against the other. In the above scheme, the primary object of the people, in choosing the members of provincial councils, would not have reference to a parliamentary election, but to the proper management of their own local interests; and, in choosing the fittest persons to attend to them, they would unconsciously select those most competent to test the qualifications of a parliamentary candidate.

The nearest parallel to such a system is that of the American senate, the members of which are elected by the local governments of the states; each state's government being in turn elected by the people. The result of this double election is like that of a double sifting of fine materials from coarse. The senate is composed of the first men in the country, while the House of Representatives, emanating directly from the people, is composed not of statesmen, but of mere popular leaders. The American constitution has found safety in its senate and its municipal institutions. With no better guidance than that of the superficial politicians of the House of Representatives, the vessel of the state would long ago have suffered shipwreck.

151. By means of some such plan of local and centralized organization, it appears to me that every individual in the community might be made to feel himself identified with the institutions of his country, and a part of the body politic; while the ambition of private individuals, or the desire of being honourably distinguished, might be turned to a good account, and receive a profitable direction.

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direction. The error, however, must be avoided which makes the American executive weak and powerless, through the independence of the states' governments. The central government should always retain the power of imposing a veto upon every act of a provincial council that would militate against the general interest.

152. In this general survey of the causes affecting the prosperity of the working classes perhaps enough has been said to show that, upon many subjects vitally affecting the condition of the people, the amount of information we possess is very imperfect, and that the materials for sound, general legislative enactments can scarcely be said to exist in a tangible form. The duty therefore of every government must continue to be, for many years, ample and extended inquiry; and the first step should be to gather from the experience of past commissions a knowledge of the means by which a great public inquiry can be most efficiently and economically conducted.

For the benefit of those who may follow in these labours, I shall conclude with two practical suggestions. One, that, to save time and the public money, it should be made the interest, in a pecuniary sense, of every inquiring agent, to avoid useless labour and unnecessary expense; and the other, that he should be cautioned against the serious mistake of trusting to open courts of inquiry as the best means of elucidating facts.

153. By an open court inquiry, I mean a public room or court-house, in which a commissioner sits between two magistrates or other influential persons on a bench, and with a clerk at a table, examining witnesses before a crowd of spectators, and recording their evidence with the formality of a court of justice.

The effect of such a mode of proceeding, when the parties to be examined are the working classes and manufacturers, is this, the witnesses brought forward by the workmen are persons prepared by a committee of the trade, and instructed what to say. Those who might contradict these witnesses, or reveal facts which it might be deemed expedient to conceal from the commissioner, are kept in the background, or stay away of their own accord. A quiet, industrious man, who has to provide for his own family, cannot afford to lose his time in watching the evidence of witnesses; and, if he could do so, he would not, for the sake of the public, expose himself to the serious annoyances or personal injury he might sustain by offending the leading men of his trade. Nor, after the tone has been once given in these open courts, will it be of much use for the commissioner to follow him to his house, for there also he will now be upon his guard; and in Glasgow, Dublin and other places, where intimidation and violence are often resorted to, his caution in committing himself is only a necessary measure of self-protection. Manufacturers and others are acted upon by similar motives: they suffer too much from combinations to risk offending their workmen, by volunteering, in open court, evidence which might militate against the case their workmen wished to get up. Hence they rarely attend, excepting when aspersions are made on their character, and mutual recrimination then ensues, by which the existing breach between employers and employed is widened instead of being healed up. Another result is, that every word thus taken being written down, the few important facts really brought out at these public examinations lie buried beneath a mountainous mass of immaterial testimony, or exaggerated mis-statements, which, not even the commissioner himself can be expected a second time to wade through.

154. I have seen no good arising out of these open courts of inquiry which might not have been more effectually attained by other means without the evils which they involve. The simple course which an inquiring agent should be instructed to pursue is to drop all formality in his investigations; provide himself with suitable introductions; enter into familiar and friendly conversation with all from whom any information can be gained, or who think they have information to communicate; visit the poor at their own houses at a time when they are most at leisure, or invite them to his own, and make notes only of the most essential facts necessary to be laid before the public.

—No. 7.—

APPENDIX.

Appendix.

Report of *W. E. Hickson*, Esq.

William Bresson, 2, Daniel-street, Orange-street, Spitalfields; Examined by Mr. *Hickson*, July 14, 1838.

I AM a velvet-weaver and loom-broker; have been all my life in the weaving trade; and am now 52 years of age. I am the great grandson of Raymond Bresson, one of the French protestants who took refuge in England after the revocation of the edict of Nantes, and established the silk trade in Spitalfields. I have now by me his bill of naturalization, which he was obliged to take out when he came to this country: it is dated 1710, and is decorated with the portrait of Queen Anne. From that time to the present our family have remained in the same place; we have never visited the land of our forefathers, but the French language is not quite extinct among us; I speak it imperfectly, but some have a much better knowledge of it than myself. By intermarriages, however, the distinctive character of the French weaver is now lost; but the number of French names in Spitalfields shows how large a portion of them are of French extraction. In consequence of their distress when they first came over, from the persecution they had endured, many of them were in part supported for a length of time at the expense of Government. The fund set apart for the purpose was called "La Munificence Royal." There are some who still receive pensions from this fund, but the pensions will expire with their lives, and no new cases are relieved.

What is the nature of your trade as a loom-broker?—I purchase looms, and let them out to weavers who cannot afford to buy one, or to those who want an extra loom, and who might afford to buy one, but who would not think it worth while, for the sake of an additional job which might not last, to purchase a new loom when one hired would answer the purpose. I charge from 3½*d.* to 4*d.* per week, and the value of the loom is about 20*s.* I should do very well, as I have about 200 looms out, if I could get my money; but the fact is, I lose half of it. I am obliged, of course, to take security, but the neighbourhood is so poor that security and all are often good for nothing. When, however, the trade prospers, I prosper; when it is depressed, I suffer. My cash-book is, therefore, a pretty good thermometer of the state of trade for the last 17 years; for trading always upon about the same capital, and being quite certain to let my looms when there is work to be had, the money I received each year will show whether the trade generally was in a good or bad state.

Here the witness put in the following extract from his cash-book, showing his receipts each year during the last 17 years:—

	£.	*s.*	*d.*		£.	*s.*	*d.*
1822 - - -	60	4	7½	1831 - - -	41	8	3
1823 - - -	52	4	7½	1832 - - -	35	15	9
1824 - - -	75	14	11	1833 - - -	49	14	4
1825 - - -	101	9	9	1834 - - -	44	4	–½
1826 - - -	42	8	5	1835 - - -	52	14	–
1827 - - -	78	9	11	1836 - - -	50	3	2½
1828 - - -	67	9	4	1837 - - -	26	6	1
1829 - - -	28	10	1	1838 (6 months only)	9	18	6
1830 - - -	29	3	1				

This statement proves that the trade has always been liable to great fluctuations.

The weaver would do pretty well if he could depend upon full employment throughout the year, one year with another, and especially upon the best fabrics; but the trade has always been uncertain and precarious. Every five or six years there comes a period of stagnation, which often lasts for two years before trade is brisk again. The last winter was one of the worst we have known. The weather was unusually severe; and the trade almost destroyed, owing to the panic which affected the American houses. The holders of silk could not sell at any price, and the manufacturers therefore completely stopped. I and my family were always able to get work, but thousands could not; and, owing to the inclemency of the season, they suffered much. At the present moment there are still many looms idle, though the greater part are employed.

Do you ever remember a similar period of stagnation in former times?—About 30 years ago, I remember the weavers in a similar state. This was when, through the Berlin decrees, we were unable to procure raw silk from Italy. Silk was then sold at 5*s.* per ounce; and the cost of the manufactured article was so great, in consequence, that only the richer classes could afford it, and the demand was greatly limited. This lasted till one of our silk-throwsters tried what could be done with the India silk, and, finding that it could be made to answer very well, we became independent of the supply from Italy.

What sum of money is a silk-weaver able to earn weekly at the loom?—It is difficult to speak with any accuracy upon this point. To determine the earnings of a weaver, it is necessary to ascertain what is his skill, and whether he is quick or slow at his work. Fancy fabrics and fine velvets require a great amount of skill; and there are some weavers (though not many), working upon these, who can make 100*l.* per annum, with one loom; but then there

there are a multitude of others, working upon plain goods, who do not make above 25*l.* in a year; and there are some poor creatures who do not make above 20*l.* This arises, not altogether from difference of price paid for different kinds of work, but from some being quicker workmen than others, and also more steady, perhaps at their work. I have a son, 18 years of age, who is remarkably quick; he will earn 25*s.* per week on plain satins, paid for at the rate of from 5*d.* to 7*d.* per yard, when it will commonly take two men, employed at two different looms, to earn this sum at the same kind of work. Again, I have known a man earn 30*s.* in a week upon satins at 8*d.* per yard; but this was a remarkable case.

Are there many families in Spitalfields unable to earn more than 20*l.* in the year at weaving?—When we speak of families, we must remember that in a family, when the trade is in a good state, there is invariably more than one loom employed. One man at a loom earns, perhaps, but 10*s.* in a week, but when able to employ the labour of his wife, children, or apprentices, perhaps three looms, and often four, are kept going, so that I cannot say. I know many families who, when in full work, earn, or might earn, 20*s.* per week. My son-in-law, for instance, lives with me in the house, and earns about 18*s.* This would be a poor sum for his family to live upon; but then his wife, my daughter, is very quick at the loom, and earns as much, or rather more, than he does himself. They have at present but one child. One of my neighbours, who has finer work than myself, and a large family, keeps six looms employed among them, and can earn with their assistance, 5*l.* per week; but, being a man of dissipated habits, he does not save money.

Are the earnings of weavers now less than they were formerly: during the war, for instance?—Certainly: though I must say I never expected the war prices to be kept up; and, as every thing else has fallen, the difference practically is not so great as some of my friends will have it. There never was a time in my recollection when some in the weaving trade would not earn very large sums, and others again next to nothing. The decline in wages has chiefly been in the article of fancy-figured fabrics; and this was occasioned by the invention of the Jacquard machine in France. Before the Jacquard machine was introduced in Spitalfields there were weavers among us able to earn (under peculiar circumstances) a guinea a day. The work, however, was not so steady as that of fine velvets; and a great deal of time was lost in waiting for fresh patterns, &c. Now, in fine velvets—that is to say, the velvets called Geneva velvets, Dutch velvets, and Dutch bastard velvets—there has been no decline of wages; the price paid per yard is about 6*s.*, and I have known some weavers quick at their work make six yards per week. The reason fine velvets have kept up is, that the work requires a degree of skill which not one weaver in a hundred attains. A common weaver, in cutting the thread next the cane wire, would cut right through the cane, and spoil the whole piece. Ladies' velvets, upon which I work, are not so well paid, and have fallen in price since the war; but they do not require so great a degree of care. Plain goods have fallen, most especially the article of gros-de-Naples, which used to be the staple commodity, or what familiarly we used to call the bread-and-cheese of Spitalfields. The price paid for weaving a yard of gros-de-Naples has fallen from 8*d.* to 5*d.* I account for this partly by the circumstance that gros-de-Naples has been to a certain extent superseded by other fabrics, what we term *struck-up-satin*, for instance. We now scarcely know what to call the staple of Spitalfields, there are so many varieties of fabrics. If the majority were employed upon gros-de-Naples, they would be very ill paid; but I do not think the majority are employed upon this fabric. It must be borne in mind that our earnings are not so great as they would at first appear, owing to various little expenses connected with the loom, and the loss of time arising from attending shop. It is necessary to make continued applications to the warehouse for shoot, &c., while the work is going on; and, when it is done, measuring and examining the work, where a great number of hands are employed, causes great delay. I attend shop for the whole of the five looms employed in my family, and lose in this way, going backwards and forwards, at least two whole days in every week.

Did you never contemplate bringing up your son and daughter to some other branch of industry?—Yes, on account of the fluctuations to which the trade has always been liable. This led me to take great pains with their education; and thinking a little musical talent might be turned to account, I had my son taught to play the violin when a child, and my daughter the piano. As they grew up, however, I never could discover any means of bettering their condition by getting them into other trades. In fact, although we are not so well off as we could wish, there are few trades in which a woman is able to earn as much as my daughter gets by working at the loom; though I must say it is a sort of slavery for a woman which I have never liked to see. And as to my son, I do not think, from what he sees of the condition of the journeymen shoemakers and tailors, that he would be disposed to change with them if he could. Carpenters get better paid; but then their trade appears to me more precarious than that of hand-loom weaving.

Do the weavers ever combine to raise their wages by means of a trades' union?—There is no trades' union among us at present, but there was formerly. At present the only unions that exist are the shop-meetings, and these are rather encouraged by the masters than otherwise, as they do not interfere with wages. They arise in this way:—the weavers, being poor, are obliged to apply for part of their money on account, before they bring the whole piece home. Sometimes it will happen that a weaver, having been paid for nearly the whole of his piece, sells it and runs away. To prevent being defrauded in this manner, the master now requires the joint security of the whole shop; and the men, therefore, subscribe 6*d.* or 1*s.* each, occasionally, to raise a fund for the purpose. In return, the shop-meetings usually require that the master shall not employ a man upon whose integrity they cannot depend;

Appendix.

Report of *W. E. Hickson*, Esq.

and make also various other regulations. A manufacturer is, however, generally content to trust his property, without security, in the hands of a weaver who does not draw on account, but waits for his money till his work is finished. I have no occasion to draw on account, and am not, therefore, required to subscribe to the fund.

In my father's time combinations existed to raise wages, and were then very formidable. Men were employed called *cutters*, who went about openly in large parties destroying, by cutting, the property of the master in the loom. When meeting at a public-house, they would station a sentinel at the door, armed with sword and pistol. These men were very determined and desperate in what they undertook. Many of them had been sailors; and the sentinel did not hesitate, in one instance, to shoot a soldier belonging to a serjeant's guard sent to apprehend the party. This ended in several of the cutters being taken up and executed, and in the Spitalfields Act being passed, which it was hoped would put an end to the differences which had existed between masters and men. When the Spitalfields Act was repealed, an attempt was made to revive the old system of cutting, in order to compel the masters to give the book-prices. I know one man who had work in the loom destroyed to the value of 30*l.* A great deal of property was destroyed, but the cutters went about it so secretly that they were never detected. The alarm was so great, that I purposely kept myself idle a month or six weeks, lest I should not be able to protect the work, and lest I should be supposed to be implicated in any injury it might suffer while in my hands.

This system was suddenly abandoned, and the *sealing* system adopted. A party went round, inserted a piece of paper in the warp of every loom, and sealed it. When a loom was sealed in this manner, it was understood to be at the peril of the weaver if he broke the seal to resume his work. The trade was put under a spell by this means, and whole families were reduced to starvation. At last the masters made a feint of giving way. They agreed to give the book-prices, with the understanding, at which many of us connived, that they should be reduced to their former level in a week or so. We celebrated this as a great victory, which most of us knew in our hearts to be a great delusion. The book-prices only lasted five weeks. Since then there was an attempt made to form a secret society, and I was asked to belong to it, but refused. I believe now there is no combination or trades' union among us. The shop meetings used to send deputies to a conference (which was a kind of trades' parliament), but have ceased to do so. The secretary was paid 35*s.* per week, and ran away with about 20*l.* of their money; and the number of persons unemployed have always defeated every attempt to get wages raised by such means. It was impossible to prevent wages falling, when so many persons were coming into the silk trade, whose labour had been superseded at cotton and linen weaving by the power-loom. There are many Irish weavers in Spitalfields, and although the wages of the weaver are higher in their own country, as I have understood, through their trades' unions, yet they come and work among us at a lower rate than they are willing to do at home, and thus injure both themselves and us.

What is the state of education among the weavers of Spitalfields?—We have never wanted for men of superior intellectual qualifications, who have had the advantages of education, when it was thought desirable to go up to Ministers, or give evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons; but, as a body, I cannot say that the Spitalfields weavers are an educated class. Perhaps the majority are not able to read and write; certainly this is the case with a very large portion of them. One of the best things the Government could do for us would be to establish schools in the district; there are now very few. Good evening schools I think very desirable. In the day-time the children are generally employed at home in winding quills, or in picking the work in the loom; but they might attend evening schools, if such were provided. I think, also, assistance might be given in establishing reading-rooms and mechanics' institutions among us, and the effect would be very beneficial. Books and newspapers are now almost inaccessible to a weaver; the new law, which accompanied the reduction of the stamp-duty on newspapers, put down the unstamped papers which were read in Spitalfields, without substituting stamped papers sufficiently cheap in their place; I think, therefore, there is now less reading than formerly. To buy a sixpenny paper, five or six persons usually subscribe together, and the news is stale before the last subscriber gets it. I belong to a mutual instruction society, connected with the chapel in Spicer-street, and we have a reading-room; but I know of no other instance of the kind. The weavers, as a body, do not appreciate the advantages of education for their children.

Is the moral state of the hand-loom weavers in your neighbourhood equal, or inferior, in your opinion, to that of other classes?—I do not think the moral state of the hand-loom weavers is lower than that of many other classes of journeymen, although it is not what could be wished. I would rather take the personal security of a weaver for the hire of a loom, than of a journeyman tailor or shoemaker; indeed, I have so often lost my money through trusting tailors and shoemakers, that I have come to the resolution never to take their security again. I cannot depend upon a journeyman tailor or shoemaker remaining long in the same place; and although he sometimes puts on a very smart appearance, yet, if you visit his home, it is astonishing how seldom you find him possessed of the most necessary articles of furniture, so that a broker would find nothing in his room to seize for rent. The weaving trade is, on the whole, more favourable to morality than many other trades, because the children are brought up at home under the eye of the parent. They have not, therefore, the same opportunities of intercourse with idle and dissolute companions, which printers have, for example, and all who work together in a common workshop; but the number of spirit-shops in Spitalfields

fields shows that we have nothing to boast of in this respect. There are three large spirit-houses, close together, at the corner of Church-street, which I have known supported out of the wages of the weaver for the last 20 years. Beer-shops are not so great an evil; I know some very respectably conducted; and it seems to me much better to encourage the sale of beer than that of gin. Distress among the weavers is always felt first among those given to intemperance and the most improvident. The steady, sober workman, upon whom the master can most rely, and with whom his property is the most secure, is always the last person out of work, even in bad times.

Have the weavers any means of rational amusement or pleasurable relaxation?—They used to be very much given to gardening, and were great tulip-fanciers; but one of our greatest grievances is, that most of the open spaces formerly let out in gardens are now built over, and there are no public walks or places for out-door exercises, as at the west-end of the town, where those who have private parks of their own have the benefit of the public parks. This is one reason why the weavers are generally such a short, stunted race; there are few athletic men among them. During the war there was a brigade raised among the weavers, most of whom were not above five feet two inches. A few open spaces, however, are still left, My house is in one, containing about three acres, all let out in strips of gardens, each only 90 feet by 20. They are at the present moment filled with flowers cultivated to great perfection. Spitalfields was once very famous for tulip-beds. A tradesman, named Bartlet, a butcher, had a bed of tulips valued at 2,000*l.*; and not long since I knew an operative weaver who was able by the proceeds of his tulip-bed to set up a beer shop, which could not have cost him less than 40*l.*

What is the sanatory state of the district?—We have suffered greatly from fever during the last winter; and this arises in a great measure from dirt and filth of some of the close neighbourhoods, inhabited chiefly by Irish weavers, and from the want of a proper drainage in other parts. There ought to be regulations for causing every house to be frequently lime-washed, and every court and alley to be cleansed of its accumulations of rotten vegetables and dirt: the sewers, also, ought to be better attended to. I know a gentleman who built 120 houses without either cess-pools or sewers: some time after they were added, but still there are hundreds without cess-pools or sewers. After a heavy rain, some of the streets are for a length of time impassable. It is impossible for a neighbourhood to be free from fever where so much noxious effluvia is generated as in Spitalfields.

What remedies appear to you desirable to be adopted for the relief of the Spitalfields weaver?—I cannot help thinking a repeal of the Corn Laws would be one of the most efficient, though I am aware this is not the opinion of many among us: they think wages would be reduced in proportion to the price of bread; but I cannot see that, for it appears to me that it would improve trade; and if it improve trade, wages would have a tendency to rise. It would also be a great blessing to a Spitalfields weaver if something could be done to supply him with coals at a cheap rate in the winter. During the severe frost of last winter the suffering was very great. Coals were only to be obtained at 20*d.* per bushel, and there were hundreds of families obliged to make one bushel last for the firing of a whole week. Had it not been for some charitable societies, by whom coals were distributed, many poor creatures must have perished, and perhaps many did, though the public might not be aware that the want of fuel accelerated their death. As to the Spitalfields Act, I do not expect to see it made again the law; but perhaps some law could be framed by which masters and men might be enabled to make regulations for their mutual benefit.

(signed) *William Bresson.*

N. B.—William Bresson, the above witness, lives in a small house containing but three very small rooms, and a fourth barely large enough to contain six looms, by which it is completely choked up. For this house, which could be built from the ground for 80*l.*, the two families occupying it pay the disproportionate rent of 16*l.*, and 2*l.* 5*s.* additional for the small strip of flower-garden in front. There is no cess-pool nor sewer to carry off the soil from the privy; and close to the house runs a stagnant ditch filled with abominable black filth, for which there is no drain, and the stench from which is often insupportable. The neighbourhood is, of course, seldom free from fever; and I was informed that a whole family were lying dead, through fever, in a street in the vicinity at the time of my visit.

COPY of REPORT by Mr. *Hickson*, on t
Condition of the HAND-LOOM WEAVERS.

(Presented to Parliament by Her Majesty's Command.)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed,*
11 *August* 1840.

[*Price* 10*d.*]

639.

Under 12 *oz.*

719

HAND-LOOM WEAVERS.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY W. CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET,
FOR HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

1841.

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COMMISSION.

COMMISSION (under the Great Seal) for INQUIRING into the CONDITION of the UNEMPLOYED HAND-LOOM WEAVERS in the *United Kingdom*.

VICTORIA, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith: To Our trusty and well-beloved *Nassau William Senior, Samuel Jones Loyd, William Edward Hickson,* and *John Leslie,* Esquires, Greeting: WHEREAS an Humble Address was presented unto Us by the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses, and Commissioners for Shires and Burghs, in the late Parliament assembled, humbly beseeching Us that We would be graciously pleased to issue a Commission of Inquiry into the condition of the Unemployed Hand-Loom Weavers, and to report whether any, and if so what measures could be devised for their relief: NOW KNOW YE, That We, reposing great trust and confidence in your ability and discretion, have nominated, constituted, and appointed, and by these presents do nominate, constitute, and appoint you the said *Nassau William Senior, Samuel Jones Loyd, William Edward Hickson,* and *John Leslie,* to be Our Commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the Unemployed Hand-Loom Weavers, in Our United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and for reporting whether any, and if so what measures can be devised for their relief. And We do hereby authorize and empower you, or any three of you, to appoint Five Assistant Commissioners, or any greater number, with the consent of the Lords Commissioners of Our Treasury, for carrying into effect the Objects of this Our Commission; And We do hereby enjoin you to obey all directions touching the premises, which shall from time to time be given to you or any one or more of you by One of Our Principal Secretaries of State. And for the better discovery of the truth in the premises, We do by these presents give and grant to you, or any one or more of you, full Power and Authority to call before you, or any one or more of you, such Persons as you shall judge necessary, by whom you may be the better informed of the truth in the premises, and to inquire of the premises, and every part thereof by all other lawful ways and means whatsoever: And We do hereby also give and grant unto you, or any one or more of you, full Power and Authority, when the same shall appear to be requisite, to administer an Oath or Oaths to any Person or Persons whatsoever, to be examined before you, or any one or more of you, touching or concerning the premisos: And Our further Will and Pleasure is, that you Our said Commissioners, or any Three of you, do, with as little delay as may be consistent with a due discharge of the duties hereby imposed upon you, certify to Us, under your Hands and Seals, or under the Hands and Seals of any Three of you, your several proceedings in the premises: And We further Will and Command, and by these presents Ordain, that this Our Commission shall continue in full force and virtue, and that you, Our said Commissioners, or any one or more of you, shall and may, from time to time, proceed in the execution thereof, and of every matter and thing therein contained, although the same be not continued from time to time by adjournment. And We hereby

command all and singular Our Justices of the Peace, Sheriffs, Mayors, Bailiffs, Constables, Officers, Ministers, and all other Our Loving Subjects whatsoever, as well within liberties as without, that they be assistant to you and each of you in the execution of these presents. And for your assistance in the due execution of this Commission, We have made choice of Our trusty and well-beloved *Joseph Fletcher,* Esquire, to be Secretary to this Our Commission, whose services We require you to use from time to time as occasion may require. In Witness whereof, We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent. Witness Ourself at Westminster, the Fourteenth day of September, in the First Year of Our Reign.

By Writ of Privy Seal.

EDMUNDS.

HAND-LOOM WEAVERS.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

WE, the Commissioners appointed by Your Majesty to inquire into the condition of the unemployed hand-loom weavers in the United Kingdom, and to report whether any, and, if so, what measures may be devised for their relief, humbly report to Your Majesty, in manner following, our proceedings in the execution of Your Majesty's Commission, and the opinions which they have led us to form.

Statement of Proceedings.

The Commission bears date the 14th day of September, 1837, but the absence from London of the Commissioners, during the recess, and difficulties in providing us with offices, prevented our meeting for the dispatch of business until the beginning of 1838.

Our first inquiries convinced us that, neither at that time, nor at the time when the commission was issued, were there many unemployed hand-loom weavers, and consequently that, if the terms of the Commission were strictly followed, the inquiry would be short and unproductive. But those inquiries also convinced us that, though the hand-loom weavers were generally employed, many individuals, and indeed many classes of them, were in a state of great privation and distress, arising immediately not from want of employment, but from insufficient wages and excessive toil. Under such circumstances, believing it to be Your Majesty's intention that the sufferings of this large and meritorious portion of Your Majesty's subjects, whatever be their proximate cause, should be investigated, and remedies, if any be practicable, be suggested, we requested, and obtained permission to consider the word "unemployed" as a qualification not intended to confine our inquiries.

Appointment of Assistant Commissioners.

As it would have been impracticable to summon witnesses from every part of the United Kingdom, or for the Commissioners to travel themselves over the whole of the weaving districts, we determined, almost at the beginning of our inquiry, to avail ourselves of the power granted to us of appointing Assistant Commissioners; but one of our own body, Mr. Hickson, with a view of connecting the results of their inquiries, undertook to visit the principal weaving districts, and having personally inquired into the state of the weavers of Bethnal Green and Spitalfields, proceeded afterwards to Manchester and several of the principal towns in the north of England, and then visited the south of Scotland and the provinces of Ulster, Connaught, and Leinster, in Ireland. In order to direct the attention of the Assistant Commissioners to the extent and nature of the inquiry, we addressed to them a letter of instructions. A copy of this document accompanies the present Report,* and we beg to refer to it as containing the best exposition which it is in the power of the Commission to afford, of the view which we entertained of the object of the inquiry, of its extent, and the varied difficulties which must attend it; of the mode of procedure by which we conceived that those difficulties might be most effectually met, and of the results which we hoped might be ultimately attained. The results of the inquiries of the Assistant Commissioners, and also those of the separate investigation made by Mr. Hickson, as set forth in their respective Reports, having been submitted to Your Majesty from time to time, and by Your Majesty's command presented to both houses of Parliament, are now before the public.

We feel that, from the nature of the subject, any attempt to present the purport of these Reports in a condensed and simplified form must fail. The varying features of the trade can be described by each inquirer only as he found them in his particular district, and they can be understood by others only through a careful perusal of their different Reports. Personal inspection of the condition of the hand-loom weaving classes is essential to a complete knowledge of that condition, and the best substitute for such inspection will be found in the Reports of those who describe what they witnessed themselves. On this account, we feel that it is impossible to render this Report in any respect

* P. 125.

Condition of Hand-loom Weavers.

a substitute for those of our Assistant Commissioners, or to hope for a just understanding of the subject on the part of those who do not seek it by a careful consideration of the statements contained in those documents.

We shall add, however, a few statements as to the condition of the different classes of hand-loom weavers, chiefly in order to render intelligible our subsequent views as to the causes and the palliatives of the distress to which many of them are subject. For this purpose it is necessary to arrange the whole body into classes, and we have felt considerable doubts as to the most convenient principle of classification. The most obvious classification is according to the material on which the weaver works; but on examination this would be found to be, for our purposes, almost an arbitrary division, since it does not appear that the material of the texture necessarily influences the condition of the weaver; and the same remark applies to a classification according to districts. On the whole we have thought it best to classify them according to the comparative degree of strength and skill required by their work. According to this principle they may be divided into four classes.

1. Where little strength or skill is required.
2. Where the principal requisite is moderate skill.
3. Where the principal requisite is strength.
4. Where both strength and skill are requisite, or an unusual degree of skill.

We do not mean to imply that these are the only elements which decide what shall be the comparative wages of different classes of workmen. But they are the elements which decide in the absence of disturbing causes; their influence is therefore constant, and though often interrupted, and frequently even overborne, it will in general ultimately prevail.

It may be necessary, however, to preface this general view by a short description of the process of weaving. The material out of which the web or finished fabric is to be formed consists of the warp or longitudinal threads (in woollen called the chain), and the weft (sometimes called the shute or the abb) which is to form the transverse threads. The insertion of the weft between the threads of the warp is the only part of the business strictly called weaving. But besides this operation there are others of some importance generally performed by the weaver, or at his expense. One is the fixing the warp on the beam of the loom and arranging and preparing it for the reception of the weft, another the winding the weft on the quill, a small movable pin which when full of weft is inserted in the shuttle, and replaced as soon as it has become exhausted. The latter operation, called winding or quilling, requires neither skill nor strength, and is performed by children, generally at an early age; the former where there is much variety of pattern requires skill, and the weaver is generally forced to do it himself, and sometimes even, when his own skill is inadequate, to get it done for him by a superior workman.

Originally, hand-loom weaving was in the British islands, as it continues to be in general on the continent of Europe, a domestic occupation. At first indeed the weaver was both capitalist and labourer, as the linen weaver is still in many parts of the north of Ireland. He and his family there cultivate the flax, heckle it, spin it into yarn, weave it, and sell the web in the linen market. This almost total absence of the division of labour is however confined to the material and the district that we have mentioned. In every other branch of weaving, even in Ireland and in every branch in Great Britain, with the unimportant exception of a small class of weavers called customer weavers in the north of England and in Scotland, the material is supplied by the capitalist or manufacturer (generally called the putter out of work) to the weaver, and he is paid on returning a given quantity of finished cloth. In most cases the loom belongs to the weaver or is hired by him. If he has not a loom, he must work either at a loom belonging to some other weaver, or at one belonging to a manufacturer. In the former case he is called a journeyman, and the weaver at whose loom he works a master weaver: the journeyman has no immediate connexion with the manufacturer, and receives from his own immediate employer, the master weaver, a fixed portion, generally two-thirds, of the price which the former receives from the manufacturer. The weaver who works on the looms belonging to a manufacturer is called a factory weaver, or shop weaver, a designation arising from the circumstance that the manufacturers' looms are placed in his manufactory, or as it is usually called, his shop. Neither the factory weavers, nor the journeymen, form large portions of the weaving population. The bulk of the hand-loom weavers own or hire their own looms, keep them in their own cottages, and perform themselves, assisted by their wives and children, both the weaving and the operations which are subsidiary to it.

We must preface our description of the condition of the hand-loom weavers by

the following qualification. Our statements are copied from the reports of our Assistant Commissioners: the Assistant Commissioners derived their information principally from the weavers; and the weavers, exaggerating as almost all persons do, the power of the State to afford to every distress direct and immediate relief, were anxious to attract the interference of Government by making the picture as melancholy as possible. We cannot but suspect that extreme cases were often described to the Assistant Commissioners as the usual state of things, the wages actually obtained by old or infirm, or slow or unskilful workmen as representing the ordinary rate, and in short exceptions presented for rules. And we attach the more weight to this remark from having observed that Mr. Hickson, the object of whose inquiries was less notorious than that of those of the Assistant Commissioners, reports in general a higher rate of earnings than will be found in the statements to which we refer.

In proportion to the width of a fabric must be the size of the loom, and therefore the strength of the workman; in proportion to its fineness, and the intricacy of its pattern, must in general be his skill. The weavers, therefore, who are employed on narrow, plain, and coarse fabrics, whatever be the material, being engaged on work requiring little strength or skill will in general be found the worst paid classes. We will endeavour to give, from the Reports in our Appendix, some general views of their condition. The following are extracts from the report of Mr. Muggeridge, to whom Lancashire, Westmoreland, Cumberland, and a portion of the West Riding of Yorkshire were assigned:—

WIGAN.

Lowest paid Weavers—North of England.
Mr. Muggeridge.

No. of Persons in each Family.	No. of Persons employed in each Family.	Total Income of each Family.	Designation of Work. (All Cotton.)
		£. s. d.	
6	2	0 7 6	Check.
6	2	0 7 6	Ditto.
5	2	0 7 6	Ditto.
7	3	0 9 4	Diaper.
5	2	0 8 0	Check.
6	2	0 9 0	Gingham.
6	2	0 8 0	Plain.
6	3	0 12 0	Check.
7	4	0 18 0	Ditto.
10	5	1 0 0	Ditto.
2	2	0 5 6	Check.
1	1	0 6 0	Gingham.
1	1	0 5 6	Check.
3	2	0 6 0	Plain.
7	6	1 7 10	Check.
2	2	0 7 0	Twill.
8	4	0 18 6	Check.
5	2	0 9 0	Plain.
5	2	0 9 0	Twill.
7	3	0 6 6	Strip.
5	1	0 4 4	Ditto.
2	2	0 6 0	Ditto.
1	1	0 6 0	Check.
1	1	0 6 0	Ditto.
4	4	0 16 0	Ditto.
4	3	0 8 6	Ditto.
2	2	0 6 6	Ditto.
9	6	1 4 0	Check.
1	1	0 6 0	Gingham.
8	5	1 2 0	Check.
7	5	0 18 0	Ditto.
13	6	2 0 0	Check.
3	3	0 10 0	Twill.
1	1	0 3 0	Plain.
4	2	0 11 0	Diaper.
5	1	0 3 9	Check.
4	1	0 6 0	Check.
5	2	0 8 0	Twill.
10	4	0 17 0	Check.
4	2	0 8 0	Twill.
5	2	0 8 0	Plain.
4	2	0 5 0	Ditto.

Lowest paid Weavers—North of England.

BLACKBURN.

No. of Persons in each Family.	No. of Persons employed in each Family.	Total Income of each Family weekly.	Designation of Work. (Cotton.)
		s. *d.*	
6	2	8 0	Plain.
9	6	19 3	Ditto.
5	2	8 0	Ditto.
7	3	11 0	Ditto.
5	3	10 0	Ditto.
6	2	9 0	Ditto.
6	3	9 2	Ditto.
4	2	7 0	Ditto.
6	3	9 10½	Ditto.
8	4	11 8	Ditto.
5	2	8 6	Ditto.
5	2	10 0	Ditto.
2	2	6 0	Ditto.
7	2	10 0	Fancy.
3	2	7 0	Ditto.
5	2	8 5	Plain.
4	2	7 6	Ditto.
5	1	6 0	Ditto.
1	1	5 0	Ditto.
5	2	8 0	Ditto.
5	2	11 0	Ditto.
6	2	9 6	Ditto.
6	3	14 0	Ditto.
4	2	8 0	Ditto.
9	3	14 6	Ditto.
9	4	13 0	Ditto.
8	2	8 6	Ditto.
6	2	9 5	Ditto.

PRESTON.

No. of Family.	No. at Work.	Earnings.
		s. *d.*
2	1	6 9
5	2	9 10
3	1	7 0
7	2	12 0
1	1	6 9
5	1	5 4
5	1	6 0
6	1	6 6
5	1	5 6

"Ashton-under-Lyne district:—

"Heads of families visited	483
Number of persons employed	813
Number of looms idle	213
Number of persons dependent on the earnings of those employed	1,955
Clear total average weekly income	£119 3 3
Average per family per week	0 4 11¼

"The Mirfield, near Huddersfield, average was 402 weavers, clear 5*s.* 6¼*d.* per week, for twelve months. The total number the 402 had to maintain was 1,655, giving 2¼*d.* per day each individual."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Muggeridge, Vol. II., p.* 582—4.

The following are extracts from Mr. Symons's Report from the south of Scotland:—

Mr. Symons.

"The following table indicates the number of separate trades or fabrics of hand-loom weaving in my district, the locality of each fabric, the looms employed in each, as nearly as they can be estimated, and the average rate of net wages earned in each department, and divided into two classes; the first being the average net amount earned by adult skilled artisans on the finer qualities of the fabric; the second being the average net amount earned by the less skilled and younger artisans on the coarser qualities of the fabric.

Lowest paid Weavers—South of Scotland.

Fabrics.	District where woven.	Date of Introduction.	Residence of Chief Manufacturers.	Number of Looms.	Clear Weekly Wages.	
					1st Class.	2d Class.
					s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*
Pullicates, Ginghams, Stripes, Checks, &c.	Lanarkshire, especially in Airdrie, Lanark and Glasgow; also at Girvan, and on the west coast.	1786	Glasgow .	18,420	7 0	4 6
Shawls, Zebras, &c.	Renfrewshire, Paisley, Glasgow, &c.	1802 to 1806	Paisley, Glasgow, and Edinburgh.	7,750	10 6	6 0
Plain Muslins .	Lanarkshire, Glasgow, Irvine, Hamilton, Eaglesham, &c.	1784	Glasgow .	10,080	7 6	4 6
Fancy Muslins . Silk Gauzes, &c.	Renfrewshire and Lanarkshire.	Silk Gauze in 1760	Paisley and Glasgow.	7,860	9 6	6 0
Thibets and Tartans.	Thibets in Lanarkshire; a few Tartans. Dalmellington, Stracton, Sanquhar and Hawick.	Thibets, 1824	Glasgow and Hawick.	2,980	7 0	5 6
Carlisle Ginghams	Dumfriesshire . .	..	Carlisle .	1,575	7 6	4 6
Woollens . .	South-east of Scotland, Galashiels, Hawick, Jedburgh, &c.	..	Galashiels, Hawick, Jedburgh.	950	16 6	11 0
Carpets . . .	Kirkmarnock, Glasgow and Laswade.	..	Kilmarnock, Glasgow, Laswade.	865	18 0	11 0
Sail-cloths, coarse Linens and Hair-cloth.	Port Glasgow, Leith, and Musselburgh.	..	Port Glasgow, Leith, &c.	580	13 0	10 0
			Total . .	51,060		

"The wages of the woollen weavers in Galashiels, Hawick, &c., are, it will be perceived, above 100 per cent. higher than those of the cotton weavers.

"The weavers in factories average nearly double what the weavers make on the same cotton fabrics when woven at home. In Messrs. Johnston and Galbraith's hand-loom factory in Glasgow, the wages of the gingham weavers will run from 9*s.* to 11*s.* net per week; in the checked department from 7*s.* to 11*s.*

"The number of these factory weavers is not large enough to affect the general average.

"It will be seen by this table that more than half the whole number of weavers are employed on the lowest paid fabrics. In the next place, the 'families' being to the looms as five is to nine, and the total number of looms being 51,060, there will be about 28,366 families, and (at the rate of four to each, as ascertained in Paisley) 113,464 individuals. As the 28,366 'families' indicate all the adult male weavers, it follows that 22,694 looms are worked by women and youths.

"Coupling these facts (which are borne out by my investigations) with the great number of old men who come into the class of heads of families, and are unable to work hard, I am decidedly of opinion that not less than two-thirds of the whole number of weavers belong to the second class of wages in the above table; whilst no less than 30,075 out of the 51,060 looms are employed on the worst paid work.

"The families of hand-loom weavers are variously occupied; but by far the most ordinary employment is that of weaving, winding the pirns, or embroidering muslins. The average amount earned by winding will not exceed 2*s.* 6*d.* per week; and this is usually done by the wife of the weaver, who can more easily blend it with her domestic labours than any other work.

"The sons usually weave, and earn the second class of wages, as also the daughters, where there are no factories, in which those who get admitted earn all rates of wages from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 10*s.* 6*d.* per week.

"The following examples will serve as fair specimens of the 'collective earnings' of weavers' families:—

"No. 1.

	Net Weekly Wages. £. *s.* *d.*
"A man, his wife, and four children:—	
"Father, weaving a 15⁰⁰ shawl, together with second son, twelve years old, drawing for him	0 12 6
First son, fourteen years old, weaving a 14⁰⁰ pullicate . . .	0 3 10
Third son, nine years old, at school	..
Daughter, seventeen years old, embroidering	0 4 6
Wife, winding pirns	0 2 2
"Total per week	£1 0 3

"Or 3*s.* 10*d.* per person.

Lowest paid Weavers—South of Scotland.

"No. 2.

"Man, wife, and five children:—	Net Wages. £.	s.	d.
"Father, weaving a 17⁰⁰ book muslin	0	7	6
First son, eleven years old, weaving a 12⁰⁰ check	0	3	4
Daughter in factory	0	3	6
Three children, young		..	
Wife, time partially occupied with children, winding	0	1	10
"Total per week	£0	16	2

"Or 2*s.* 3$\frac{5}{7}$*d.* per person.

"No. 3.

"Man, wife, and two children:—	Net Wages. £.	s.	d.
"Man, weaving a 15⁰⁰ gingham	0	5	11
Wife, winding	0	2	0
Two young children		..	
"Total per week	£0	7	11

"Or 1*s.* 11$\frac{3}{4}$*d.* per person.

"No. 4.

"Man, wife, and five children:—	Net Wages. £.	s.	d.
"Father, weaving muslin	0	5	0
Eldest daughter (sick) winding	0	1	0
Four young children		..	
Wife, winding	0	1	2
"Total per week	£0	7	2

"Or 1*s.* $\frac{2}{7}$*d.* per person.

"The first and fourth are extreme cases; in the latter, the woman was evidently dying a slow death from want of food; but Nos. 2 and 3 represent the wages and distribution of labour in the great bulk of the Scottish weavers' families.

"The number of hours usually actually occupied in work by the domestic weavers in the cotton districts will average 70 hours per week, exclusive of meal-time; usually 12 or 13 hours on five days of the week, and from five to ten on the Saturday. Monday is often an idle day, owing to the new webs, which are usually loomed then, an operation in which the weavers assist each other; but all idle time must be made up to realize an average wage. The time the weavers are at work is little more than half occupied in throwing the shuttle; the time spent in attending the warehouse, in beaming the warps of the new webs, and drawing or passing them through the heddles and reed, also in constantly dressing them with the paste used for the purpose, and which must be continally put on to keep the warp moist; all these, and other minutia, which cannot be correctly termed weaving, occupy a considerable portion of the 70 hours.

"This fact is proved by the higher wages earned in hand-loom factories above alluded to, although the rate of payment is lower. In the factory of the Messrs. Johnston and Galbraith the weavers are paid for a 15⁰⁰ $^4/_4$ gingham, 32 inches wide, 2*d.* per ell. For the same fabric, the domestic weavers will receive 2$\frac{1}{4}$*d.* and 2$\frac{3}{8}$*d.*, yet the net average amount earned by the former will be at least 9*s.* per week, and by the latter 6*s.* at the very utmost, both working the same length of time. The differences result from three distinct causes; first, the factory weaver finds the web ready to his hand, and both beamed and dressed for him by machinery; he has therefore nothing to do but throw the shuttle as fast and uninterruptedly as he pleases. Secondly, a superior quality of warp yarn is usually used in factories, which breaks far less frequently, and nearly removes another and continual hindrance to the domestic weaver. Thirdly, the factory weaver being further from his home, has far fewer temptations to leave his work, even for a few minutes.

"The wages of the country weavers are five per cent. less than those of the Glasgow weavers. This reduction is made on the pretext of the extra expense of agency to the manufacturer; though in some cases the weavers pay the agency, and receive the reduced rate besides.

"The same, or nearly the same, amount of wages appears to be made by the Scottish as by the Irish weavers."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Symons, Vol. I., p.* 6—9.

"The homes of the cotton weavers (which I was during my whole inquiry constantly visiting) but too well attest the reality of their generally depressed condition; their food is usually of a coarse description, and often deficient in quantity.

"The furniture in most of their dwellings is scanty and miserable; their beds are often of straw, and seldom among the poorer class are they provided with clothing by day or covering at night so good as the common day-labourers, either in Scotland or in England; sometimes I found articles of massive and even handsome furniture, the relics of former and happier days, still treasured up with a pride which poverty cannot subjugate, and contrasting painfully with the pauper meal and care-worn features of the impoverished owner; in fact, to me it appears

that the hardship of their case, as regards, at least, the elder class of the weavers, consists less in the actual scantiness of their means, than in the bitterness of the contrast between past and present times: the income which formerly raised them as high, if not higher in social rank, than any other class of Scottish artisans, is gone from them; but the intelligence and education which then enhanced their prosperity, remains now to embitter their poverty: the case is far less painful of the younger generation, who have been for the most part accustomed to but little more means than they possess; and whose tone of mind and scale of education render the evils of a low physical condition less grievous and galling.—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Symons, Vol. I., p.* 18—20.

Lowest paid Weavers—South of Scotland.

The following are extracts from Mr. Fletcher's statement of the condition of the single hand ribbon weavers in the villages near Coventry, whose earnings he estimates at 5*s.* a-week.

Lowest paid Weavers—Neighbourhood of Coventry.

Mr. Fletcher.

"In the neighbourhoods of Nuneaton, Bulkington, and Foleshill, the usual condition of a number of journeyhand families is that of the greatest dirt and misery, sometimes with no bedsteads, but beds of wrappers, stuffed with straw, and without any linen to them. Sometimes the bed consists merely of chaff held together with bricks, and covered with a wrapper. Their food in these instances consists chiefly of bread and butter, pototoes, and a little tea, with occasionally a few poor scraps of bacon. This class are commonly in extreme distress, while the wife is bearing a family of young children, who can as yet render them no assistance; and, when want of weaving work comes upon them, they are utterly helpless. The joint earnings of the single-hand journeyman weaver and his wife, if she could continue uninterruptedly at the work, would only amount at most to the wages of an agricultural labourer, whose wife was attending to domestic duties, for the non-performance of which scarcely any amount of earnings can compensate. The condition of the single-hand weaver is therefore far worse. When the children begin to work, the family earnings might rise to those of an agricultural labourer, and set the wife more at liberty for domestic duties, but she has not learned what they are. The weavers working together, too, at irregular hours, and with this want of domestic comfort, inevitably mismanage the narrow means they possess. Rudeness and misery seem to be the inevitable condition of the mere journeyhand in the single-hand trade.—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Fletcher, Vol. II., p.* 302.

"I did not at first credit the statements made to me of the moral debasement which prevails among the country weavers, but cautiously weighed the mental character of the witnesses, in the belief that their strong terms might be employed only according to some exaggerated standard in their own minds. But the overwhelming flood of evidence on every side at length compelled me to recognise a grossness and an immorality, which are the more painful to contemplate, since I cannot but apprehend that they prevail throughout the other large portions of our population similarly circumstanced. The more intelligent of the men themselves gave, in public, uncontradicted testimony to ignorance and vice, rendered appalling by their universality. Even in regard to their labour they are absurdly unsteady. They are, for the most part, idle from Saturday morning to Tuesday morning, and to make up their week's work, apply themselves during the whole night of Friday.

"The following evidence was given me in public, at Foleshill, by Richard Holmes, an intelligent undertaker, and one of the constables:—

"'The mass of the people, with the exception of a few young men, are brutally ignorant, and the intelligence which is to be found in the exceptions has manifested itself only within the last half-dozen years. It is not the population which has gone down into ignorance; it has never emerged from it. This is not surprising, for there is not an efficient school in the parish (which contains upwards of *seven thousand inhabitants*). The people are as ignorant as ever, and, in proportion to their numbers, more immoral. Their language is awfully depraved. Independently of their irreligion, they are *practically* more immoral than formerly. Bastardy is greater than ever, even since the Poor Law Amendment Act (and information to the same effect was given me in regard to the city). At any little holiday time, the public-houses will be thronged with girls ready for the lowest excesses. Both sexes are great drinkers, chiefly of ale. The place is also notorious for poaching and robberies; and the magistrates of Coventry well know that when a desperate case is brought before them, it is generally from this neighbourhood. Compared to what they now are, though rude and ignorant, they were formerly a harmless population. The foregoing observations apply to the mass; the better are only exceptions.'

"Robert Cantrill, an aged man of the same class, thinks that, 'though the journeyhand weavers' houses, forty years ago, were poor miserable places, which might be called 'hovels' almost, the journeyhands are less well-conducted now. A part, certainly, of the general misconduct is brought on by distress. Thinks it makes a man hopeless; and, when hopeless, he becomes desperate, and preys upon society, and careless even of what little honest advantages are in his way; and then comes the last wretchedness. Times of bad trade, in the witness's youth, which were very frequent, then, as now, always led to thieving. Thinks, however, that there was then nothing of the aggravated kind that there now is. Now never a night passes without some depredation in this or the neighbouring parishes.' They generally marry very young, approaching, or just at full age. Sometimes the men marry without any home to go to, and they and their wives will lodge in separate habitations. They are altogether excessively rude and uncultivated. When trade has been unusually good, these people would spend their extra earnings in lamb out of season, fowls, and dress; and such is now the feebleness of their morality, that any sudden increase to their resources would assuredly pro-

Lowest paid Weavers—Linen Weavers in Yorkshire.

duce only the same effects. And with all its usual distress and degradation, the trade of single-hand weaving offers half the *liberty* of savage life. for which the uninstructed man is almost tempted to sacrifice half the enjoyments of the civilised. Thus, there is a well-known feeling among the farm labourers, the bricklayers, and the other ordinary artizans, in this district, that it is very hard upon them to be turned out at early hours every day instead of being able to take what hours they please like the ribbon weaver, and, like him, take *saint* Monday, and *saint* Tuesday, too, if they choose.

"Precisely the counterpart of these feelings is also to be found in the other sex. Notwithstanding the wretched state in which, until recently, the trade had long been, it was impossible for the respectable families to procure domestic servants. There is the greatest difficulty in prevailing on parents to let their children come to service. The young women look down with scorn upon it, and prefer the liberty of the Monday and Saturday, the exemption from confinement, and the little finery, with the liberty to wear it, which the loom procures them. As housewives there are none worse. They can neither make nor mend their own clothes; they cannot sew; they know nothing of domestic management; they cannot make a house comfortable, and the men, not much expecting it, seek the beer-shops."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Fletcher. Vol. II.*, p. 75-8.

Linen Weavers in Yorkshire.

The previous statements apply principally to those employed on cotton and silk. We will now extract from Mr. Keyser's Report some particulars respecting the condition of the worst paid linen weavers in Yorkshire.

Mr. Keyser.

"Barnsley may be considered the most important town in Yorkshire in which linen weaving is carried on, not only as regards the number of persons engaged in hand-loom leaving, but also by their influence in regulating the rates of wages, in many other places where the Barnsley printed lists have for the most part been adopted to regulate prices between masters and men.

"At the time of my inquiry at Barnsley, the trade was considered good, and up to the present date (September 1838), I am informed it continues so, and that there is no scarcity of work.

"In order to obtain as correct an average of wages as could be ascertained, I induced a principal manufacturer to favour me with an extract from his books, showing the earnings of a considerable number of weavers in his employ for various periods at different seasons of the year, stating the days on which work was taken out, and returned to the warehouse, and the amount of wages paid.

"After considerable discussion and objections on the part of the weavers to the mode in which this document was made up, it was referred to a committee of the weavers, who, after a long conference with the manufacturer, returned the statement with trifling alterations, and pronounced it a fair average statement of the weavers' earnings when fully employed. The result being, net wages 7*s.* 11*d.* per week.

"The weavers also furnished me with an average statement of wages, the result of which gives a net weekly earning of 7*s.* 8½*d.* The trifling difference in these two statements may be easily accounted for, the weavers in their statement deducting from the gross wages per week 2½*d.* more.

"To the weavers' statement of earnings they have annexed several observations on their general condition, and pointing out other items not taken into the above calculation, but which may also be considered deductions from wages. This statement bears the signatures of three persons deputed to present it by the general body of weavers, and is in the following words:—

"'The weavers are at the very lowest average, one week out of eight, fully employed in changing from one sort of work to another, and going to and from the warehouses concerning their work, for which they do not get a single farthing remuneration; and very often these changes are attended with considerable expense over and above what they ever stipulate as deductions from their wages, such as winding, loom-rent, dressing, &c., and for which they cannot make any accurate calculation. These changes are very laborious, and very frequently can only be managed by the studious artizan. In many other trades the same amount of labour and skill would secure to the workman a very high amount of wages. The time and expense thus incurred are not deducted from the statement of the average earnings of the weavers of Barnsley, for which in general they do bitterly complain, being, in their opinion, unexampled in any other trade.

"'There is also, at the very lowest calculation among the weavers, one week out of every eight that they will be entirely without employment, and being so very numerous, not a tithe of them can get any other kind of employment in the neighbourhood where they reside. When these two great deductions are made from the earnings of the weavers when fully employed, there would only remain about 5*s.* 6*d.* a-week for a man's earnings, for, be it understood, this statement applies exclusively to the men. Boys and girls do not average above half that amount.'"—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Keyser, Vol. I., p.* 478—9.

And yet, low as are the wages of the linen weavers of Barnsley, their condition appears to be far better than that of many better paid artisans. The following description is a striking instance of the degree in which low earnings may be eked out by good management:—

Mr. Keyser.

"The moral condition of the Barnsley weavers is highly spoken of by their employers and others with whom I conversed on the subject, and I have found them, for the most part, sober, steady, and intelligent to a degree far above what might be expected in their humble situation.

Lowest paid Weavers.—Linen Weavers in Yorkshire.

Their dwellings present an appearance of comfort much superior to that of weavers in other places. Their cottages are built of stone for the most part, in the airy and dry situations for which the town and neighbourhood afford abundant space, the situation being remarkably healthy. The cellars in which they work are not more damp than is desirable for carrying on their trade; well ventilated; and, even where the inhabitants are suffering from extreme poverty, their houses have a look of cleanliness and good order. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule, but they are not very numerous. In their persons, clothing, and the appearance of their children, the Barnsley weavers contrast favourably with the same class of persons at Leeds and elsewhere.

"It must, however, be kept in view that the time of my investigation at Barnsley was a period of comparative prosperity, the sufferings and privations of the weavers some months ago having been very great; but even when fully employed on the best work, the weavers' wages are below those of any other journeymen, some persons employed in the collieries only excepted.

"Few power-looms are as yet employed in linen weaving at Barnsley, but their number is likely to increase considerably. Although at present, and for some time to come, evidently tending to throw many hand-loom weavers out of employ, their ultimate advantage to the trade is ably described in the evidence of a manufacturer. He gives it as his opinion, that 'before power-looms are even generally brought into operation, they will occupy all the hand-loom weavers who can be found to work at them.'

"At Knaresborough the linen trade has greatly fallen off, and has been very bad for the last 12 months. The situation of the place is by no means so favourable as that of Barnsley. Coals are brought 18 miles by land carriage. There are no canals in the immediate neighbourhood.

"In 1801	4,202	
1811	5,067 . .	865 increase in 10 years
1821	6,656 . .	1,589 „ „
1831	6,894 . .	238 only in the latter 10 years.

"This falling off is attributed to the weavers leaving Knaresborough, and going to Barnsley and other places. There are at present about 130 cottages empty.

"Mr. Richard Dewes, formerly a manufacturer, now overseer of the poor, says in his evidence, 'The situation of the weavers here is most deplorable; they are suffering much. As assistant overseer, I have the opportunity of seeing it. There are many able-bodied men who, by working day and night, are not able to get a living, owing to the low rate of wages. We have a dispensary, a lying-in charity, some free Sunday and day schools. Much good is done here by private charity, but there is much demand for it.

"'I consider the weavers much worse paid than any other workmen. I have had many men in my employ who would formerly have scorned to ask charity, and are now obliged to do so. We have 68 poor persons on our pension list, not one of whom is an agricultural labourer; they are all weavers or flax-dressers; also about 30 having casual relief, all weavers.'

"Mr. Thorpe, a considerable manufacturer, says in evidence, 'The weavers are very badly off; from my own knowledge of weaving, I know they are so. They are certainly the worst paid of any description of workmen. They could not, with the greatest industry and exertion, do as well as other workmen.'

"Other manufacturers confirm this statement.

"The general average of wages will be, according to various data from which I have endeavoured to calculate accurately on 404 looms, the number at present employed in various descriptions of linen, (mostly, however, of the lower sorts,) about 7*s.* 4*d.* net per week.—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Keyser, Vol. I., p.* 483—4.

"At Darley, Hampsthwaite, Dacre, &c., the rate of wages are even lower than at Knaresborough. The weavers in these villages are in very great distress, and would be worse off than those in the town, but that they occasionally obtain harvest and other field-work, of which, however, only a few are capable. On the other hand, the weavers living in the country have not the advantages of charitable and other assistance afforded in the town.

"Their dwellings, their clothing, and that of their children evince great misery,

"I visited an extensive linen factory at Westhouse, about 11 miles from Knaresborough, where many power-looms are employed, and will undoubtedly in a short time be adapted to almost all descriptions of linen weaving.

"I continued my inquiry at Northallerton, Brompton, Osmotherly, Borrowby, and the neighbourhood, where, with few exceptions, the weavers suffer distress, occasioned by low wages and scarcity of employment. The amount of their earnings appears to depend in a great measure on the master for whom they work, not being regulated by any fixed rate. At Osmotherly, in particular, wages are very low. It is given in evidence that they are one-third lower than at Brompton; and, by a statement furnished by the Osmotherly weavers, would not produce 7*s.* a-week.

"Proceeding with the investigation at Darlington, &c., I found the rates of wages not differing materially from those of Northallerton and neighbourhood.

"There have been several extensive failures of houses engaged in the manufacture of linen, which trade, now remaining in few hands, has caused a continual reduction in wages, very many hand-loom weavers being constantly out of employ and reduced to very great distress: an experienced weaver states his earnings at 7*s.* 6*d.* per week,

"A manufacturer deposes to the condition of the weavers being much worse than that of other operatives; he further says,

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" ' Many are thrown out of work for half their time; there is no demand for their labour. A weaver certainly cannot live on his wages, working 12 hours a-day. They are generally sober, steady, industrious men; but with the best intentions, at the present wages, they cannot get a living. Many weavers are obliged to apply for parish assistance.'

" Several witnesses stated their earnings to be very trifling, from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* a-week, but, being old and very infirm men, it cannot be taken as a criterion.

" As the evidence of Mr. Laidler, overseer of the poor, conveys a full description of the weavers' general condition, I state it at length as follows:—

" ' I have been manager of the poor for five years. The weavers are generally in great distress; I have many applications from them, very distressing cases. From five or six years' experience, I know they are not idle men; in general, they are a very industrious set of men. Many of the weavers' children are so much in want of clothes that they cannot avail themselves of the Sunday and other free schools. I scarcely ever had an application for assistance from a weaver but found it really a case of distress and a deserving object.'

" Similar evidence is given by the overseer at Aycliffe, a neighbouring village, as to the state of the weavers in his district, who says—

" ' The situation of the weavers is so bad, they should go to some other business. As weavers they are badly off—much worse than other labourers. Many have left weaving; the able-bodied men are gone to the collieries and to rail-road work.

" ' Not one weaver has applied for parochial relief, though in great distress. They all try to get employment at something else.'—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Keyser, Vol. I., p.* 488—9.

Linen Weavers—Ireland.

The state of the linen weavers in some portions of Ireland affords a remarkable example of occasional prosperity, the result of circumstances which will, we fear, at no distant period produce extensive distress. Till within a recent period, the only yarn used, was hand-spun, and it was too hard to be woven by females. Mill-spun yarn, which may be worked in half the time, and with half the strength, has now been extensively introduced, and females are taking to weaving. At the same time the greater cheapness of the mill-spun yarn, and the shorter time and labour required to weave a piece, have extended the trade, and prevented any fall of wages. For the present, therefore, the weavers in many parts of Ireland can obtain employment for all, except the infant members of the family, at wages which for that country are good. The following answers to some queries circulated by Mr. Muggeridge, are instances of the state of things which we have been describing.

Mr. Muggeridge.

" 16. What is the condition, moral and physical, of the hand-loom weavers in your district?

" The linen weavers are in general the most industrious and happy people of their rank or place in Ireland.

" 17. Are there more or less female weavers in your neighbourhood than formerly; and at what period, and under what circumstances, did such increase or diminution take place?

" There are a great many more female weavers than there were before mill-spun yarn was introduced.

" 18. Has such increase or diminution had any, and what effect, on the wages of the male weavers?

" I think the female weavers have not made any alteration in the wages of male weavers, there being abundance of work for all.

" Millview, Keady, December 14, 1838. " JOSEPH M'KEE."

Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Muggeridge, Vol. I., p. 753.

" 16. What is the condition, moral and physical, of the hand-loom weavers in your district?

" The linen weavers, from not being congregated in large towns, their moral condition is and always has been greatly superior to any other class of operatives. Their physical condition is at the present pretty fair, as there is plenty of employment at pretty fair wages; but, at the high price of provisions, if the demand for linens was not good, the condition of the hand-loom weaver would be wretched.

" 17. Are there more or less female weavers in your neighbourhood than formerly; and at what period, and under what circumstances, did such increase or such diminution take place?

" There are more female weavers every year.

" JAMES MURLAND.

" Castle Welland, December 22, 1838. " PRO CHARLES MURLAND."

Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Muggeridge, Vol. I., p. 755.

" 16. What is the condition, moral and physical, of the hand-loom weavers in your district?

" At present they are pretty comfortable, wages being high. They are, in general, quiet, well-conducted people.

Linen Weavers—Ireland.

"17. Are there more or less female weavers in your neighbourhood than formerly; and at what period, and under what circumstances, did such increase or diminution take place?

"Female weavers have much increased in number since the introduction of the trade in unions, and latterly by the falling off in the demand for hand-spun yarn.

"Dunminning, Ballymena, December 18, 1838. "THO. M. BIRNIE."

Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Muggeridge, Vol. I., p. 757.

"16. What is the condition, moral and physical, of the hand-loom weavers in your district?

"The weavers in this district are in general poor, although contented and well conducted; many of them save from their earnings what enables them to emigrate to America, if they are so inclined; and, generally speaking, they are better off than their contemporary agricultural labourers.

"17. Are there more or less female weavers in your neighbourhood than formerly; and at what period, and under what circumstances, did such increase or diminution take place?

"There are more females weaving in this district than formerly, particularly within the last six or seven years.

"Cneve Ballyboy, February 6, 1839 "S. CUNINGHAM."

Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Muggeridge, Vol. I., p. 771.

"I am of opinion that the substitution of mill-spun for hand-spun yarn has been beneficial; it can be woven in one half of the time. A female weaver can weave a linen web of mill-spun yarn in less than six days, which a few years since, when nothing but hand-spun yarn was to be obtained, would have kept a male weaver busy for 12 days.

"As to the physical condition of the weavers (query 16), it is perhaps better in those weavers who are partly agricultural labourers (which is generally the case with a great number of them who are employed in the fields at certain seasons of the year), than with such as confine themselves exclusively to their looms. In reply to query 17, there are many more female weavers in this neighbourhood than formerly. Within the space of three years, since the mill-spun yarn surmounted the prejudice which existed previously against it, the weaving by females commenced, and has gained ground, and, in my opinion, ought to be encouraged.

"Ross Lodge Antrim, December 4, 1838. "W .MILLER."

"The rural population generally are the hand-loom weavers; and I think their moral condition will compare with any others of the same class of society in the empire. Wages, have been very low; they are now advancing, and, on the whole, their present prospects are much better than they have been for some time.

"There are more females now weaving than formerly, because they make better wages than by spinning. I do not think that they have affected the wages of male weavers; demand regulates wages. Female weavers are employed on the lighter and less valuable fabrics,

"Anvale Keady, December 1, 1838. "WILLIAM KIRK."

Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Muggeridge, Vol. I., p. 746—7.

It is to be feared, however, that this state of things cannot be permanent. In a country where employment affording even a bare subsistance is almost always of difficult attainment, and often unobtainable, it is not likely that a trade easily learned and easily practised, will remain unaffected by the general competition in the labour market. In the branches which require strength or skill, wages may keep up, but where women and children can be employed, the wages will be those of women and children, and those of the men who continue in such an employment must sink to their level.

Second Class of Weavers—where skill alone is required.

We now come to a class of weavers whose remuneration rises one step higher, namely, those employed on fabrics requiring moderate skill without strength. Wherever women are found to earn wages exceeding 5*s.* a week, or probably wages even approaching nearly to that sum, it may be inferred that the business is of this description. As an illustration of the wages obtained by those employed on such fabrics we insert the following tables from Dr. Mitchell's Report on Norwich. It shows the wages obtained there, not only on the abovementioned fabrics, but also in the higher class, requiring the union of skill and strength, and therefore confined to men.

Dr. Mitchell

"The wages earned by the weavers employed by Messrs. Henry and Edward Willett, as certified by Mr. Henry Willett, are as follows:—

Wages of moderately skilled Weavers--Norwich *Dr. Mitchell.*

Exhibition of the Average Earnings per Week of Sixty Weavers on the following Four Fabrics.

Article.	Quality or Rate.	Weavers on each Fabric.	Average Earnings of each Weaver per Week.
	Rate.		*s.* *d.*
Figured Challi .	84	10 men .	16 0
Plain Challi . .	90	10 men .	14 3
Ditto . . .	78	10 men .	13 0
Bombazines .	39	10 men .	12 6
Ditto . . .	32	10 women	8 0
Cotton, &c. . .	60	10 women	7 0

" Mr. Philip Breeze, warehouseman to Mr. Francis, gives a more detailed account, which will show more distinctly the wages of each class of persons.

BANDANAS.

	Per Week.
MEN:	*s.* *d.*
Old married	8 9
Middle-age married	7 0
Ditto	11 8
Ditto	12 10
Young single	10 7
Ditto.	8 10
Average . .	9 6
WOMEN:	
Middle-age married	7 0
Ditto	5 3
Young single	5 10
Middle-age married	5 6
Young single	8 7
Middle-age married	5 0
Average . .	6 $1\frac{1}{2}$

COTTON WARPS.

	Per Week.
MEN:	*s.* *d.*
Middle-age married	5 3
Ditto	9 2
Ditto	8 0
Young single	9 9
Old married	7 0
Ditto	7 $8\frac{1}{2}$
Middle-age married	9 2
Young married	9 9
Average . .	7 $10\frac{1}{2}$
WOMEN:	
Middle-age married	6 3
Young married	6 8
Middle-age married	6 5
Aged married	8 $10\frac{1}{2}$
Young married	6 5
Middle-age married	7 0
Young married	6 0
Middle-age married	4 10
Average . .	6 5

Wages of moderately skilled Weavers.

"From Messrs. Bolingbroke, Enfield and Co. the following account was received:—

"Twenty weavers (men) employed on fine bombazines, alapines, and paramattas:

"Number of weavers, 20.
Weeks each, 12.
Money earned, 164*l.* 11*s.* 1*d.*
Average to each, per week, 13*s.* 6½*d.*
Including play, 9½ days each.

"Twenty weavers employed on low bombazines, checks, and challis.

"Number of weavers, women and men, 20.
Weeks each, 12.
Money earned, 101*l.* 9*s.* 1*d.*
Average to each per week, 8*s.* 5½*d.*
Including play, 10¼ days each.

"Twenty men employed in weaving bandana cloth:

"Number of weavers, 20.
Weeks each, 11½.
Money earned, 106*l.* 9*s.* 6*d.*
Average to each per week, 9*s.* 4*d.*
Including play, 1¼ day each.

"The above is taken from December, 1837, to March, 1838, inclusive.

"Pro Bolingbroke, Enfield and Co.,
"Norwich, 5 April, 1838. "(signed) Jesse Minns, Warehouseman.

"The above may be considered a fair average of all the weavers in the employ of B. E. and Co.

(Signed) J. M.

"Mr. Charles Middleton, through his warehouseman, Mr. Spinks, has given the wages of his weavers as follows:—

"First Class.

"Twelve weavers constantly employed on fine bombazines:

"Days employed, 1,870.
Earnings, 194*l.* 15*s.* 7*d.*
Average to each per week, 14*s.* 7*d.*

"Second Class.

"Twelve weavers generally employed on bombazines and other work

"Days employed, 1,845.
Earnings, 134*l.* 10*s.* 5*d.*
Average per week, 10*s.* 2½*d.*

"Third Class.

"Twelve weavers generally employed on challis and light work:

"Days employed, 1,906.
Earnings, 90*l.* 17*s.* 8*d.*
Average per week, 6*s.* 8*d.*

"The above classes have generally employment. There are others who are occasionally employed by me and other manufacturers, of the earnings of whom no correct calculation can be made.

"For Mr. Charles Middleton,
(Signed) S. Spinks.

"From Messrs. Shickle, Towler and Co., the following amount was received:—

"Ten men employed weaving fine bombazines:

"Number of weavers, 10.
Time employed, including Sundays and all stops, 1,851 days.
Money earned, 165*l.* 15*s.* 10½*d.*
Average to each per week, 12*s.* 6*d.*

"Ten women employed weaving middling and coarse bombazines:

"Number of weavers, 10.
Time employed, including Sundays and all stops, 1,840 days.
Money earned, 98*l.* 0*s.* 4½*d.*
Average to each per week, 7*s.* 5¼*d.*

"Twelve men employed weaving paramattas, saxonies, and challis:

"Number of weavers, 12.
Time employed, including Sundays and all stops, 1,265 days.
Money earned, 116*l.* 13*s.* 8¹*d.*
Average to each per week, 12*s.* 10*d.*

Per pro Shickle, Towler and Co.,
(Signed) H. Gunton.

Wages of moderately skilled Weavers.

"From Messrs. Massey and Son, the following statement was received, through Mr Williams, their warehouseman and clerk:—

Gross earnings.

"No. 1.—Ten men, each 20 weeks, average 13*s.* 10*d.* a-week.
No. 2.—Ten men . . . . . 10*s.* 9*d.* „
No. 3.—Ten men . . . . . 6*s.* 7½*d.* „
No. 4.—Ten women . . . . . 7*s.* 4*d.* „

"No. 1 are upon the best work, fine bombazines.
No. 2 are upon secondary work, paramattas and middling bombazines.
No. 3 are upon the lowest bombazines, challis, &c.
No. 4 are upon bombazines, generally below 33*s.* 3*d.*

"For Massey and Son,
(Signed) "J. Williams, jun., Warehouseman and Clerk.
"April 9, 1838."

"Of the Expenses of the Weavers.

"From the weaver's gross earnings must be deducted his expenses.
"Mr. Fish, and the deputation accompanying him, gave the following account:—

	£.	*s.*	*d.*
"Extra rent on account of loom	0	0	6
Winding	0	1	0
Candles	0	0	3
Beaming-on	0	0	1
Twisting-in	0	0	4
Cord to repair the loom-picker, to pull the fly-shuttle and shuttle	0	0	1
	£0	2	3

"The beaming-on and twisting-in occur only to every new web, say every six weeks; and the above is the sixth part of what is paid when these operations are performed.

"When bombazines are wove, there must be added another 6*d.* for winding, making the expenses 2*s.* 9*d.* a-week. This is for a man in full employment, and making good earnings. When the man is not fully employed, his loom-rent remains the same, but all the other expenses are less in proportion.

"Mr. Spinks gave the following statement:—

	£.	*s.*	*d.*
"Winding	0	1	6
Rent (extra)	0	0	6
Candles	0	0	3
Pickers and cord	0	0	1½
Beaming-on	0	0	1½
Dressing	0	0	1
Change of work and other expenses, namely, twisting in, &c.	0	0	3
	£0	2	10
Deduct for weaver, who is at no expense for sleight, that is, wear and tear of clothes, comparatively with other trades	0	0	3
	£0	2	7

"Respecting the account of expenses given by Mr. Fish, the following evidence has been given by Mr. Breeze:—

"'Respecting the outgoings of the weaver on account of his work, I would remark, that a weaver who pays for twisting-in thereby proves that he has not properly learnt his business; if he employ another man to twist in, he must himself be idle all that time. The shilling a-week for winding applies to bandanas. A man who has to pay 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week for winding the bombazines must do work enough to earn 18*s.* wages. At the rate of wages given by me, 1*s.* a-week for winding would be sufficient."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Mitchell, Vol. I., p.* 312—15.

Third class of Weavers—where strength is required.

Mr. Symons has stated, vol. ii. p. 616, that in weaving strength is better paid than skill. This proposition is partially confirmed by the wages obtained by those employed on the strong and coarse woollen, hemp, and linen fabrics, such as blankets, and coarse carpets, among the one, and sail-cloth, sacking, and floor-cloth, among the other. On recurring to the tabular statement of the wages of weavers on the south-west of Scotland, which we have extracted, p. 5, it will be seen that the lowest wages obtained by the weavers of coarse fabrics, whether woollen or linen, are more than double those obtained on the easy fabrics of cotton and silk; and on looking through the Reports of the Assistant Commissioners, this difference will be found general. There are however so many fabric of cotton and silk in which little or no skill is required, that this opinion must be cautiously received. Mr. Hickson was unable to find any

instances of mere strength being so well paid as the skilled labour of the weaver of figured poplins and broad velvets. Wages where strength is required.

We extract the following statements from Mr. Mitchell's report on Surrey and Norfolk, from Mr. Miles's report on Bristol, Mr. Austin's on the South-west of England, Mr. Symons's on the South of Scotland, and Dr. Harding's on the East of Scotland, a district in which, for the higher linen fabrics, the highest earnings of able-bodied men do not exceed 7*s.* 6*d.* a-week.

Dr. Mitchell.

"Bolting-Cloth Factory, Wandsworth.

"This factory was visited on the 14th of June, 1838, when the following account was given by Mr. Henderson, the superintendent, and, as far as regards the wages, was confirmed by the men:—

"The factory is situate near the church. It is for making bolting cloths without seams, to be used for dressing flour. These cloths are a substitute for the wire machines. The proprietors are Messrs. Blackmore. The fabric is made from hard hand-spun woollen yarn of the same sort as is made in Suffolk.

"The men all work in the factory, the proprietors finding the looms, and making no charge for looms or loom standing. The men work by the piece, and their average earnings are about 25*s.* a-week; but out of this they have to pay for candles, as well as the assistance of a boy in some parts of the work, and in winding the quills. The employment is regular throughout the year.

"The Assistant Commissioner had only to congratulate the men on their condition being so much more favourable than that of the weavers generally in other fabrics."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Mitchell, Vol. I., p.* 278.

"Diss, in Norfolk.

"The only manufacturer giving out work is Mr. Henry Warne. He makes drabbetts, huckabacks, sheeting, and shirting. The number of persons employed is 63, being 40 men, 20 boys, and 3 women. Mr. Warne stated that he was anxious to increase the number of his weavers, but had not at that time succeeded. The fabrics are capable of being produced by the power-loom, but they have not as yet been made to such an extent by power as materially to affect the market.

"Two workmen were examined, Mr. John Bradley and Mr. Samuel Crick. The first of these is a veteran soldier, who was five years in the wars under the Duke of Wellington, and he is now one of the most industrious men in the country. He works from 15 to 16 hours a-day regularly, which, deducting time for meals, is 13 to 14 hours, and he makes 16*s.* a-week in the gross, and deducting expenses has 14*s.* net. He makes two chains a-week, and is paid 8*s.* a chain. The wife and foreman of Mr. Warne confirmed this account, but both agreed that two chains a-week was more than men generally could possibly do, and that a chain and a half was the full average which most men could weave without destroying themselves. Occasionally men did more than even two chains, and sometimes two chains and a half, but unless the over-exertion was counterbalanced by rest afterwards, it would do serious injury.

"Mr. Samuel Crick gave a similar account of the work done on the average. He himself did a chain and a half, making thereby 12*s.*, and deducting 1*s.* for winding his quills, 6*d.* for starch, and 6*d.* for candles, he had 10*s.* clear; which was the usual amount of wages.—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Mitchell, Vol. I., p.* 353.

"North Lopham, in Norfolk.

"It is delightful at last to have met with one green oasis in the vast desert of discontent in which the inquiries of this Commission have been conducted.

"Three of the operatives, Messrs. Christopher Land, Michael Barman, and George Shaw, who were sent for to the inn, on being asked how trade was going on with them, at once replied, "Pretty middling; we are pretty well off here. We are not as they are in many parts." These men, like the other weavers of North Lopham, were engaged in making shirting, sheeting, and table-linen. They stated that their net wages, after deducting expenses, were on the average 10*s.* a-week. The hours of labour are twelve hours, out of which two are to be deducted for meals, leaving ten hours in the loom. This length of time they declared to be the utmost that men in general could endure for a permanency. Occasionally, when an order was received which must be executed by a given day, if taken at all, the men, to oblige the master, worked even 16 or 18 hours; but such work rendered it necessary to have corresponding relaxation afterwards.

"The race of weavers is kept up by the fathers teaching their sons. Lads accustomed to the looms, and to winding quills, and handling the yarn from their early youth, readily learn weaving; but a man from field labour would be difficult to teach. The masters said that if they were asked to take an apprentice they would not do it under 20*l.*, and it would be necessary besides to pay 50*s.* to the journeyman who taught the apprentice, to make up for his loss of time. This expense saves the trade from overwhelming ruinous competition.

"The houses of North Lopham are distributed along both sides of the road, at some distance from each other, and frequently back in the fields. There is a neat and cheerful air about the place, which is pleasing to behold. The men seemed to be in a fine state of health."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Mitchell, Vol. I., p.* 353—4.

Wages where strength is required. *Mr. Miles.*

STATEMENT of the EARNINGS for Two Years of SIXTEEN WEAVERS, employed in the Manufacture of Sacking and Tarpauling, at Messrs. H. and F. GWYER's, at BRISTOL, with the Average Amount of Weekly Earnings per head.

Names.	Earnings in 1836.			Earnings in 1837.		
	£.	*s.*	*d.*	£.	*s.*	*d.*
George Lucas	38	0	0	40	0	0
Adam Welsh	39	0	0	1	0	0
Daniel Harrington	30	0	0	36	0	0
Charles M'Carthy	39	0	0	30	0	0
John M'Carthy	33	0	0	35	0	0
Daniel M'Carthy	34	0	0	33	0	0
John Croker	39	0	0	34	0	0
John Camble	30	0	0	38	0	0
James Warr	37	0	0	31	0	0
James Warr, junior	30	0	0	29	4	1
John Donovan	32	0	0	27	0	0
John Gribble	33	0	0	31	2	2
Daniel Crowley	27	19	2	26	0	0
Henry Evans	31	0	0	33	7	0
William Peat	30	0	0	29	17	3
John Oram	29	0	0	30	9	0
	531	19	2	514	19	6

Equal to 1046*l.* 18. 8*d.*, or 12*s.* 7*d.* per week per man.

"John Hare and Co.

"Floor-cloth manufacturers. Weave canvas chiefly for their own purposes.

"The firm employs about 19 men, weavers, who work in a factory.

"The payment for weaving is by the piece, which contains 60 yards in length, and breadth according to the width of the loom; thus—

"1 piece of canvas cloth, 7 yards wide, 420 yards . . . £3 10
1 piece of canvas cloth, 9 yards wide, 540 yards . . . 5 2

"Two men work in a loom of seven and nine yards wide, and finish a piece in about a fortnight, some in ten days."

"Edwards and Baker.

"Hemp and Flax Works.

"The following is a list of the prices of wages for weaving, per piece:—

"Bed sacking,	46 yards,	7*s.*	per piece,	2½	can be woven in a week,	17*s.*	6*d.*
Sacking for sacks,	42 „	4	„	4	„	16	0
Wool bagging,	72 „	7	„	2½	„	17	6
Poldavey							
Hemp carpeting,	52 „ / 1 „ wide,	8	„	2½	„	20	0

"Tarpauling, 41 yards in a piece—

"2 feet wide,	5*s.* 9*d.*	per piece,	3	in a week, 17*s.* 3*d.*
2 feet 3 inches,	6 3	„	3	„ 18 9
2 feet 6 inches,	7 0	„	2	„ 14 0

"The firm employs about 26 weavers, who are in constant work in a factory.

"There are other manufactories which I did not visit, as I was given to understand that the above rate of earnings was the average in the trade."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Miles, Vol. II., p.* 545—6.

Mr. Austin.

"The linen* trade is carried on at Crediton, and at Plymouth, in Devonshire; at Bridport, Beaminster, and the adjacent villages in Dorsetshire; at Crewkerne and Yeovill and vicinities, in Somersetshire; and at Mere, and within a circle of four or five miles radius in Wiltshire.

"The sailcloth trade employs 1,154 looms.

"Strong able-bodied men can earn 13*s.* a week at Bridport, and from 11*s.* to 11*s.* 6*d.* at the other places where the wages are lower, in consequence, it is stated, of having to pay land-carriage for the manufactured article to Bridport, the place of shipment; rent and provisions are also cheaper.

"Very little variation has taken in this trade for many years. During the war the wages were higher and the work was passed by the master in a more slovenly condition, and less firm in texture; but, on the other hand, the yarn is now spun by improved machinery, is much

* "By linen, I mean everything made of flax; it is said that 80 tons of flax are used weekly in a circuit of 20 miles round Bridport, one-tenth of which is of home growth.

better, and gives a facility of weaving, which, according to the manufacturers' statement, is equivalent to the before-mentioned drawbacks. Wages where strength is required.

"The other sorts of canvas, ducks, &c. are generally woven by women, many of whom are weavers' wives, some are wives and daughters of agriculturists, &c.

"Finding that no variation had taken place in this trade for many years, that no complaints were made by the weavers, or of the weavers by their masters; that no combinations or strikes, and no disagreements had taken place, and that until the present alarmingly high price of bread the people were contented,* I concluded that further inquiry was needless."—(*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Austin, Vol. I., p.* 412.)

South of Scotland, Mr. Symons, p. 35.—

Port Glasgow and Greenock.

"Sail-cloths are almost exclusively woven here: the Gourack Rope Company employs 300 looms in a factory at Port Glasgow. *Mr. Symons.*

"There is a sail-cloth factory at Greenock also belonging to Messrs. Muir and Martin, employing 60 looms, of which two are domestic.

"Sail-cloths are divided into five qualities, of which the first is woven of flax warp and weft, and is highly bleached; the second is the same, but less bleached; the third is coarser, and with flax warp and tow weft; the fourth is the same, but less bleached; the fifth is of tow, both warp and weft.

"There are, moreover, seven subdivisions of each, varying according to the quality of the yarn.

"These vary from 10*s.* to 15*s.* per week.

"The first quality, No. 1. (subdivision,) 24 porter reed, is paid 6*s.* 2*d.* per piece of 40 ells; deduction for winding, 5*d.* each piece; a good weaver weaves 2½ pieces per week.

"The factory hours are from six morning to half past seven evening, and the weavers take what time they choose for meals.

"The weavers say they have nothing to complain of."

Kilmarnock.

"Wages of the carpet and rug weavers run from 12*s.* to 14*s.* per week net, and occasionally higher."—(*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Symons, Vol. I., p.* 35, 36.)

East of Scotland, Dr. Harding, p. 187.—

"2d. '*Heavy work,*' as canvas or sail-cloth, broad sheetings, floor-cloth, some descriptions of bagging, &c. This is entirely carried on in factories; perhaps 4,000 looms may be thus employed in the district. These fabrics generally require able-bodied men, the physical force necessary being often very great, although no great skill is essential. They are almost entirely manufactured in large towns; principally in Dundee, Arbroath, Aberdeen, Montrose and Kircaldy. The average net weekly earnings of this class of weavers is at least 8*s.* 6*d.*; steady and skilful men can earn 10*s.*, and in some cases much higher wages; at some fabrics of this description, 15*s.* is not rare."—(*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Harding, Vol. I., p.* 187.) *Dr. Harding.*

It is unnecessary to swell this Report with similar evidence as to the wages of those employed on the coarse and heavy woollen fabrics. As their employment, though seldom requiring much skill, yet generally requires more than the heavy linen fabrics, their earnings are rather higher.

On the whole the class of weavers of whom we are now speaking, those whose employment requires principally strength, appears as a body, and with the exception of a comparatively small section of highly skilled weavers, to be by far the most prosperous portion of the weaving community. Their fabrics are principally intended for the home market, and are articles for which the demand is regular and uninterrupted. Their wages are higher than those of the agricultural labourer, and their employment is unaffected by weather; and while the strength necessary for their own department saves them from the competition of women and children, there are in their manufacture subsidiary branches (though not to the same extent as in silk and cotton) in which women and children can be employed, and the united income of the family increased.

Fourth class of Weavers—wages where both strength and skill or unusual skill are required.

We now come to the highest paid class of weavers, those whose business demands both strength and skill, or an extraordinary degree of skill.

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* "It must not be imagined that this contentment was produced by a rate of wages which enabled them to live in luxury. I have everywhere found that an Englishman's contentment is hard work, enough to employ all the hours of the day, with as much bread, cheese, and potatoes, as he can eat at night, and a little fuel to cook them; if they get meat once a week, they think themselves very fortunate. I will here quote the words of a manufacturer of woollens at Salisbury, which run thus: 'Has never known one during his life and experience who would not rather work if he could get employment, than go to the parish: it is not the Englishman's character.'

Wages where both strength and skill or unusual skill are required.

Dr. Mitchell estimates the highest individual wages of the Spitalfields weavers on waistcoat velvets at 25*s*. 9*d*. a-week, and the average at 20*s*. (p. 229.) The gross wages of those employed at Norwich on the broad and rich flowered shawls, appear (p. 212) to be 25*s*. 6*d*. a-week. Mr. Otway states that the earnings of the tabinet weavers in Dublin are equal, if not superior, to those of any other class of weavers with whom he has met. And this appears from the evidence of Mr. Geoghan, one of the most respectable manufacturers in Dublin, employing one third of the whole number of tabinet weavers, who states that the hand-loom weavers on plain tabinets can earn from 10*s*. to 15*s*. a-week, those on the figured from 20*s*. to 24*s*., and those on the brocaded from 25*s*. to 28*s*. (p. 605.) To proceed from silk to wool, it appears from Mr. Miles's Report from Kidderminster, (p. 532) that a skilful weaver on the finer carpets can earn 1*l*. 6*s*. 9*d*. a-week, (p. 550,) and that nearly the same sum can be earned on the finer blankets. Mr. Chapman states (p. 530), that on the finest cloths at Leeds from 24*s*. to 28*s*. a-week may be earned, and that the average earnings of the 146 weavers employed by Messrs. Hirst Bromley and Co., who stand highest among the manufacturers of that town, for the preceding six months, were 3,562*l*. or 18*s*. 9*d*. per head.

But though the earnings made on the highest paid fabrics are comparatively high, it does not follow that either the annual income of those employed on them is large, or their general condition prosperous. The commodities which they produce are necessarily high priced, and in many instances can be considered merely as ornamental superfluities. The demand for them is, in some cases, confined to portions of the year, in others is affected by changes of fashion, and, in all, is contingent on the prosperity of the community. Unhappily the commercial code of this country has long been and still continues to be such as to occasion constant alternations of prosperity and adversity, sometimes, indeed, affecting only a small portion of the community, but more frequently comprehending several and large classes. There are few on whom these calamities press more severely than those who produce articles which are luxuries that can readily be dispensed with, or which, though decencies or even necessaries, may be more or less sparingly and carefully used, and more or less frequently replaced. In these classes are comprehended the great bulk of the commodities on which hand-loom weavers are employed, and particularly those which, from their fabric or their material, are the most costly. Silk is so expensive a material that, except among the most opulent portions of the community, articles composed of it are considered luxuries; and, as might have been inferred, it is found that those employed on them suffer in their full force the evils arising from vicissitudes of demand.

Irregularity of Weavers' employment.

Dr. Mitchell.

"There is, perhaps," says Dr. Mitchell, "no occupation in society so much subject to irregularity and uncertainty of employment, as that of the silk weaver. In common with the merchant, he is affected by the fluctuations of commerce, and he is also subject to that which influences his fate still more, and which baffles all possible calculation, the caprice of fashion. Hence for a period of time, which may be longer or shorter, there is an abundance of employment for all hands that can possibly be induced to enter into the trade, and at such times multitudes are enlisted into it, and then, after a time, the employment may cease to a greater or less degree, and to what extent no man can ever predict, and how long it may endure is equally uncertain. There may be an embarrassment in the commerce of the country, or there may be a change of fashion, and either of those causes will produce a powerful effect, and if both causes come into operation together, the whole body of the weavers is reduced to incalculable misery.

"At a period of great demand for silk goods, the weavers previously employed, have not now to wait, after bringing home the last piece, for a week or fortnight before getting another cane. There is no artificial delay affected by keeping them, during the progress of weaving a cane, a week or more at a time waiting for shute. Every facility is now afforded; and although no addition be made to the rate of payment, much more wages are earned. The other weavers who have been nearly, or altogether, unemployed, have now work given to them. The weavers' wives now also get work, and their boys and girls who never were in the loom before, are now put to the trade, and are allowed the same rate per yard as grown persons. Fresh hands are also introduced. From the metropolis the demand for labour goes into the country. All the old weavers are employed with their wives and families; agricultural labourers are engaged on every side, and every one is urged to do all he can. Blemishes, for which at other times a deduction from the wages would have been claimed, are now overlooked. Carts are sent round to the villages and hamlets, with the work, for the weavers, that time may not be lost in going to the warehouse to carry home, or take out work.

"The facility with which the plainest kind of weaving may be done, is abundantly shown by the evidence given in London and in the country towns. One of the Norwich witnesses expresses it that the weavers may be 'struck into existence in a month.' Men from almost any other employment may be put to do the plainest and easiest fabrics, and men who have been accustomed to do the easiest fabrics, may be advanced to those which are more difficult.

" The whole number is, therefore, capable of an immediate and indefinite extension.

Irregularity of Weavers' employment.

" But let us see the contrast when business falls off, and at no time is there so likely to be so complete a stagnation of employment and commercial embarrassment as immediately after an extremely exciting and supposed prosperity, as in the beginning of 1825 and in 1836. As to the caprices of fashion, they baffle all calculation.

" The immediate effect is, that all the less skilful workmen, the dissolute and disorderly, are denied work. The third and fourth looms, those worked by the sons and daughters of the weavers, are all thrown out of use. The weaver is fortunate who can get work for himself, and reckons himself still more fortunate if he can get a second loom employed also, perhaps by his wife.

" But the manufacturers, at such a period, do systematically, and with design, divide what work they still have to do amongst as many weavers as they possibly can, in order to retain as large a number of hands as they can about them, and thereby be able, when trade revives, to supply the demand. They may also be actuated by an idea that it is benevolent so to do. Hence the weaver is kept waiting between one cane and another, not only, as sometimes is the case, because the manufacturer is waiting for fresh orders from the mercers, but because he keeps engaged far more people than he can fully employ, and he makes the best excuses that he can to put off weavers one by one. Many of these men, ignorant of the motives, attribute to tyranny and caprice what is really the result of calculating design.

" At such times the country towns and villages, to which work is liberally sent when there is a demand for goods, suffer still more. A staff or skeleton only is kept in pay, and that chiefly with a view to operations when a demand returns."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Mitchell, Vol. I., p.* 375—6.

" The weaver," says Mr. Bresson, a very intelligent silk weaver, examined by Mr. Hickson,

Mr. Bresson.

" would do pretty well if he could depend on full employment throughout the year, one year with another, and especially upon the best fabrics; but the trade has always been uncertain and precarious. Every five or six years there comes a period of stagnation, which often lasts for two years before the trade is brisk again. The last winter was one of the worst we have known. The weather was unusually severe; and the trade almost destroyed, owing to the panic which affected the American houses. The holders of silk could not sell at any price, and the manufacturers therefore completely stopped. I and my family were always able to get work, but thousands could not, and, owing to the inclemency of the season, they suffered much. At the present moment there are still many looms idle, though the greater part are employed." *

The demand for the finer woollen fabrics, though more regular than that for silks, is subject to great vicissitudes. We have already remarked on the high wages earned by the best workmen in Leeds. Mr. Chapman proceeds to condense in the following table " the points of the whole scale of earnings at which the largest number of cases occur :"—

Mr. Chapman.

		s.		*s.*
" 4	earn over	20		
9	„ from	16	to	20
13	„ „	12	„	16
4	„ „	10	„	12
3	„ under	10		
33"				

But he adds, " that these earnings suppose full employment—that is, with no more delay than is incidental to fetching the warp and carrying home the piece. If employment were steady—if all the cloth-weavers in the West Riding could earn the wages stated in the table—however desirable it might be to improve their condition, I very much doubt if they themselves would have complained. It unfortunately happens, however, that full employment is rare. Even Messrs. Ripley and Ogle, who carry on an extensive business, cannot at all times give employment to their hands. Out of the 10,000 weavers in the district, it is rare—perhaps I ought rather to say, it never occurs—that some are not out of work. On this point, the following testimony may be offered from Joseph Best's examination :—

" ' 20. Is there now full employment for weavers ?—It is much better than it was in 1836 and 1837 ; but there are still some out of employment. There are also many who are only partially employed.

" ' 21. You yourself stated that your looms are idle ; how long have they been so ?—About three weeks.

" ' 22. You say that during 1836 and 1837 employment was slack ; did that affect wages ? —Wages have not risen since. In the best of times there are always men enough out of employment to keep down wages.'

" Joseph Cromack, who stated himself to be able, with good work and constant employment, to earn 20*s.* a-week, said his earnings in 1837 would not average more than 13*s.* a-week. In like manner, Abraham Worsnop gave evidence as follows :—

* Mr. Hickson's Report, p. 76.

Irregularity of Weavers' employment.

"'6. If I could have full employment all the year, as I have had for the last three months, I could earn 17*s.* a-week; but that would be rather over than under.

"'7. Had you full employment last year?—No; from November to November I made exactly 11*s.* 1½*d.*; and, previous to this quarter, I have stated I was one month and I had not an hour's work.'

"It has been already stated, that the papers put in by the several witnesses referred exclusively to the year 1837. The statement for the township of Holbeck, delivered in by Joseph Best, shows the total net earnings of 174 men to have been 3,130*l.*, which will make an average of just 7*s.* per week. This would make it appear, that in 1837 the weavers of that township were not above half employed.

"The statement for Armley, given in evidence by James Cromack, makes the average earnings of the weavers of that township, in 1837, 9*s.* a-week. The Bramley statement, put in by Joseph Middlebrook, is rather better, as it makes 10*s.* 6*d.*

"To estimate the exact measure of these periods of depression would be quite impossible There can be no doubt, however, of their constant occurrence. Their injurious effects upon the condition of the weaver, it is easy to perceive, must be much more intense than a permanent reduction of wages with constant work. The habits of a people, receiving at all times 10*s.* a-week, would be much more conducive to their own comfort, in every way, than the same average sum distributed in the shape of higher wages, during one part of the year, lower wages during another, and no wages at all during a third portion; yet this is precisely the fluctuating condition to which the cloth weaver is liable.

"In the evidence taken at Horsforth, a clothing township just without the limits of the borough of Leeds, an attempt was made to estimate the average effects of periods of depression. First, as to the severe suffering of 1837, one witness, Charles Fletcher, gave evidence as follows:—

"'13. Have you any statement of the earnings of last year?—I have a statement made out, by going from house to house, when we first heard of the commission, in December last (1837). We took a report of earnings from 340 looms, and the whole sum earned was 5,374*l.* 15*s.*, which gives 15*l.* 16*s.* 2*d.* each loom, good workmen and bad workmen taken altogether; the weekly average would be 6*s.* 1*d.*; from that there is deducted for rent, light, and repairs, of 1*s.* 3*d.*, which leaves a weekly average of 4*s.* 10*d.*' Accompanying the evidence of the above witness is a written statement, from which the following is taken. It embodies the estimate alluded to:—

"'It was also ascertained that the weavers of Horsforth, *if fully employed,* would average 12*s.* a-week, taking skilled and unskilled persons together; some would earn a little more, and some less; but it was found that the weavers in Horsforth are unemployed one-sixth part of their time, which will make their average earnings 10*s.*; from this sum there will be 1*s.* 3*d.* to be deducted for rent, for the loom, light, &c., leaving 8*s.* 9*d.* per loom for the weavers of Horsforth.' One of the witnesses examined at Yeadon, a township a few miles north-west of Horsforth, said, at the conclusion of his evidence, 'I wish also to state that we have had four panics in eight years; the first lasted half a year, the two next a quarter of a year each, and the last half year, adding something for the fact already stated, that there are always some few out of employment at the best of times, the Horsforth estimate of one-sixth as an average, receives confirmation.'

"To say that the 10,000 weavers of the district around Leeds were out of employment three months in 1837, is, I am convinced, within the truth; as an aggregate average, calling wages only 10*s.* per week, we have a sum of 65,000*l.*, of which the weaving population were deprived. We often felicitate ourselves on the large sums raised to relieve the distresses of particular classes during periods of depression; but we are too apt to overlook the extent of the evil to be remedied. No relief, in fact, can make up for even a short period of stagnation. When the general rate of wages is low, as in the case of the weavers, as well as in that of the agricultural labourers, there must be acute suffering; it is for this reason that it is especially incumbent on the Legislature to avoid all measures which have a tendency to promote, rather than check, commercial fluctuations, by far the most serious evil the weaver has to endure."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Chapman, Vol. I., p.* 535—7—8.

A similar irregularity of employment is attributed by Mr. Symons to all the Scottish hand-loom weavers.

Mr. Symons.

"There is no constancy of employment in any branch of Scottish hand-loom weaving; all are liable to periodical stagnation; and there were few of which some portion of the weavers were not thrown wholly out of employment during the crisis of last summer; in fact, these frequent stagnations are a considerable part, though far from the whole, of the grievance. In May, this year, 756 of the Paisley looms were idle; in two months subsequently they were all, or very nearly all, again employed; at the present time, August, 1838, all the Paisley and nearly all the Glasgow looms are in full employment, and some employers have already raised wages ⅛*d.* to ¼*d.* per ell on pullicates, and in Paisley the lower class of wages is raised by 20 per cent.

"In April there were 365 idle in Glasgow; perhaps in six weeks there may be from 500 to 600 weavers seeking webs in both places.

"In the check and striped ginghams, a very few weeks ago, the demand slackened so much, that a large hand-loom factory was compelled to work short time; even at Jedburgh, notwithstanding the extraordinary impulse recently experienced in the Scottish woollen trade,

both manufacturers and weavers complained of the *inconstancy* of demand and employment." —*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Symons, Vol. I., p.* 8—9. Irregularity of Weavers' employment.

"The inference," says Mr. Austin, in his report on the south-western parts of England, "from all my evidence is, that the weavers, taken as a body, are out of work one-third of their time, which reduces the income of the master weaver, for one loom, to 8*s.* instead of 12*s.* a-week, and that of the journeyman to 7*s.* instead of 10*s.*"

Mr. Austin.

"During the time that the weaver has no work on his loom he incurs debts, a part of which he pays off when his earnings are higher,* but he is rarely in advance of the world; few are ever in a situation to save in good times, to provide for adversity; those who trust them are generally losers, and sell to them perhaps as much from charity as profit.

"He must, consequently (if he do pay), pay dear for all he consumes; he must take just such bad or indifferent articles as they will let him have; he is, therefore, badly fed and at a dear rate.

"This is a sad demoralizing state of things, but it is true, and even extensively so.

"Referring to the evidence of a person† deputed by me to go from house to house to inspect personally the condition of the weavers, and to obtain from each family a statement of income and expenditure, I find that, 'in the 74 houses he has visited to procure this statement, there is great distress. In some of them he was told they had not a bit of bread nor a potatoe in the house, and he believes this to be true.'

"To sum up, I should say that one-third of the whole number were in a worse situation than the agricultural labourer in amount of income, one-third on a par in that respect, but without the advantages of cheap rent, occasional food and fuel, and a settled habit of life, arising from greater regularity in his wages and employment; the remainder are in tolerably good circumstances."‡—*Vol. I., p.* 451—453.

Mr. Otway gives a nearly similar account of the Dublin woollen weavers, who are, he says,

Mr. Otway.

"Generally kept idle for want of work for one-third of each year. The average earnings of the woollen weavers for the last three years amount to from 8*s.* to 10*s.* a-week, making allowances for the time they are kept idle, and the fines and deductions to which they are subject. The periods of idleness, which are very frequent, act most injuriously on the woollen weavers; if they had full employment, the industrious portion of them would, on the present rate of wages, earn from 15*s.* to 18*s.* a-week on each loom, clear of all expenses. It was stated in evidence that the woollen weavers earning from 10*s.* to 15*s.* a-week, are worse off than other weavers earning only 7*s.* or 8*s.* a-week, from their bad management, improvidence, and intemperance; that if they were kept working the whole year round except one week, they would be starving that week."—*Vol. I., p.* 661.

It is not, however, by the mere reduction of average wages that the evils of fluctuation are to be estimated—

Dr. Mitchell.

"Long want of employment," says Dr. Mitchell, "has a strange benumbing influence. Necessity at such times teaches to half exist on almost nothing, and this diminishes mental and bodily energy; and the habit of indolence, from doing nothing from day to day, becomes a ruling principle. There is a strong instance of this at Braintree. When the crape weavers of that place, after being for months idle, had, on a demand springing up, work given to them in 1837; the manufacturer found, after some weeks, that exceedingly little was done, and he ascertained that they were not engaged at anything else, but too indolent to work as formerly. He was, therefore, obliged to exact from every one a condition, that a certain quantity should be done every week, and that, too, was much less than they could do, under a penalty of a fine, and risk of being totally discharged."—*Vol. I., p.* 376.

Even the high wages of occasional prosperity are mischievous to those who have not the habits necessary to their judicious or innocent expenditure.

Mr. Austin.

"Whenever," adds Mr. Austin, "the monopoly of any new invention has enabled the proprietor to give high wages, or that he has been compelled so to do by the difficulty of procuring a sufficient number of workmen instructed in the new art, or by the effect of combinations among the operatives, the consequence is frequently drunkenness, neglect of their work and of their families.

"I do not mean to say that this is universal, but it is of more frequent occurrence than where wages are at a medium rate. Those who have been in the best circumstances, as regards wages in the trades which have come under my observation, have the worst reputation. Those who are generally the best characters for steadiness, are persons who, by giving their whole time to their employment, can earn from 12*s.* to 15*s.* per week."—*Vol. I., p.* 473.

"The Rev. Bryan King, of St. John's church, Spitalfields, speaking of the silk weavers of that district, says,

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* "This debt is frequently never repaid.

† "This person was considered by those manufacturers who knew him, and by the weavers also, to be a very competent and proper person for the purpose.

‡ "That they also are worse paid than other branches of the trade is acknowledged by all; a manufacturer states, they are generally, and were in better times, a poor class of people, and the adults in other branches of the manufacture are better paid than the weavers."

Irregularity of Weavers' employment.

Rev. B. King.

"'That the condition, religious, moral, intellectual, and physical, of this class of operatives is of a decidedly lower standard than that of the other trades of their neighbourhood, appears to be an almost universally recognised fact. And yet,' he remarks, 'to a person of prudence and frugality, and in other respects of ordinary well-regulated moral habits, there are perhaps few occupations of a similar grade which offer equally favourable opportunities for the developement of a high moral and even intellectual character. The circumstance of the weaver's work being necessarily performed in his house, in the midst of his family, would appear especially favourable to the growth of the domestic virtues and charities both in himself and his children. The fact of his working by the piece ensures a steady attention and perseverance in his employment, whilst the nature of the work itself stimulates the mechanical ingenuity of the workman, by its constant demand upon his invention for contrivances to meet the ever-varying patterns. But,' he adds, 'on the other hand, the extreme alternations of occupation and idleness experienced in a trade subjected to commercial changes in common with others, and to the caprices of fashion, perhaps far exceeding all other employment, these alternations acting upon persons who are unprepared by moral habits of providence and frugality to provide for such contingencies, must evidently degrade the great mass of minds which are subjected to its operation.'"—*Vol. I., p.* 251. *Mitchell.*

Mr. Keyser.

"A temporary improvement in the state of trade," says Mr. Keyser, "has too often led to carelessness, neglect, and sometimes even to dangerous excesses. Many good workmen by such conduct have lost their employment, and thus, by being for a time in comparative prosperity, have been finally reduced to the deepest distress."—*Vol. I. p.* 493.

Mr. Miles.

"The habits of the weaver," remarks Mr. Miles, "are as unsettled as his earnings; he feels little or no inducement to set his house in order this year, because his goods might be seized the next. It is not so, however, with the mechanic or an agricultural labourer, whose earnings are more regular and steady; he knows what he has to depend upon; his habits become fixed; he supplies his cottage more or less with furniture, and adds to the comforts of his home with a conviction that necessity will not compel him to dispose of them. This remark holds good to all classes of work-people who earn certain, as well as those who earn precarious, wages. The brickmaker, for instance, obtains good earnings in the summer-time; the sawyer is a roving and uncertain trade; the postboy earns money one week, and none the next; and the consequence is, their houses are dirty and ill-conditioned, and their habits loose and unsettled. On the contrary, the mason, the carpenter, and the agricultural labourer, obtain regular wages, and in most of their houses there is a degree of comfort, and amongst the men a stability of conduct."—*Vol. II.* p. 398.

Mr. Otway.

"The silk weavers of Dublin," says Mr. Otway, "are thrown out of employment, taking the average of the last three years, for from two to three months in each year. The wages received during the period of employment, with frugality, should enable them to provide against these depressions of their trade, and, if equally divided, would afford an adequate means of subsistence throughout each year. Yet, on the recurrence of these stagnations, they are unable to meet them, and maintain themselves by going in debt, or by having recourse to the pawn office. During a renewal of employment they are seldom able to clear themselves before another stagnation occurs, which they are in a worse position to meet. Thus, from want of abstinence and forethought, and the fluctuations between full employment and total idleness, they are involved in a circle of evils reproducing and increasing each other, until they are left in such a state as to be reduced, on the slightest fluctuation or depression in their trade, to a condition of absolute starvation. They present continually the deplorable spectacle of a body of able and skilful tradesmen, with large families looking to them for support, whose average yearly earnings ought to be sufficient for their maintenance, reduced to the necessity of depending for their supply of the necessaries of life on the bounty of their friends, or on the unprofitable charity of the public."—*Vol. I.* p. 613.

General results as to condition of Weavers.

We have already disclaimed the intention, indeed we have denied the possibility, of making this Report a substitute for those of our Assistant Commissioners. But, we have endeavoured to give a general, though a superficial, view of the condition of the numerous and diversified classes comprehended under the general name of hand-loom weavers. We have shown that, with the exception of those employed on the coarse manufactures for domestic use, which require strength from the workman, and command a regular sale, their condition is a painful one—distressing where wages are low, and subject to frequent vicissitudes where they are high; and we have shown that, as a general result, the lowest wages are found among the weavers whose business requires the least strength or skill, that their wages are generally somewhat better when rather more skill though not much strength is required, and better still where the strength of an able-bodied man is necessary, and that the highest wages are paid where the fabric requires both skill and strength, or unusual skill, though the irregularity of the demand for such fabrics may keep down the average annual income of the workman.

But we have already remarked that the degree of strength and skill required are not the only elements which decide what shall be the comparative wages of different classes of workmen. The demand for these qualities operates on wages solely by limiting the *supply* of labour. But there are other causes by which that supply is influenced, and there are causes, numerous and important, which affect the

demand for labour. We propose to consider the influence on the wages of the hand-loom weavers of all these causes.

Causes affecting the supply of labour.

The principal causes which influence the *supply* of labour in any business are three. First the degree in which it is attractive or disagreeable; secondly, the facilities for engaging in it; thirdly, the degree in which it affords employment, either in the main labour itself, or in occupations subsidiary to it, to the wife and children of the workman. These influences are generally permanent, and apply to the business in question at all times, and wherever it may be situated.

Causes affecting demand for labour.

The principal causes which affect the *demand* for labour in any business are generally temporary and local; they seldom affect more than a portion of the work people engaged in the business, and only at a particular time and place.

Of these causes the principal are—first, the recency or long establishment of the business; secondly, increase or diminution of the consumption of its produce; thirdly, the competition of rival producers, and fourthly, combinations.

It is to be observed, that temporary alterations in the supply of labour, or in the demand for it, may, during their continuance, as frequently raise the workman's wages as they may depress them. But durable alterations are always to his disadvantage. No cause can permanently keep the wages of any large class of artificers above the proportion which the skill, strength, and the sacrifices of comfort and ease which are required from them, bear to those required from the general body of labourers; but more than one cause may keep them under the general level for an indefinite period; in fact, until, as a separate class, they shall have ceased to exist.

As the causes which affect the demand for labour are rather accidents than properties, rather exceptions than rules, we think that it will be most convenient to consider them before we treat of those which influence the supply of labourers.

I. Recency of business.

I. First as to the recency of a business. The evidence of our assistant commissioners is full of examples on the high wages obtained on almost every fabric at its first introduction. The absence of competition enables the manufacturer to obtain a high profit, and induces him to extend his operation, and to bribe workmen into his service by an increase of wages. But this prosperity carries in itself the seeds of an early decay. Other capitalists and other workmen press into the new employment; it becomes the interest of each manufacturer to reduce the price of the commodity in order to extend its sale, and the interest of each workman to accept lower wages as long as those wages exceed, in the least, the average wages which he could obtain for his labour in any other employment; until at length the price of the commodity, the profits of the manufacturer, and the wages of the workman sink to their natural level.

The following evidence given by Mr. Kingan before the Committee of the House of Commons on hand-loom weavers in 1834, in answer to questions 215 and 217, illustrates the rise and fall of wages, on the introduction and subsequent disuse of new articles in the fancy trade:—

Mr. Kingan.

"In the last 20 years there was hardly any rise ever took place in an old article. I never knew a rise of wages in a thing which had been long made; but the wages were very high when a new article was introduced; then, as the article became old, it became depressed, till it became so bad and so low that it went out of use or fashion. That was the general history of everything in cotton manufacture in Scotland. The general rule of all fancy goods is, that as they are introduced, they continue to descend and descend until the article becomes so bad, and the wages so low, that they become stale and coarse, and badly manufactured, and they go out of use, and some new articles supersede them.

"217. Did they supply the same demand for labour?—In general greater. When the new article was introduced it gave a fillip to all sorts of labour, because it relieved the old article of its hands, and sometimes it did more than compensate."

II. Increase or diminution of consumption.

II. The second cause which we have mentioned as affecting the demand for the labour of any work people is the increase or diminution of the consumption of the article which they produce. We have already remarked that a diminished consumption of the produce of their labour must frequently affect those artisans who produce commodities that may be more or less sparingly or carefully used, and more or less frequently replaced, particularly if they are commodities of only occasional demand, or superfluities owing their use merely to fashion, the consumption of which expands in general prosperity and is diminished or discontinued as soon as economy becomes necessary. Still more subject to such a calamity are those, on whatever articles employed, who work for a distant market, and who are affected therefore, not only by the commercial vicissitudes of their own country, but by those, still more difficult to foresee, which may affect the foreign consumer. And both the intensity and the duration of all these disturbing causes will be aggravated, if the commodities pro-

Causes affecting demand for labour.

duced by the labourers in question be from their own nature unfit to be accumulated, when the demand is slack, in anticipation of an improved market: or if the fixed capital, by which the labourer is aided, is small, or belongs to the labourer himself, so that he cannot hope for employment from a capitalist at periods when his work is unsaleable: or if, by refusing at such periods to accept lower wages, he voluntarily rejects the opportunity which is offered to him. The Reports of our Assistant Commissioners show that the wages of the larger portion of the hand-loom weavers are affected by one or more of these temporary disturbing causes, and that those of some classes suffer under almost every one of them.

We use the word *suffer* because we believe that fluctuations of all kinds, whether in wages, in employment, or in the prices of the principal articles of consumption, are in the long run injurious to the moral condition of the labourer, though their temporary effect may be as often to his immediate pecuniary benefit as to his disadvantage. In a subsequent portion of this Report we shall have to mention these fluctuations as one of the causes which make hand-loom weaving attractive, though there can be no doubt that it is also one of those which diminishes the happiness of those engaged in it.

III. Competition of rival producers.

III. The third cause influencing the wages and condition of particular branches of weavers, namely the competition of rival producers, requires to be considered more at length.

It is obvious that in the same market all commodities of the same kind and of the same goodness will sell for the same price, whatever be the means by which they have been produced. The purchaser will not pay more for a piece of cotton woven by hand, than for a similar one woven by power, though the latter may have cost less to the producer. It is obvious, too, that no manufacturing capitalist will voluntarily accept a less profit than he could obtain by using the cheapest mode of production that he can employ. His interest as a tradesman must almost force him to use the instrument which is least expensive, in proportion to the effect produced, and, if he finds that he is using processes more costly than those employed by his rivals, to escape from that condition, either by adopting the means of production used by them, or if he continue to use his own, by reducing their expense. Every inferiority in the means of production,—every inferiority in the habits or skill of the workman, or in the tool which he employs, and even every natural deficiency arising from want of coal or of water, or of means of communication, falls ultimately on the price of the workman's labour. The purchaser will not consent to its being met by an increase of the price of the commodity, and the manufacturer is never willing, and seldom able, to deduct it from the small portion of the wholesale price which constitutes his profit.

We do not mean to represent these effects as immediate. The mechanical improvements which produce changes in manufacturing processes so great as to substitute one class of workpeople for another, such as the mule or the power-loom, are of slow introduction. Nearly 20 years have passed since the application of the power loom to wool, and though constantly extending, it is still much less employed for that purpose than the hand-loom. So much less, that its use does not seem to have as yet affected wages in the woollen trade. Again, the rise of a manufacture in a new district is always gradual. Years therefore generally elapse before the influence of a new process, or of a superior local advantage, is shown in a diminished price of the manufactured article. During this interval the effect of either is rather to give higher wages and higher profits where it has been adopted, than to lower those obtained in the establishments where it has not come into use. But sooner or later its influence is inevitable, and the workman who is unwilling or unable to obtain work under the new system, must submit to lower wages, and, in many cases, to irregular employment. He often attributes his calamities to his employer, and often attempts resistance by combination and violence. But the influence against which he contends is irresistible. The manufacturer who should yield to the wishes or to the menaces of his work people, and attempt to maintain a rate of wages greater than the price of the commodity will justify, must in time be ruined, and the only change on the workman's fate would be, that his employment, instead of continuing at a depressed rate of wages, would cease suddenly and altogether.

Power-loom.

One of the most melancholy instances of the mode in which the introduction of improved manufacturing processes affects those who are unable or unwilling to adopt them is found in the contest which has been long going on in many cotton and silk fabrics between the power-loom and the hand-loom.

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The steam-engine, always exerting the same force, produces a more uniform texture, and can finish a larger quantity of web in the same time. Its produce is both better and greater. In the fabrics, therefore, on which the power-loom can be employed, it must supersede the hand-loom weaver, unless the latter can furnish his work at a cheaper rate. The consequence is, that with every improvement in the power-loom, which either cheapens its services so as to enable it to work on even terms with the hand-loom, or renders them applicable to a new fabric, the demand for the labour of the hand-loom weavers employed in producing similar articles diminishes, and, if their wages remained unaltered, must cease; since the manufacturer who persisted in employing them must be undersold. Their obvious resource is to take work at the power-loom, which in many cases would employ them all; but partly the dislike of factory restrictions, and partly the aversion to change, which prevails in proportion as education is deficient, leads the great majority of them to stick by the hand-loom while it will afford a subsistence, however poor. They are forced, therefore, to offer their services at a rate of wages which render them rather cheaper than those of the power-loom; and which can continue only until some further improvement shall again have made the power-loom a successful rival, and the hand-loom can be kept at work only at a still further reduction: and thus the unequal race continues, until the hand-loom weaver, finding the united wages of himself and of his family unequal to support life, is gradually ground out of the market, and forced to endeavour to find some other employment. Under the old Poor Law system, indeed, even the state of things which we have described need not have decided the matter, since the deficiency of the hand-loom weaver's wages might have been supplied out of the rates, and his parish taxed to prolong indefinitely a mischievous and hopeless contest.

The following extracts from Mr. Otway's Report on some branches of the linen and cotton trade in Ireland are painful but instructive examples of the influence which is exerted by the work people in one district by the rivalry of improved manufacturing processes in another.

Mr. Otway, Drogheda.

"I would now direct the attention of the Commissioners to the condition of the linen trade in Drogheda. The total number of linen weavers in occasional or permanent employment in Drogheda and its vicinity are about 1,890. The white cloth 27 and 30 inch wide weavers, who amount to 1,200 out of the total number, are not able to earn more than from 4*s* to 6*s*. a-week; and deducting 2*d*. on each shilling for the expenses attendant on the weaving, winding, and dressing, the net receipt of the weaver averages only from 3*s*. 4*d*. to 5*s*. a-week; the winding is, in most cases, performed by a member of the weaver's family. This is the lowest rate of wages I have met in the trade, and the weavers of Drogheda are in a most distressed condition. The numbers of individuals depending on each weaver for support, as far as I could learn from personal observation or inquiry, amount on the average to six; and the occasional earnings of the weavers at other employments are very small, though they avail themselves of harvest work, and some of them are bound to pay the rent of their cabins by agricultural labour, at whatever time their landlords require it, which is, of course, always at the busy season of the year.

"The cabins that the weavers live and work in, are fearful specimens of what habit will enable a human being to endure; it is impossible that any good description of work could be woven in such sinks of filth; but the very dirt is their principal means of support. I could easily explain, when I visited them, why fever and the cholera had made such dreadful ravages in Drogheda; there is no attempt made at drainage, and after rain it was almost impossible to enter the dwellings; what with the overflow of the noisome pools at the door and the droppings in the cabin from the mouldy and broken thatch. I have seen whole web so befouled with these droppings from the sooty roof, as to defy a guess at the nature of the fabric. That a corporate town, entrusted with public property for the benefit of its inhabitants, should have permitted such a state of things, is to me inexplicable; I am persuaded that no part of Europe, or, I might add, of the world, presents such a spectacle of dwellings for human beings as part of Drogheda.

"I found no dissimilarity in the rates of wages paid by the different masters for weaving in Drogheda. Whenever I have investigated statements of this kind, I have always found that either the description of the raw material given in the instances to which I have alluded was easier made up, or that the work of the higher-paying employer was of a better description, and required to be made up with greater care; the evidence on this head, without full consideration and investigation, would be likely to mislead. Though Drogheda, from the poverty of its weavers, would afford greater facilities for a dishonest employer (if in his power) to take advantage, for any long period, of the necessities of his weavers to reduce the amount of his wages below the rate which the state of the market would enable him to pay, and although the circumstance of the great body of the Drogheda weavers being reduced to the minimum of subsistence, might lead to the supposition that this had taken place, yet all my evidence goes to show that no real variation in the rates of wages has occurred, and that the manufacturers pay as high a price for the weaving of their cloth as the market will allow them to do. The fact is, that at a certain low rate, they can obtain a demand for their goods in the market, which merely enables them, at very small remuneration to all parties, to con-

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Mr. Otway, Drogheda.

tinue in the trade; at this rate they can obtain an extensive demand; but the competition in the trade is so great as not to enable them, under the circumstances in which they are placed, to increase the wages of their weavers. The competition amongst manufacturers prevents the possibility of any one employer paying less to his weavers than the demand in the market would allow of his doing, after deducting his fair profits. There are 60 manufacturers employing hand-loom weavers in Drogheda; and if any one of the 60 were to attempt to reduce his rate of wages below what the demand would enable him to give, the other 59 would be glad to get his weavers, and I presume the weavers would be equally glad to go to them. If the number of the weavers were reduced, the manufacture would be proportionably limited; I think that if there were but 1,000 weavers instead of the present number, the wages would not be increased. The employers can only get, and only afford to give, a certain price. If there was an opening for agricultural or other employment which was more profitable to the present operatives, the consequence would be, not that the employers would raise their rate of wages, but that they would quit the trade.

"I have now to consider the causes which have operated to render it necessary to reduce the rate of wages in Drogheda to their present low rate, a rate lower than in any portion of the linen trade of Ireland; and the only instance in which the earnings of the weaver are reduced to the level of the common labourers, though it must not be forgotten that, on the average, there are two looms to each family; and that from the ease with which the fabric is woven, the labour of females, and young persons from the age of 12 to 20, is usefully applied to the manufacture. From the bounty on the exports of linen being paid according to quantity, not quality, and from the difficulty of obtaining large supplies of uniform quality in Ireland, the Irish manufacturers were able to export only mixed linens, while the English and Scotch devoted their attention to the manufacture of coarse linen, and were, in a short time, enabled to undersell the Drogheda manufacturer in his own market. This competition compelled the Drogheda manufacturers to lower wages, and restricted their profits. The manufacture of fine linens not being thus rivalled, the attention of Drogheda manufacturers was directed to this more profitable investment for their skill and capital, and most of the wealthy manufacturers emigrated to the counties Down, Armagh, Derry, and Antrim. These were amongst the first to introduce the system of giving out work to weavers, and transferring the domestic manufacture, carried on by the weavers, into the hands of a class of middlemen that had previously bought the made-up cloth by the weavers, and sold it to the wholesale merchants or exporters when bleached. But the hand-loom weavers did not emigrate with the manufacturers, and were left behind to struggle with a competition against which they could only successfully contend by the application of large capital and skill. Advantage was taken of the quantity of unemployed hand-loom labour thus thrown into the market, by a number of small manufacturers, who were tempted to enter the trade from the small fixed capital with which it could be carried on. The large manufacturers, employing from 100 to 200 weavers each, were obliged to lower their wages to meet the competition, and eventually left the trade. The small manufacturers were obliged to lower them still further; not being able to make such extensive sales, they could not take the same rate of profit.

"Then came the introduction of spinning flax by machinery in England and Scotland by the manufacturers, and its application to produce coarse linens, which cheapened their production. This system not being introduced into Ireland until a considerable period after its introduction into England and Scotland, the Drogheda manufacturers were not able even to keep their former ground in the market, and were obliged to have recourse to the mill-spun yarn instead of the hand-spun; and this they had to import; in many cases they exported the raw flax to Scotland and had it spun there; so that in the one case they had to pay the freight, commission, and insurance on the import of the yarn from Scotland, and in the other to pay the freight, insurance, and commission on the export of the raw material to Scotland, and the same expenses on its import back again converted into yarn; this gave an advantage of from six to eight per cent. on the raw material to the Scotch and English manufacturer. From the number of small manufacturers in the linen trade of Drogheda, and their inability to purchase or keep on hand a large stock of good yarn, added to the want of concentration of their weavers, and their want of means to procure good looms or tackling, they were unable to produce a uniform quality or a regular supply of cloth. The character of their fabrics became injured in the market; moreover the progress of bleaching was, and is, very imperfectly carried on, which added still farther to deteriorate the character and quality of the Drogheda cloth. In a Report made to the House of Commons, December 1782, it is stated, that a great quantity of Irish linen had been returned from England in consequence of being injured by the quantities of lime used in the bleaching; that 2,141 pieces had been returned to a man named Crothers; and that deficient measure and other frauds of Drogheda weavers, had forced the manufacturing of linens, similar to those of Drogheda in Lancashire and other parts of England. In addition to all these circumstances, the application of mechanical power in England and Scotland to weaving the description of cloth made in Drogheda, still further tended to enlarge the competition; and the manufacturers, instead of turning to those other branches of weaving with which power did not interfere, and for which an increased demand was arising, continued an attempt to struggle against a power with which they were unable to compete, except by a reduction of wages, which reduced the operatives to the minimum of subsistence; added to all this, the workmen, perceiving the continued depression of their wages, and not knowing the true cause attributed it to the avarice of their employers, and vainly attempted, by combinations and strikes among themselves, to fix and raise their wages, and to compel the employer to pay more for labour than there were funds to supply. But these attempts, though always acting injuriously, and leaving the operatives in a worse

condition than before, were of short duration; starvation soon compelled the weavers to strike to their employers. The Drogheda manufacturers attempted to introduce in 1827 a description of coarse sheeting, not made in England, and carried on the manufacture with great success for some time; there was an immediate advance on the wages of the weavers. The operatives, on the advance, concluded that their former wages had resulted from the will of their employers, and that even then they could afford to pay them higher wages; the consequence was a strike so extensive and continued that the orders could not be fulfilled; the trade consequently went away, and has never since returned."—*Vol. I., p.* 627—8—9, 630—1.

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"BANDON.

"The cotton-trade at Bandon is almost extinct, and the few weavers who continue to weave cotton are hardly able to eke out the most miserable means of subsistence. The numbers are rapidly on the decrease; Mr. James Scott, woollen manufacturer, comber, and spinner, states—

Bandon.

"'I have been carrying on the cotton business for the last 15 years. In the year 1825 I employed between 200 and 300 cotton weavers, most of them on corduroys, some on calicoes. The weavers were then able to earn from 10*s.* to 12*s.* a-week for weaving corduroys. The cotton weavers could not earn more than from 9*s.* to 11*s.* a week. The trade flourished up to 1829. There were at that time from 1,500 to 2,000 cotton weavers employed in Bandon and its vicinity. After the year 1829 I found that we could not compete with the English goods that were sent into the market; the power looms swept away our trade in three or four years. This town was then the seat of the corduroy manufacture for the south of Ireland; we might say, for all Ireland. When we found we could not compete with the English goods, we reduced our wages to what enabled the weaver to earn from 6*s.* to 7*s.* a-week. We found that even with this reduction of wages we could not compete with the English merchants, who sent corduroys into Cork, Bandon, and Dublin. When we found we could not carry on the trade with a fair profit to ourselves or the weavers we gave it up. Those that still carried on the trade reduced the wages so that the weavers could only earn 3*s.* or 4*s.* a-week gross wages. From what I know of the trade I think there are not more than 150 cotton weavers, both on cord and calico, now employed, and we think 3*s.* 6*d.* the very ouside of what weavers can earn at 14 to 15 hours work. They have been generally employed for about 10 months in each year for the last five years.'"

"Nothing can equal the distress of the poor cotton weavers of Bandon. I never witnessed greater misery than in their cabins and mode of living; few, however, remain at the trade, except old or infirm persons, and a few young boys, whom the poor parents try to keep at the loom, in order to preserve them from absolute destitution. I did not meet what I could call an able-bodied individual on a cotton loom. The moment the young weavers are able to turn to anything else, they quit the loom, and, if they cannot obtain labouring work, quit that part of the country, and look for employment elsewhere, or enlist. Bandon is one of the best depôts for obtaining recruits in the south of Ireland.

"The description of cotton cloth woven at Bandon, corduroys and check, is that kind of manufacture to which power looms have been most successfully applied; and I rejoice to say, that the competition has not been dubious, but so successful as to render it impossible for hand-loom labour to compete with it. The manufacturers are not even able to afford to pay what will supply the minimum of the most wretched means of subsistence to the able-bodied cotton hand-loom weavers."—*Vol. I. p.* 658.

In the first of these examples we see the depressing effects of an inferiority sufficient, not absolutely to destroy the local trade, but to reduce it to the actual verge of destruction. It is obvious that the slightest diminution of the price of the commodity, or increase in the wages of those who produce it, would immediately destroy it; and we see that in one instance that effect was produced by an attempt to force a rise of wages. Still the trade lingers on. But in Bandon the decisive superiority of the power-loom has destroyed it as far as concerns the able-bodied. And we fully agree with Mr. Otway in thinking this the less calamitous result of the two.

Similar instances of the depression or extinction of particular branches of hand-loom weaving in consequence of the superior local conveniences or improved processes of their rivals will be found scattered through the reports of our Assistant Commissioners. We do not think it necessary to do more than to refer to a few instances. Such as the depression of the woollen weavers in the south-west of England in consequence of the advantage which Yorkshire and the south-west of Scotland possess in their coal-fields; the result of which is, that the former are among the least prosperous portions of our artizans, the latter, especially in Scotland, among the most prosperous. Such again is the state of the hand-loom crape weavers, which is well stated and commented on by Dr. Mitchell in the following passage:—

Dr. Mitchell.

"The weavers of crape, or, as they call it, of *hard silk*, are under circumstances very different from the other silk weavers, and very little will be required to explain their case.

"By far the greater part of the crapes are now made by the power-loom, and it would be

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easy for the manufacturers to increase their power-loom establishments, and make the whole of the crapes thereby; but it is not their interest so to do. Like other branches of the silk manufacture, the crape branch as its high and its low tide. The manufacturers study so to arrange the extent of their power-loom factories, that they shall be able to produce all the goods which they expect shall be in demand at low tide; and they even venture to go a little farther, and to accumulate at certain times a stock of goods to be ready for the market as soon as there may be a brisk sale. But they do not venture to go farther in extending their factories; for if they were to do so, then during slack demand they would be obliged to have a part of their looms idle, and thus they would lose the interest of their capital fixed in buildings, and in machinery, of their looms, and in providing the power, whether by water or steam. To be able, however, to take advantage of an extraordinary demand for goods, they employ a certain number of hand-loom weavers; and when trade falls off, they gradually diminish the number, until perhaps they scarcely have any at all. Thus the factories are for what is expected to be the steady and permanent demand, and the hand-loom weavers are a body to meet the fluctuations of the market, and to be adjusted as circumstances may arise.

"The crape weavers are paid lower wages than other silk weavers, as may be seen by the accounts of Braintree and Norwich; nevertheless, at ordinary times they are not employed, as it is more beneficial for the manufacturer to get his work done by power. It is only when there is a large profit by increased price and a speedy return of capital that the manufacturer is induced to employ them.

"The inquiry to be made is, what, under those circumstances, can be done for the crape weavers, and the answer must be, that the only thing which at present can be done is, to explain to them what is the real state of their occupation, and advise them to flee from that occupation as soon as they can.

"The power of the Czar of Russia could not raise the wages of men so situate. He might, indeed, order a scale of prices to be paid to them for the work which they did, but in such case the manufacturer would soon cease to give out work, as it would be against his interest to do it.

"The Czar of Russia, either by fixing on a high scale of wages, or by a direct command, might put an end to the occupation altogether; and such would be a most merciful exercise of his unlimited power; but the authority of the government of a free country cannot thus control the subjects, even for their own good; and all that remains, therefore, is to enlighten the crape hand-loom weavers as to their real situation, warn them to flee from the trade, and to beware of leading their children into it, as they would beware of the commission of the most atrocious of crimes."—*Vol. I. p.* 378—9.

We have already remarked that the influence on any given class of manufacturers of improved processes or superior natural advantages on the part of their rivals is gradual. But it is gradual only at its commencement. It is a well known law of manufacturing industry that *cæteris paribus* with every increase of the quantity produced the relative cost of production is diminished, and, what is the same thing, that with every diminution of production the relative cost of production is increased. The instant, therefore, that any given class of manufacturers begin to feel that their competitors are outstripping them, the instant they find that commodities similar to their own meet them in the market at a lower price, that instant they ought to know that they are engaged in a contest which, if its elements continue the same, must terminate ruinously. If they can change those elements, if they can adopt the processes of their rivals, or procure for themselves similar local advantages, they may, perhaps, regain their ground. But if they are unable or unwilling to use these means, their relative inferiority must become more striking every year. The less they produce the greater will be the relative cost of the produce, while the more their rivals produce the less will be their relative cost of production. First comes a fall of profits, next a reduction of wages, then irregular employment even at reduced wages, until the capitalist is ruined or forced to change his business, or the seat of his manufacture, and the workman must follow his example or be supported by charity.

"We find by experience," says Mr. Gardner, a very intelligent manufacturer, examined by the Committee of the House of Commons on hand-loom weavers, in 1835, "that if we lose a market one year we lose it altogether. It is not well to trifle with trade: by trying experiments for only one year, we might shut ourselves out. Once in possession of the market they would keep it."—Q. 2321.

These considerations give a painful interest to the contests now in progress, or beginning or impending, between many of our important manufactures and foreign producers. Great natural advantages enjoyed by the United States of America, difficulty and insecurity in the managementof our manufacturing capital, occasioned by the perverseness and violence of our combined artisans, anti-commercial jealousy and folly on the part of many of our neighbours, and a still more anti-commercial, still more jealous, and still more absurd legislation of our own, are among the obstacles which oppose the British manufacturer for foreign sale.

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Our capital, our machinery, the excellence of our means of internal and external communication, our mineral wealth, and above all the superiority of our artisans in skill and in diligence, a superiority so great as often to render British labour at British wages cheaper than that of the lowly paid continental workman, are the advantages which once gave to us in almost every manufacture a decided supremacy.

Our advantage in mineral wealth continues. No other country has been able to avail itself of deposits of iron and coal so abundant and in such convenient juxtaposition; and we believe that as respects diligence and skill, with the exception of the operations requiring taste, our workmen retain over those of the continent of Europe their general superiority. The general result of the evidence collected by our Assistant Commissioners, by Dr. Bowring, and by the Committee on Manufactures and Trade of 1833, is that though the continental hours of labour are longer than ours, yet the daily amount of work done by a British workman is much greater. This remark, however, does not apply to America. There is indeed some evidence that American labour is more effective than our own,* and none that it is inferior.

But twenty-five years of peace have made a vast addition to the capital of our most formidable rivals, the inhabitants of the north-eastern parts of Europe, and of the United States of America. The means of internal communication in America are in many respects superior to our own. We have nothing to compare with their inland navigation, or with their four thousand miles of railroad. Central Europe has made slower advances, but Belgium is already covered by a network of railroads; many are completed, and still more are in progress in Germany, and the mere improvement in the ordinary roads, which from being among the worst are now among the best in the world, is a change almost as great as that from a good English road to a railroad. In machinery the advance both in America and in Europe is still more remarkable. In 1824 the Americans were considered as thirty years behind us.† In 1833 their cotton machinery was in general quite equal to ours, and in the coarser articles superior, so much so that all our recent improvements had come from thence.‡ Such was their progress in nine years. Again, in 1824 France appears to have been the only rival that we feared in machinery. She then supplied Germany and Switzerland, and in a great measure Belgium.§ In 1833 the machinery in many parts of Germany is described as equally efficient, though not so durable as our own.‖ In 1839, our Assistant Commissioner, Mr. Symons, found the trade of machine-making flourishing both in Switzerland and in Austria, vol. i. p. 113—119, and Belgium had already not only become independent of France, but a formidable rival to Great Britain.

Mr. Symons.

"One of the most ungainsayable evidences," says Mr. Symons, "of the progress of manufacturing industry in a country, is unquestionably that of the number of its machine-making establishments. In these, for extent Belgium surpasses, in proportion to her size and population, every nation in the world; whilst she can hardly be considered permanently second to England in mechanical perfection, when English engineers are at the head of all her establishments, English patents open to her immediate adoption, and English artisans in nearly all her *ateliers*.

Coal.

"There is but one chance of an obstacle to the career of Belgium in her manufacturing progress of competition with England, and that one of Her Majesty's Government have recently, no doubt with the best intentions, instructed their minister at Brussels to use his best exertions to remove—exertions which have met with the kindliest reception and success on the part of Belgium. I allude to the decreasing stock and increasing price of coal in that country. The following table of its rapid rise in price is extracted from statistical returns:—

	1836.		1837.
Mons . . .	*frs.* 7 and 8 per *tonne*	. . .	*frs.* 12 and 13 per *tonne.*
Charleroi . .	*frs.* 13 and 14 „	. . .	*frs.* 18 and 19 „

"Prior to 1836 Mons coal was 8 *f.* per *tonne* at the *maximum*: it has risen in price again since last year; and the Belgian government have consequently assented to the prayer of the English government to be allowed to supply them free of duty. A similar favour has been obtained, though not quite to the same extent, in France.

"It is not for me to discuss the policy of this conduct on our part: all I have to state is, that the manufacturers of Belgium look upon the importation of English coal as a God-send." —*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I. p.* 157.

Equally strong is Dr. Bowring's statement of the present state of machinery in Germany:—

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* Evidence of Committee on Trade and Manufactures of 1833, Answers 2618, 2619.

† Mr. Dunlop's Evidence, Fifth Report, Artisans and Machinery, p. 473.

‡ Evidence of Committee on Manufactures, Commerce, and Shipping, 1833, Answers, 640, 1972, 1973 2620.

§ Third Report, Artisans and Machinery, p. 105.

‖ Evidence of Committee on Manufactures and Shipping, 1833. 1127.

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Dr. Bowring.

"Our legislation prohibiting the export of machinery has wholly failed in its object. It has not prevented the exportation of machines from England, for such machines are to be found in every continental establishment; but it has led to the introduction of many machine-making establishments on the continent, and to the emigration of large numbers of our most intelligent artisans. I have often heard the observation made in Germany, 'You may try to stop the exportation of your machines, but how can you stop the exportation of the heads and hands that make them?' In fact, our prohibitions have only had the effect of transferring to the continent the trade in the manufacture of machinery, of which we might long have kept the monopoly; so that the prohibitions have injured nobody but ourselves.

"In some respects Germany may boast of superiority to Great Britain in her means for manufactures. The arts of design and their application to various fabrics are better understood; metals are more successfully wrought and worked: chemical knowledge, in its various branches, is farther advanced than with us. Steam-engines are found on all sides, and mechanical improvements have made rapid strides, and have served to open a wide field for the characteristic developement of German intelligence; which, if not especially distinguished for invention and discovery, seems particularly fitted for laborious and thoughtful application, and for the unwearied pursuit of any object which strongly interests its attention."*

We have already stated that the reports of our Assistant Commissioners show that the distress of many classes of hand-loom weavers arises from irregularity in the demand for their labour. They do not, however, show clearly how much of this irregularity arises from the increase of foreign competition. But of the formidable fact that this competition is increasing there can be no doubt.

Dr. Bowring.

"Much of the trade," says Dr. Bowring, "which was formerly carried on in direct importation from Manchester, has ceased. One example will serve instead of many. There was a district in Berlin frequently called Petty Manchester, in the Spandauer street and neighbourhood, in which were many large warehouses of British cotton goods. They have almost wholly disappeared. The owners have retired from a losing trade, either on their savings or have engaged in other adventures, some even in manufactures competing with England; so that all their influence, which was once on the side of free trade, is now flung into the protecting and prohibitory scale. And the evils of this state of things are increasing and must increase. Up to the present moment the importation of articles in the early stages of manufacture, to which more labour is to be applied, in Germany, is important and increasing, and serves, to a large extent, to fill up the vacuum arising from the diminished importation of wholly manufactured articles. The various materials, the produce of our superior machinery, such as cotton, woollen, linen, silk, and other thread—metals in the earlier progress of manipulation—in a word, articles which stand almost in the situation of *raw materials* to be worked in the later stages of manufacturing industry—form a very large portion of the imports of the Zoll Verein. They have been hitherto and are still imported at low rates of duty; but the protective system will as infallibly reach these in the progress of time as it has reached the articles of more complete manufacture, unless the field of intercourse be considerably extended by mutual modifications of the tariffs of Great Britain and Prussia. There will be a growing demand for higher duties on half-manufactured articles—a stronger desire to depend for their supply less upon the foreign and more on the home producer. Not that this state of things is at all likely to promote the future well-being and permanent interests of Germany; but it is quite certain, unless the tendencies of her legislation are towards the extension of her foreign trade, they must and will move in the direction of securing more and more of the home market to her manufacturers in every stage of manufacture. It is against all experience that the reasonings of a sound and enlarged philosophy, whose results, however splendid, require some time for their development, should be able to counteract and control the pressing claims of interests demanding present support, and which have been called into existence by the predominant legislation. And the influences of the Zoll Verein upon foreign nations, and especially upon Great Britain, are yet n their bud. In another stage of its progress, unless mutual concessions and friendly arrangements take place of the present hostile system, it will be in England that the action of the Zoll Verein will be principally felt, and will continue to be increasingly felt, by its progressive intrusions on manufacturing labour. It must invade more and more the regions where the raw materials receive the smallest quantity of added value. Thus the goods on which the manufacturing process is complete, have been the first to experience the effects of the Prussian tariff; for it cannot be too often repeated that many of the articles wholly manufactured, for which there was formerly a large demand, have ceased to find their way to the markets of the Commercial Union. No woven goods of low quality can any longer be sold, and the tendency of the tariffs is at the same time to intrude more and more upon the higher qualities which still are enabled to hold their place (but not very firmly) in the markets of Prussia.†

We now come to the third cause to which we have referred as influencing the demand for the labour of particular classes of hand-loom weavers at a particular time and place, namely combinations. We use this term in its common acceptation, as referring to combinations respecting wages, or the control of masters. It is of course evident that workmen may combine, and do so, for objects really bene-

* Report on the Prussian Commercial Union, p. 53.
† Report on the Prussian Commercial Union, p. 55.

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ficial to themselves and to the community, as in the case of benefit and mutual assurance societies. The shop meeting of Spitalfields, as now conducted, are a protection to the master's property. But this is not what is usually understood by the word "combination."

IV.—As the object of the combinations among workmen, of which we are now speaking, is the increase of their wages and the general improvement of their condition, and as they have adhered to them for many years, at the expense of great and widely-spread occasional suffering, at a sacrifice of individual liberty, such as no political despotism has ever been able to enforce, and with a frequent disregard of justice and of humanity, which only the strongest motives could instigate, it may be supposed that combinations have been found to produce the benefits for which such enormous evils have been voluntarily incurred. We believe, however, that, with a few exceptions, the tendency of combinations has been precisely the reverse of their object, and that, as hitherto directed, they have led to the positive deterioration of the wages and of the condition of those who have engaged in them, and of the far more numerous body who are excluded from them.

The purposes for which combinations are generally formed are four: 1st. Withdrawing the workmen from the master's control. 2dly. Rendering the wages of each class of workmen equal, as between the different members of that class, instead of being dependent on their comparative diligence, strength, and skill. 3dly. Raising wages, or, what is the same, preventing their fall. And 4thly, in order to effect the other objects, limiting the number of workpeople in the best paid classes.

The general basis is intimidation and a system of annoyance or injury to the property or persons of those who oppose, and in most instances of those who do not assist in the combination. As respects masters, the injury is generally confined to property, though cases have occurred even in England, and more frequently in Scotland and Ireland, of masters opposed to particular combinations having been wounded, maimed, or assassinated. These, however, are comparatively rare occurrences. The usual mode of attacking a master is in his property, by means of a strike—that is, a refusal to work for him, and a determination to prevent any other person from doing so. By this means his capital is rendered useless, his machinery spoils, his engagements are unfulfilled, and, if the combination can persevere, he must submit or abandon his business.

The obnoxious workmen, having little property, suffer in their persons, the punishments rising from simple assaults to blinding with vitriol and beating to death.

Some combinations are mere agreements among large bodies of wokmen as to their conduct in one or two particulars; others are associations for a temporary purpose, which terminate when the occasion has passed. The most numerous and most important are the permanent unions, separately formed in almost every trade, by comparatively small portions of the workmen employed in it. The affairs of the combination are managed by a committee, appointed directly or indirectly by the whole body—directly, where the constituent body is small, indirectly, where it is large; each factory or shop, in the latter case, appointing delegates, who themselves elect the committee.

The committee, whether directly or indirectly elected, and whether appointed for temporary or for permanent purposes, appears always to exercise over all the members of the confederacy unquestioned power. For the purposes of detection, it is omnipresent; for those of punishment, unlimited in power and in ferocity. It directs against any resisting workman the moral force of the public opinion of his class, and the dread of bodily sufferings more severe than those which any civilized tribunal inflicts. One of its duties is to lay down the regulations of the combination. Three rules are common to almost all combinations:—1st, that each member shall pay a certain weekly or monthly payment towards the expenses of the combination; 2ndly, that no member shall work under a stated price; and 3rdly, that no member shall work in company with any workman not a member of the combination, or for any master that disobeys its orders. To these are generally added, in the smaller unions,—1. laws to keep down the number of persons in the trade, by prohibiting the employment of those who have not served an apprenticeship, and by limiting the number of apprentices, either by confining each master to a given number, or by absolutely forbidding any one to be received as an apprentice unless he be a son, brother, or nephew of a journeyman: 2. laws either prohibiting piece-work, and requiring every workman to be paid by the day, and at the same rate, or, where piece-work is permitted, forbidding any workman to earn more than a given sum or to do more than a given amount of work in a day or a week; 3. laws pro-

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hibiting a master from discharging any workman without the consent of the whole body, and, in many cases, requiring him to take into his employment as new workmen those only whom the committee may choose to send to him. Some special regulations generally follow, adapted to the peculiarities of each trade, the object of the whole being to enable the combined body to fix the price of their labour and to escape the control of their master, or even to reduce him to subservience to themselves.

A combination frequently succeeds in effecting its immediate purpose, when the inactivity of the workmen in combination can produce the further effect of throwing out of employment other and more numerous sets of workpeople, or render useless a large amount of fixed capital. These two circumstances render the spinners so formidable to all other persons engaged in the cotton manufacture. A spinning factory worked by 700 or 800 persons does not require more than 50 or 60 spinners. Supposing the capital engaged in it to be about 100,000*l.*, which is a probable estimate, at least 75,000*l.* of that capital is fixed in the buildings and machinery. A strike by the 60 spinners renders useless, during its continuance, all this vast aggregate of human and material power. If, as is frequently the case, a power-loom factory is connected with the spinning factory, the influence of the strike extends still further—and further still if there are also dependent on it bleaching-works and print-works: 50 or 60 individuals can then control thousands of work-people, and hundreds of thousands of property. Armed with such powers, the spinners are found everywhere in strict combination, and in the receipt of wages far exceeding the average price of labour in the district.

The hand-loom weavers possess neither of these advantages; the machinery which aids them is generally their own property, so that they alone suffer from its inactivity, and, in most subdivisions of the business, they add the last finish to the product, and have therefore no further classes of work-people or capitalists dependent on them. Under such circumstances, there exists less combination among them than in most other trades. They are not, however, free from it, and its effects on their welfare may be best understood from the following statements, extracted from Dr. Mitchell's report on Norwich, and from Mr. Otway's on Dublin:—

Dr. Mitchell, Norwich.

"In the city of Norwich there has never been an Act of Parliament to regulate wages as in Spitalfields, but in lieu thereof there has been a scale of prices, either agreed upon by the weavers and manufacturers together, or arranged by the weavers and submitted to by the manufacturers, and such scale has been enforced by the union of the weavers, and by their committee, with a vigour which, until of late years, produced the most decided conformity."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Mitchell, Vol. I., p.* 311.

"In the time of the war the scale of prices had been raised, and in 1829, there was a meeting of the manufacturers, at which it was agreed that the price of weaving bombazines, for which 1*s.* 3*d.* was paid, should be reduced to 1*s.*, and so on in proportion with other fabrics. This was strenuously resisted by the weavers, who made a general strike, and several manufacturers suffered personal outrage. Mr. Henry Willett, in reply to a question whether he had not suffered himself, says, 'I considered that all the manufacturers who took an openly active part in this reduction were in considerable personal danger. I was myself, on returning from my warehouse to my dwelling-house, attacked by a multitude of several hundreds, and but for the assistance rendered to me by the Rev. Prebendary Wodehouse, my life would probably have fallen a sacrifice. I got into a court with a narrow entrance to it, and Mr. Prebendary Wodehouse placed himself at the entrance, and addressed the people, whilst I made my escape; but I could not return to my own house until a strong police force came to my assistance. In the course of that day the military had to be called out. Even at my own door a large stone was thrown at me, which might have proved very serious. Colonel Harvey, a magistrate, who was with me, was struck by a stone. Mr. Wright, who, with me and others, took an active part in this reduction, was waylaid, and vitriol was thrown into his face, and that gentleman thereby lost the use of his right eye. The rest of the manufacturers endeavoured to throw the blame on us, although many of them approved of the reduction, and were parties to it. The reduction, notwithstanding all this, was effected; the masters feeling that they must either obtain the reduction or abandon the trade.'

"Mr. John Wright, referred to in the preceding evidence, may be seen at his warehouse with a large green shade, which completely hides his right eye. He was not desirous of giving evidence, and it would have been unfeeling to have urged him to do so.

"In respect of the present time, many of the manufacturers most readily explained the state of dread under which they lived, but were unwilling to appear as witnesses.

"In 1831, a man who came in from the country for work, and was considered as doing it under the union price, was waylaid about five miles from Norwich, and dreadfully beaten with hurdles from the hedge, and was left on the ground. After they had left him, one of the miscreants turned back, and endeavoured to pour vitriol into his ear; some of the liquid ran down into his eye, and he lost the sight of it."

"The evidence of Mr. John Clarke will explain the system:—

"Do you consider that the Norwich manufacturers can give the present list prices, and

at the same time withstand the competition of Kidderminster and the towns in the north?—I do not think we can. I held out for the list prices as long as I could. About Christmas last applications were made to me for work below the list prices, and I gave some out.

"What was the consequence?—Some of my people went and told the union committee, and soon after Mr. Fish and a committee-man came to me, and charged me with destroying their prices, and said, 'We warn you to desist.' I said to them, 'I warn you to go down stairs;' this was on Tuesday the 30th of January last. The next day Mr. Fish came to me with a letter, which I now show to you. The last words are, 'Our every legal energy will therefore, and therefore only, be directed to oppose you in every shape.' They then called my hands together, and tried to operate on their minds. I went to the magistrates, and told them that I had no doubt some of my work was likely to be cut or destroyed. Soon after I had a letter, which I now show you, signed by 13 of my work-people, and with 19 names of other work-people, with crosses after them, declaring that they would not work for me. I took this letter to the magistrates, but I could not get redress, and the same night two pieces of work were cut, but I could get no redress.

"I have been told that your premises were watched?—Such was the case from February 8th to Saturday April 7th, the night before your arrival in Norwich. They knew of your coming. Whether they will again lay my premises under blockade, after that you are gone, I know not.

"I have met with no offers of protection from our magistrates, nor do I expect any. I have been obliged to send out my work by night, and that with considerable risk."

"Mr. Daynes gives evidence in perfect accordance with that of Mr. Clarke:—

"It was formerly very dangerous to send any work to the country; it was likely to be destroyed; and, in fact, goods have been destroyed; that occurred to some of my own. In common with many others, I have been greatly interfered with in my business, of which I can state one remarkable instance:—In London I was asked if I could make bandanas, and I made a sample, and stated at what price I could manufacture them; I, in consequence, had an order for 100 pieces. Soon after I began the work, a deputation of the union waited upon me, with a request that I would raise my wages 2*d.* a yard, as Mr. Francis had done. I told them that I had taken the order in expectation of accomplishing it at a certain price, which I had ascertained by inquiry among the weavers, and I could not afford to give more under that order. The union then told my weavers to give over working for me, and some of them sent in their work, and went on the parish. However, I persisted, and last winter, many being out of work, I had less difficulty in succeeding. From the first my own weavers were content, and why should the union interfere? Some manufacturers, in consequence of the union, have got their bandanas made at Sudbury."

"At the Mechanics' Institution, about a fortnight ago, 22d March last, I put certain questions to Mr. Fish, the secretary of the weavers' union, and I have a copy of them, and of the answers.

[*Witness handed in a copy, from which the following is an extract.*]

"'*Do you employ or pay a police or watch?—We do.*

"'*For what purpose?—To watch who go in and out of the premises of Mr. Clarke, and to advise them 'not to touch that unclean thing, called under-price work,' and to avoid his premises as they would a plague.*

"'*How much do you pay them?—Four pence per day.*

"'*Any other remuneration?—Yes, the persons employed to watch are persons who have been victimized by Mr. Clarke, and have an allowance of 8s. per week besides the 4d. per day.*'

"Do you know from observation yourself, that a watch has for some weeks actually been set?—It is quite notorious; and I have seen them myself. A manufacturer, of whose honour I can entertain no doubt, has informed me that he saw the watch, and heard one man say to the others, 'B—— his eyes! serve him out with vitriol, as they did to John Wright; but instead of putting out one eye, put out both.'

"'Do you consider that many of the manufacturers are under feelings of dread of personal violence?—Most certainly they are; and I have no doubt that many of them have told you so, although they dread to come forward and sign evidence to that effect.'"

"The conduct of the union, and of the weavers generally, in respect to the dispute respecting camlets, will be seen by the following narrative of Mr. Robberds:—

"'Having ascertained that manufacturers in other parts of the kingdom were selling camlets at lower prices than I could charge, and that they were enabled to do this by the lower rate of wages which they paid for weaving, I announced to my weavers, about the middle of last May, that from that time I should reduce the scale by which they were paid. Soon after I had taken this step, some men, styling themselves a deputation from the weavers' committee, came to speak to me on the subject. I inquired if they were camlet weavers, and having been answered in the negative, I stated that I had nothing to say to them, and would hear nothing from them; that I knew of no weavers' committee; that the regulation of wages was a qusetion to be decided between me and my workmen; and that I should allow no other parties to interfere. On this they withdrew, and I afterwards agreed to explain to two of my weavers, attended by a third person, the circumstances which rendered the proposed alteration necessary.

"'The rate of wages which I offered is still considerably higher than that given to the

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hand-loom weavers of Yorkshire, whose average earnings are not more than 12*s.* a week while, at my reduced rate, regular and industrious workmen can bring in from 15*s.* to 20*s.* per week, and their wives and sons (of a competent age) from 12*s.* to 15*s.* more.

"'The committee, however, although there were no camlet weavers among them, would not allow my hands to take any work. A watch was stationed, from six in the morning till twelve at night, at each end of the street in which my manufactory is situated, to observe all that was done, and to intimidate those who were willing to take work. There were many who stated, both to me and others, that they were anxious to be employed, but dared not, on account of the threats used against them. At length a few ventured to brave the danger; but some, as they were carrying away their work, were assaulted in the open streets, and forced to bring it back; others, who reached their homes in safety, were there beset by riotous mobs, and compelled to return the materials unwrought; and, in two instances, houses, where the work was in progress, were broken open during the night, and the goods destroyed on the loom.

"'Wherever I could obtain sufficient evidence, the offenders were taken before the magistrates, and in most of these cases the committee undertook their defence. Some of the parties were convicted of assaults, and fined, but the fines were immediately paid (no doubt by the committee), and the parties at liberty to repeat the same outrages. Some underwent short terms of imprisonment, and others were bound over to keep the peace, which they were among the first to break. Six of the watchers were summoned before the magistrates on a charge of obstructing my business. The evidence against them was clear; they were informed that the charge was proved, but were recommended to acknowledge their error, and to promise that the system of watching should be discontinued. They agreed to this, and the case was adjourned for a month. But this produced no good effect; the watching was continued as before. I, therefore, summoned three others on the same charge. The case was proved, and the men were bound over to appear at the assizes, to answer an indictment against them for a conspiracy. All these proceedings were of no avail; intimidation and violence, escaping thus almost with impunity, were carried to greater lengths. The dispute began to be rendered subservient to the purposes of party. One of the most useful members of the court of guardians was turned out by the parish which he represented, because he disapproved the conduct of the weavers; and candidates for municipal honours sought to acquire popularity by courting the promoters of these disturbances. Subscriptions were collected for their support, to which publicans and small tradesmen were the principal contributors: some, deluded by the idea that a high rate of wages would enable the working classes to spend more freely, and others influenced by the fear of becoming marked men, and losing their customers. Those who refused to give any money, or in any manner discountenanced the proceedings of the weavers, were abused as "under price" men, and every possible effort was made to injure them in their business. Thus encouraged, the committee issued hand-bills, announcing that they had sufficient funds to maintain the camlet weavers for several months; and it was generally understood that they received an allowance of 3*s.* each per week.

"In the meantime I had commenced preparations for making my camlet by the power-loom, and passed some weeks in Yorkshire for that purpose. On my return from that district towards the end of August, I found my weavers generally dissatisfied with the conduct of the committee, and severely pinched by starving so long on 3*s.* per week, when they might have been earning at least five times as much. Many of them applied to me for work. I told them I should give them none, unless they went publicly to the magistrates, stating that they were willing to be employed on my terms, and claiming efficient protection for themselves and the materials entrusted to them. They at once complied with these conditions, and an additional police force was engaged to guard, both by day and night, the houses of those who might take work. But before these arrangements were completed, a body of nine or ten men attacked the house of a weaver, named Wells, about 12 o'clock, in the night of the 28th of August. Having broken open the outer door, they forced an entrance into the room where the man and his family slept, and in which was also his loom. There, while one of them stood over him with a pistol, and threatened to shoot him, some of the others totally destroyed his work; but before they could extinguish a candle which the wife had lighted on the first alarm, two of them, named English and Engall, were recognized, and both were apprehended during the night. On the following day they were fully committed, and bail refused for them. Both of them are sons of publicans. English had been a notorious leader in all tumults, and his father's house the head-quarters, where some of the most active were always in attendance, to receive information, to issue orders, and distribute drink. The apprehension of these two men, and the vigilant observation of the police, produced an immediate calm. More weavers than I could employ came for work, and those who obtained it have been unmolested. My business is now proceeding quietly on my own terms, and offers have been made to me to take even lower wages than I am paying.

"But the consequences of these proceedings have been very injurious to the working classes; not only have they lost the circulation among them of at least 1,000*l.* in wages, but three months of idleness and delusive excitement have deteriorated all their habits. Many of them will never recover from the effects of their privations. One old man, who had for many years maintained himself decently, and for whom I had ordered work, came to thank me for it; but he added, 'I must give up. I have been obliged to sell everything, and starvation has brought me so low that I can do no more. I must go home to my parish, and for this I I have to thank the silk weavers' committee.'"—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Mitchell, Vol I., p.* 311—336—40.

The following is Dr. Mitchell's statement of the result of this combination :—

"The rate of wages hitherto paid at Norwich to the weavers is according to a scale settled by the weavers themselves, and submitted to, if not formally agreed to, by the manufacturers. This scale is the same both for summer and winter, and is the same in slack trade as it is when all hands are in demand. Such is obviously different from what things would settle down into if left to themselves. But the manufacturers have been accustomed to look upon this scale as authoritatively established, and to call it the fixed scale, although it is no otherwise fixed than the weavers demand it, and the manufacturers submit to it; though perhaps the manufacturers will say that their lives and properties would be endangered if they resisted it.

"Mr. Henry Willett, in partnership with his brother Mr. Edward Willett, carries on business on a very large scale, having sometimes from 800 to 900 looms employed, and at other times a much greater number. He considers that the condition of his weavers is very good when they are in employment, but that they suffer very much when out of work. He is of opinion that a rate of wages, fluctuating and adjusting itself according to the state of trade, would be much more advantageous both to the manufacturers and weavers. He states,—

"'I have little doubt that the effect would be to procure for the weavers nearly constant employment throughout the year. In all the large manufacturing towns of the north, when a slackness comes in trade, the manufacturers do not turn away their hands. Rather than that they should be idle, they allow them still to continue; but as they cannot then have sale for their goods, and must lay them up, and wait for a market, they cannot afford to give the same wages as at a time when they can get an immediate sale. They therefore then reduce the wages, to make up for the loss of interest upon the capital so locked up; but in Norwich we cannot do any such thing. The people will not work but for the rate of wages, which can be afforded only when the sale of goods may be immediate. We are not afraid to turn away a great many of our work-people when we have no occasion for them, because, from the system forced upon us, we know that we can always find a large mass unemployed; and although we always keep a great many hands constantly employed, it is because they are superior workmen, and we consider that it answers our purpose to keep them at work, whether the goods are wanted or not. Within the last week, a demand having sprung up, we have had no difficulty in engaging 600 or 700 new hands. If the Yorkshire principle were acted upon here, we should not turn our weavers off, but reduce their wages in a slack time, and advance them when trade became more active. My impression is, that the average rate of wages would be fully equal to what is now paid at the time when he is employed, and the weaver would have the advantage of constant work, instead of being out of employment one-third of the year, and some much more.

"'There is less capital employed in Norwich in manufacturing than in most towns in the kingdom, and the reason is, that the capitalists know the system of wages at Norwich, and that the capitalists have but little advantage over the man of no capital; but if a fluctuating rate of wages were to be established, my impression is, that the capital employed in the Norwich trade would increase so rapidly, that not only the present weavers would be constantly employed, but a large proportion of the population for 10 or 12 miles round the city. The situation of Norwich being so much nearer to the metropolis than the other large manufacturing towns, it would have a decided advantage if trade were to be carried on on the same principle.'

"Mr. Willett has never been able to get the weavers to act agreeably to his plan, in consequence of the interference of the committee of the union, and of their influence over the weavers. He says, 'I have endeavoured as well as I could to make them see their own interest. I endeavoured to reason with the men whom I had employed at a Macclesfield fabric, by which they were getting about 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week; I pointed out to them, that if they would work on another article which we were making, at the same rate of wages which they were paying in Yorkshire, then, instead of 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week, they would gain 20*s.* a week; but though it was so clearly for their own advantage, I could have no influence on their minds. They said that the price offered for that article was below the list price, and they would not take it; and I could not convince them that the ultimate effect of their conduct would be to drive from Norwich a trade by which 20*s.* a week might be earned, and extend one by which they would get only 10*s.*

"'Now I can give another instance in regard to a new fabric called mousseline de laine, a fabric with silk and worsted warp and worsted shoot. I had women working at them, and earning 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week. The committee came and examined the fabric, and said, that, in conformity with the analogy of the list prices, I was paying too low a rate of wages for it.' As I could not afford to pay more, and as the committee had sufficient influence over the weavers to prevent their continuing to weave it at the price which I had been paying, I took down the work, and gave up making it.'"—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Part II., p.* 389—91.

"The unhappy results of the violent conduct of the union, and the want of such a government and police force as would restrain such violent conduct, have been,

"1. The prevention of the introduction of machinery into the city.

"2. The prevention of the introduction of capital.

"3. The loss of many fabrics.

"As to the prevention of the introduction of machinery, Mr. Stark has given distinct evidence on this subject. Mr. Dodshon Blake, manager of the yarn factory, is of opinion that machinery would have been introduced long ago, and with great advantage, but for the mis-

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taken views of the operative weavers. He is of opinion that, to machinery, the city must in future look for its prosperity.

"Mr. James Spalding, an operative, states, 'One great cause of the distress in Norwich is the folly of the people in objecting to machinery. I know that capital has been driven out of our city by it which would have employed hundreds.'

"If the prejudices against machinery had been manifested by a disinclination to work in factories where machinery was employed, there would have been cause to deplore the fact, but no cause for imputing moral blame to the weavers of Norwich; but as the matter stands, their conduct cannot be otherwise viewed than as most highly to be condemned. The men of the union are not content with abstaining themselves from what work they choose, and with applying persuasion to others, they have employed physical force they have attempted to destroy life; they have inflicted the most grievous physical injury; they have brought men into terror for the safety of life, person, and property; they have denied to other men the right of judging for themselves, as to how they would employ their own industry; and all this because they hoped that it would be to themselves a benefit; and they cared not how much they might trample on the rights of others so be that they might obtain their own ends.

"The weavers manifest no tolerance towards any of their number who oppose their views; woe to the committee-man who advises counsel not in accordance with the opinion of the majority. 'I was turned out,' says Mr. Spalding, 'because I differed in opinion from them; there were five or six of us who firmly declared our sentiments; they said we were free traders, and plumped us right out.'

"By being a 'free trader' is understood in Norwich to be a person opposed to a fixed rate of wages, and desirous of leaving employer and employed in freedom to make their own arrangements.

"That the conduct of the union has prevented the introduction of capital is the opinion of many of the witnesses who have been examined. Indeed, what capitalist would wish to settle in a place where his life, his person, his property were insecure; where he was not at liberty to employ persons who were desirous of getting employment, unless on terms which he could not afford; where he was liable to the indignities and insults in defiance of law, to which the Norwich manufacturers are obliged to submit.

"Of the manner in which fabrics are driven from the city we have already had several instances. The following is a striking case stated by Mr. Hastings: Being asked whether of his own knowledge he knew of any fabric having been lost by the conduct of the union, he replies—

"'The lastings is one fabric, being that of which the upper part of ladies' shoes is made. When I was at Mr. Theobald's, I wanted to introduce lastings, and to give the same price as paid in Yorkshire; and we wrote to Yorkshire to know what was paid there; it was only 12*s.* 6*d.* a piece. We were willing to take 1*s.* off our profit, and add it to the wages, and we gave out the work at 13*s.* 6*d.*, and more we could not afford to give. Mr. Fish told my master that the weavers should not work for any such money, and the men were deterred and brought the work back; the effect is, that no lastings are now made in Norwich; that is one branch lost to us. The fact is, that Halifax is carrying off some of the best of the Norwich trade. The goods are made there as well as with us, and are sent to Norwich to be dyed, and then sent abroad. They cannot equal us in dyeing. If we cannot manufacture at such a price as to meet them, the consequence necessarily follows that we lose the trade. I was threatened to be shot in the streets for giving out the lastings at the price which we offered.'" —*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Mitchell, Vol. I., p.* 341—2.

The following is Mr. Otway's statement of the effects of combination on the silk trade of Dublin:—

Mr. Otway, Dublin.

"It is evident that the silk trade in Dublin has decreased, and, whatever may be the exaggerations as to its former state, that it is now confined to the manufacture of one fabric, the tabinets. There can be no doubt that the trade in weaving whole silk is extinct, and that the manufactures of velvets, handkerchiefs, and ribbons, are reduced to a few looms. The decline of the trade is attributed by J. Kelly, both an operative and employer, more particularly to the effects of combinations on the part of the weavers. This, he states, is the great cause of the decline of the trade. The effect of combinations is one of the great causes of the downfal of the trade and consequent distress. A man of the name of M'Connell, a silk manufacturer, who carried on the trade to a great extent, had a quantity of work going on, and made an agreement with his men, in one branch of the business, to get it done for less than the standard price. The body of the trade got information of it, and stopped his works; would not allow the men to fulfil their engagements; called a meeting, and ordered all his work home (*i. e.* the work he had out in the looms), unfinished, and fined him 10*l.* for committing that crime against their will. They would not suffer him to proceed with his business until he agreed to pay the fine, and the full price in future for all the work out. He paid the fine, and got his work finished, and when it was finished, quitted the trade. So disgusted was he with the conduct of the men, and the fearful effects of such a system of combination. 'I myself,' said he, 'about nine months ago, made an agreement with men (who solicited me) to give them work under the usual price, trade being remarkably low. The body got information, and called a general meeting on that business, and came to the unanimous resolution at the meeting that no person, for the future, should work for me. These resolutions were passed, and in a few nights after, my works were consumed by vitriol thrown in through the windows, by unknown persons, and no person connected with the trade would work for me

for fear of the body. Informations were lodged against 11 persons, by men who worked with me at the time, and they were tried in about five months after for combination; but in consequence of the terror exercised by the body over the persons who lodged the informations before the magistrate, the witnesses, on the trial, swore the direct contrary of the very informations they had given before the magistrate. They were then indicted for perjury. The effect of all this was to drive me from the business. The unions in my trade have regular officers, meetings, and collections to support their combinations. They would not allow me, though having served my full time to the ribbon trade, to work at the broad silk, though in every respect the same, except one being broad and the other narrow; a great hardship this; and as a manufacturer they would not allow me to take an apprentice at it. I look upon the system of combination which exists as one of the great causes of the decline of the trade. 'A few individuals frame a system of rules and laws, and call themselves "a common committee," tax the whole trade for their purposes, and enforce their laws and their system of taxation on the trade, the majority of whom are totally ignorant of their proceedings, and have no voice in the framing of their laws, but are obliged, from fear, to submit to the laws of this committee. The committee men are generally composed of leading undertakers of work, who give it out as well as weave it; and so they have the less forward and more humble workmen in their power by these means. The principal leaders of this body are generally great spokesmen, and are always sure of getting themselves in the first instance appointed on the committee by self-election. Part of the combination committee of each trade is in connexion with a general combination committee or body of all trades. To this each trade that has formed a body or a union sends its delegates; and generally, when any of their laws are to be enforced against any one who has come under their displeasure, the person to punish and the punishment is pronounced and awarded by persons connected with totally different pursuits and trades. This connexion with a general body of all trades is denied by the silk weavers; but though I cannot speak of it from personal knowledge, as I can of their own system of combination and its fearful effects, still I am fully persuaded and convinced of the truth of it.'

"Alderman Abbott, for many years one of the most extensive silk manufacturers and mercers in Dublin, states: 'I am acquainted with the state of the silk trade for the last 50 years. When I remember it first it was flourishing, and gave employment to a large number of individuals, consisting of silk throwsters, dyers, winders, warpers, weavers, and dressers; even as far back as I can remember, considerable fluctuations took place in the trade, but were merely temporary, occasioned by the wear of muslins and other fabrics. Up to 1829 I was engaged in the wholesale silk trade, employing a large number of looms; imported my own silk, and had it manufactured here. I left the trade in consequence of the combinations amongst the workmen. I called my weavers together, and they agreed to make a considerable reduction in the price of weaving; when they got the work out for the winter's trade, the committee of the combinators took the shuttles from them, and would not allow them to finish their work in the looms until I agreed to give the full London prices; in consequence of which, I did not think it safe any longer to continue in the trade, and I retired from business. This occurred in the year 1826. The weavers were accustomed to fix the prices of weaving; and, as I stated before, I called them together and told them, as the facility was so great for getting goods from England, and the protecting duty being taken off, that I could not with safety give them the London prices. I manufactured everything that could be made, from silk velvets, ribbons, &c. &c. &c. I believe there are very few silk weavers here now, except the tabinet weavers. I attribute the withdrawal of the trade in whole silks to the combinations of the men, who would not work at Manchester prices, but insisted on London prices, which the manufacturer here could not afford to give."

"The day or two previous to my leaving Ireland, I called on a manufacturer of high respectability, and the head of one of the oldest houses in the trade, who had previously (last May) given me evidence. He told me that since I had examined him, he had set up a hand-loom weaving factory for broad silks; had gone to England and expended a sum of 700*l.* in purchasing Jacquard-looms of the best construction, and a machine for winding silk. He took me to see his factory. I found it the best arranged, and the most healthy and convenient factory I had ever seen; but out of upwards of 30 looms, only 12 were at work, and the winding-machine appeared never to have been used. I asked the reason of this; he told me, when he had finished his arrangements there was a meeting of the body of the trade called, and that they had passed a resolution not to allow more than 12 weavers to work for him, and he was directed not, on any account, to use the winding-machine: 'The consequence is, sir, that although I give the same rate of wages as that fixed by the union, if I was to give 100*l.* as an inducement, I could not get a thirteenth weaver to work for me. But this is not all; they passed another resolution forbidding the 12 weavers to pay me more than 1*s.* 6*d.* each for the use of the looms, though 2*s.* 6*d.* is the fixed price, when the manufacturer supplies a Jacquard-loom; and to-morrow there is to be a meeting of the trade to limit the number of weavers that they will permit to work for me to six. The other manufacturers are either afraid or unwilling to assist me to put down this combination. The consequence is, that after sustaining immense loss, I must withdraw from the trade. The silk-winders are so exasperated at my introducing a winding-machine, though I never used it, that I dare not, even in the open day, walk through the liberty, the very women would pelt me with stones or mud.'

"The combinations of the operatives have not only driven the most extensive and wealthy manufacturers out of the trade, but, by the unjust and illegal control which they assume over the industry of their fellow workmen, they have compelled them to emigrate to some place where they can exercise their judgment as regards the disposal of their own labour. The consequence has been, that many of the best Irish silk weavers, sooner than submit to such a

Causes affecting demand for labour. IV. Combinations.

tyranny, have from time to time migrated to Manchester and other silk-weaving districts of England, where they have been glad to get employment at a much lower rate than that fixed by the trade in Dublin There are in fact more Irish workmen now in Macclesfield than English. Mr. Curran, the secretary of the Manchester silk-weavers, in his evidence, stated: 'After the Spitalfields Act was repealed, the silk weavers in Dublin combined not to take lower wages from their employers than they had previously received; and numbers came over here, where in many instances they were obliged to take a lower rate of wages than the rules of their trade in Dublin would permit. This had the effect of withdrawing a large portion of the trade from Dublin."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Otway, Vol. I., p.* 608—611.

While such have been the effects on the condition of the hand-loom weavers of combination among themselves, they have been still more injured by the combinations among other trades. The great cause of distress in the depressed branches of their business is the number of persons employed in it, or seeking employment, in proportion to the demand for their labour. The remedy of course must be that a portion of them should transfer their own labour, or at least that of their children, to better paid occupations; but from these they are repelled by combination.

Mr. Symons.

"The combinations in other trades," says Mr. Symons, "and the fees exacted by the unions for entrance, are, in most cases, insurmountable barriers to the weaver in his exertions to put his children to other trades. On this subject I have not been able to elicit much evidence from the weavers, beyond, in many instances, their avowal that such was the fact. But at Glasgow, where these impediments are chiefly felt, the terror was far too great to allow of freedom of speech on a point on which it were perilous to be communicative. The weavers, however, undoubtedly suffer from the tyranny of these conspiracies, which not only exclude them and their children from participation in the comparative prosperity of other trades, but are continually driving fresh hands to have resort to the loom, as being well nigh the only employment open and accessible. The military were, in one instance, I was informed by the sheriff of Lanarkshire, employed to protect weavers whilst working during a strike in a colliery."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Symons, Vol. I., p.* 54—55.

We have dwelt at some length on combinations, partly because we believe that they influence materially the condition of the hand-loom weavers, and partly because we think that their influence, so far as it is productive of mischief, is more susceptible of immediate diminution by legislation, than any other cause of evil affecting the weavers.

Causes affecting supply of labour.

We now proceed to consider the principal causes which influence the supply of labour in hand-loom weaving. These causes are—first, the attractiveness of the business; secondly, the facility of engaging in it, and thirdly, the employment which it affords, either in the main labour itself, or in occupations subsidiary to it, to the wife and children of the workman. We will first consider the attractiveness of the business On this subject the evidence collected by us is full. We extract the following passages from Mr. Muggeridge's and Dr. Mitchell's Reports, merely as samples of the numerous statements, to the same effect, scattered through our Appendix.

I. Attractiveness of hand-loom weaving. *Mr. Muggeridge.*

I. "The weaver," says Mr. Muggeridge, "will stand by his loom while it will enable him to exist, however miserably; and many, induced temporarily to quit it, have returned to it again, when work was to be had. A variety of causes tend, I think satisfactorily, to account for, if not extenuate, the pertinacity with which an employment is clung to, yielding, as has been shown, such scanty and inadequate remuneration,

"1st.—It gratifies that innate love of independence which all more or less feel, by leaving the workman entirely the master of his own time, and the sole guide of his actions. He can play or idle, as feeling or inclination leads him; rise early or late; apply himself assiduously, or carelessly, as he pleases; and work up at any time, by increased exertion, hours previously sacrificed to indulgence or recreation. Beyond the necessity imposed upon him of yielding a given quantity of labour to produce a given amount of earnings, he has little, if any, control. In the proportion he is willing to sacrifice the one, he can dispense with the other, and idleness carries with it no punishment, beyond the restrictions of enjoyment which arise from its being unremunerated. There is scarcely another condition of any portion of our working population thus free from external control. The factory operative is not only mulct his wages for absence, but, if of frequent occurrence, discharged altogether from his employment, The bricklayer, the carpenter, the painter, the joiner, the stonemason, the out-door labourer, have each their appointed daily hours of labour, a disregard of which would lead to the same result. Similar restraint is carried throughout all our commercial and trading establishments. Another cause of the attachment of the weaver to his precarious occupation arises, I am persuaded, in many cases, from better, and more commendable feelings. It concentrates the family under one roof; gives to each member of it a common interest; leaves the children under the watchful eye of the parent; and, the fate of one being the fate of all, it is borne, be it harsh or otherwise, without repining. '*Home is home* be it ever so homely,' is a trite but an apposite proverb, the truth of which cannot be more practically evinced, than it has been by hundreds

of families of hand-loom weavers. A third cause, and an influentially operating one, is the remembrance of by-gone days. Few weavers but recollect the 'good old times,' when their labours were four-fold remunerated, compared with their present rates of earnings; and it is hard to cast off altogether the cherished, though it may be but a delusive hope, that such days are past never to return. Many, who, if interrogated on the subject, would perhaps deny being actuated by such feelings, would nevertheless admit that an influence is exercised over them by such reminiscences; and that some latent prospect of an ulterior change for the better induces them to continue in an employment at present so ill requited. 'It is a long lane that has no turning' has been more than once offered me as a significant apology for the weaver's continuance at his loom.—*Vol. II. p.* 601.

Causes affecting supply of labour. I. Attractiveness of hand-loom weaving.

Dr. Mitchell.

"There is," says Dr. Mitchell, "a considerable portion of lottery, fortune, and chance in the weaver's occupation. This produces a fond delusion on the mind, and multitudes cling to a trade which they would not abandon, even for one more productive than their own, which had not this attraction.

"Too great attachment to the occupation is the bane of the trade. The cause just last mentioned would of itself retain many, even against their better judgment; but there are other attractions. There is a sort of independence about the work. A weaver is not tied to hours like the carpenter, bricklayer, and most artisans. He may begin his work when he pleases. He is not confined within the walls like men in a spinning factory. He may go out when he thinks fit. He may work to 10 and 11 o'clock, or later, to make up for lost time. The weaver also enjoys the society of his family. He feels strongly the domestic attachments, even beyond what cool reason would approve. Hence he will not find any other employment for his children, and easily believes that he cannot.

"From all these causes it is, that many are drawn into the trade, and afterwards bring up their children to it, and cling to the trade under every disadvantage. There is at the best of times a full supply of hands, equal to the work, and at other times a great superabundance. At the best of times the weaver can never be very highly paid, and at other times, even if the same price be paid for the work done, the work to be done is so little in comparison of the number willing and anxious to do it, that the wages distributed amongst so many, make but a very poor and wretched income, and from which a comfortable existence cannot be supported."—*Vol. I. p.* 376

II. The attractiveness of the business is common to all branches of hand-loom weaving, with the exception of the comparatively small one of factory weaving. The facility with which it may be engaged in differs of course in its different branches; but the general impression produced in our minds by comparing the testimony that has been submitted to us is, that it is the business offering the most numerous and the easiest avenues.

II. Accessibility of hand-loom weaving.

Mr. Muggeridge, in a passage immediately following that which we have already extracted, speaking of linen weavers, adds that—

Mr. Muggeridge.

Apart from these influences, which may be regarded as of a personal nature, there are others which greatly tend to keep up, if not to augment, the number of hand-loom weavers. The trade, if it may be so called, particularly in its inferior branches, is one, of all others, the most easily acquired and understood. I have had abundant testimony, as well as direct personal proof, that a young person of either sex, of from 13 to 17 years of age, possesses the requisite physical capacity, and will, with a few weeks' practice, acquire the requisite skill, to weave an ordinary cotton fabric, as well as the most robust and most expert adult weaver of the same description of goods. The peculiar facilities moreover afforded the destitute and unemployed of engaging in this occupation, will also account, in a great degree, for the keeping up the numbers in an employment so scantily remunerated. It was proved to me that a young person may, in the neighbourhood of Burnley, Colne, &c., hire a lodging, with the use of a loom, for one shilling a-week. *For this small sum, acquired in some instances by a day, or half a day's mendicancy, a person enters on a home, and on a trade. The weaver with whom he lodges, who possesses usually a fixed connexion with some employer, will supply his lodger with materials to enable him to go to work, and afford him the necessary instruction to perform it, receiving in return a stipulated proportion of the earnings: with such probationary assistance, continued for a few weeks, the scholar becomes an adept, and is fairly launched into the community of hand-loom weavers.*

"The class of 'journeymen,' as they are termed, is one conducive to the same result. The practice, in their case, is to give their labour to their employer, who is an operative weaver. The latter finds loom, warp, and weft (materials), receiving in return one-fourth part of the earnings of the journeyman; the remaining three-fourths form the fund of maintenance."—*Vol. II. p.* 601.

Mr. Keyse

The evidence of J. Harper, a working linen weaver, taken by Mr. Keyser, states as one of the principal causes which depress hand-loom weaving—

"The facility with which a man can become a weaver. 'I was working,' says the witness, 'at Barnsley two years ago, when the trade was brisk. One morning 30 Irishmen came into the town, each proposed to become a weaver. They got friends and got work. They had never worked as weavers before.'—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p.* 485.

He adds, indeed, that they did their work badly; but in what other business, entitling a man to the name of artisan, could they have done it at all?

Causes affecting supply of labour. II. Accessibility of hand-loom weaving.

The facility of engaging in woollen weaving seems nearly equal. Mr. Austin says:—

Mr. Austin.

"I have found great difficulty in getting any one to assign a reason why weavers are so numerous, and, consequently, worse paid than other classes. The weavers are unwilling to admit that weaving requires little skill, and yet, on the other hand, they inadvertently say that 'colts' (persons who are not children of weavers, and have not been brought up to the trade) are taken in by some master weavers, to the great injury of the rest: this seems to prove that no great skill is needful. Industry and attention, with six months' close practice, are, I believe, the chief requisites; and the facility with which the art is learned may account for the number of those who are initiated in it.

"On the subject of the qualifications necessary to make a good weaver, and the time required for learning, we have the following evidence, which is somewhat contradictory; but, if carefully considered, will bear me out in the conclusion I have made above. *A very extensive manufacturer states, that 'supposing a young man (whose age and strength were suffieient for the labour) had not seen a loom before, he might (if an apt person) be left to himself in an hour, and at the end of a week would be a perfect workman as a journeyman.* The preparing the chain, the sizing, and the turning it on, are the operations requiring skill: some men would never acquire it, but an apt person would acquire it in six months.' A weaver examined on this subject states that 'weaving is not very difficult to learn; but to become a weaver, competent in all its branches, requires a considerable deal of practice. There is a great difference in the skill of different weavers. Many good weavers are out of employment.'

"A master weaver, possessed of several looms worked by journeymen, says, 'that, to make a good weaver, a boy must be put to quilling at eight years old, and by the time he is 21 he will make a good workman; but if a lad (who is not a weaver's son) be taken at 14, he will require to serve seven years' apprenticeship, and unless he had done so he would not employ him. Does not employ any others.'

"A manufacturer of blankets states, that 'all his weavers, except one, were husbandmen, whom he has taught to weave.'"—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p.* 437.

The following extracts from the Report of Mr. Chapman show the accessibility of the woollen trade in the north of England:—

Mr. Chapman.

"If we examine the whole poriod over which the evidence extends, we shall find that, with the exception of a short period, the hand-loom weavers have been at all times subject to numerous causes of undue increase, which, without machinery as well as with machinery, without corn-laws as well as with them, have kept their condition low.

"Besides the mere increase of their own numbers from procreation, hand-loom weaving has been the refuge of the surplus numbers from nearly all other trades. Whilst all, or nearly all, other trades have regulations to protect themselves from an undue increase of numbers *from external causes,* hand-loom weaving has been open to all comers. Many trades have regulations or customs which have the effect of limiting the number of apprentices, among which, charging a premium is conspicuous; not only have the hand-loom weavers no such regulations, not only do they never dream of a premium, but they have all along held out, and to a certain extent do still hold out, a bribe in the shape of wages to children who will come amongst them.*

"In the case of the cloth manufacturer, the mode of paying lads, and the division of the profit between the small manufacturer and the parent, so as to afford an inducement to both, has been already explained. In the case of the worsted trade, the custom formerly prevailed to a most vicious extent, and it was greatly facilitated by the lightness of the labour, and the short time requisite for acquiring it. During the short period of high wages, every man who was provident enough to save a few pounds, purchased an extra loom, and set a child, or a man, or woman, from some other employment, in which work was not to be had at the time, to work upon it; in this way the number of hand-loom weavers was increased beyond the natural increase of their own numbers. Hand-loom weaving, in short, has been, and is, a receptacle for the destitute from all other classes; and the great, the really appalling evil is, that the labour of the parent once transferred to the child, what is found to be child's work, comes to be rewarded with child's wages.

"The great facility of acquiring the art of weaving, the encouragement given to parents to have their children taught, and the self-protecting rules adopted by most other trades, have tended to keep the weaving business over-stocked with hands. This will account for the fact, that wages were low and declining at a time when all the other assigned causes of depression were absent. To this cause must we also attribute the fact, that wages began to decline before any machinery was introduced. This undue increase of numbers, and its effect on wages, will be found to be admitted by several of the witnesses, especially when endeavouring to account for the fact just mentioned, relative to the decline of wages previous to the introduction of machinery.

"Joseph Best, alluding to the practice of taking apprentices, said, 'We are compelled to bring up our children to our trade, because we cannot afford the premiums demanded in other

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"* In trades requiring considerable skill, the skill itself has the effect of limiting numbers. Even in skilled trades, not one man in ten is a good workman, not one in twenty a really clever workman. The necessity of acquiring skill keeps more out of a trade than all schemes of exclusion; skill requires time for its acquisition, and that is a powerful cause of limitation."

trades. I myself was asked 70*l.* premium by a wool-sorter, to take one of my sons; all other trades are over-stocked; we have no other resource but our own trade, and *we breed sadly too many* on that ground.'"—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p.* 581.

Causes affecting supply of labour. II. Accessibility of hand-loom weaving.

Mr. Miles.

Mr. Miles shows that the Welch flannel weaving is still more easily acquired and practised:—

"Male adult weavers are now only in the proportion of 62 per cent.

"Richard Evans, weaver at Newtown, in reply to this question—

"Can women and girls weave as well as men, and do they receive the same rate of wages?—answered, Yes.

"In how long a time would an apt person be enabled to earn per week a given sum for subsistence?—Some would learn in a year or two; some in three years; a lad could weave, but he would require an experienced hand to size and fettle the loom.

"The Rev. Morgan Davies, of Machynlleth, observes, that

"'The weavers' terms of apprenticeship are neither long nor expensive; the time for which they are bound varies considerably in duration, depending of course upon the pecuniary consideration; and I am informed, by a very intelligent operative, that a child of 13 years of age can learn the weaving trade in three-quarters of a year, so as to be able to work under the eye of a master.'

"Richard Evans, a weaver at Newtown, states,

"'That the chief work for the weaver is four months in the year; that the weaver's is the most depressed of all trades. Children get into the loom, and take the weaver's work from him at under price. Wages are nominally stationary, but few work at these prices; the men are underselling one another. There are too many on the ground, and young persons, boys and girls, are working and underselling male and older weavers.'"—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. II., p.* 557.

Mr. Otway.

Mr. Otway states as part of the evidence of J. Maloney and W. Tod, themselves working woollen weavers, that a youth of intelligence from fifteen to seventeen could, after a year's practice, weave as well as *any* adult.—*Vol. I. p.* 664.

Dr. Mitchell.

The following is Dr. Mitchell's statement as to the facility of engaging in the business of silk weaving, ascertained in its principal seats, Spitalfields and Norwich.

Of the facility of Introduction to the Art of Weaving.

"The best mode of showing how men are introduced into the trade will be by an abstract of the personal history of some of the witnesses.

"Mr. Joseph Hoyles is the son of a weaver, and grandson of a weaver. He was accustomed to wind quills at the period of life when he was at school. At 11 he went to fancy trimming, and worked at that trade till 18, when he left that employment in consequence of slackness of trade. He says, 'I took to the silk-weaving, and have now been 18 years at it; I had been familiar with the trade, and I began weaving at once, my father showing me the way. I did my first web so as not to get blame for it, but I took a great deal of time to it, and had my father's superintendence; in 12 months I was master of my business.'

"He was asked, 'Do not many learn sooner?' To which he replied, 'When once the silk is put into the loom, and it is all ready, the weaving plain silk is easy; but the preparatory part is difficult to learn, and some will not do it for years.'

"Mr. Thomas Heath, one of the best weavers of Spitalfields, at 12 years of age went to sea, and was a sailor for 12 years; he returned in 1816, and took to weaving. He says, 'I had been accustomed to the winding of quills and drawing when a boy, and accordingly after coming from sea I took to weaving. I worked at plain satin for 12 months, until I got well acquainted with the loom, and then I took to figured work, and have been at it ever since, excepting that I have occasionally done a plain piece of work when no figured work was to be had.'

"Mr. John Duce gives the following account of his introduction to weaving:—

"My father had been a manufacturer of woollen cloth, but I was never taught weaving by anybody, and in 1802, being then 16, I was obliged to take to some employment, and I tried silk-weaving and succeeded. I began with the easiest kind of work at first, but I have made myself master of almost every branch, and when any kind of work which pays well falls off, I can take another kind of work which pays well, and by so doing I have been able to keep myself better than many others.

"*Q.* Could most men acquire a knowledge of the art as you did?—*A.* There is the greatest difference amongst men; some have a far greater aptitude to learn weaving than others, and pay more attention; it is certain, however, that many men never can get beyond the plainest work, and which pays them the lowest wages.'"

"Of the manner in which the trade is overwhelmed by the introduction of new hands, he gives the following evidence.

"*Q.* Have many men taken to the weaving trade lately?—*A.* Not many lately; there would not have been employment given to them; but whenever the trade is brisk men come to it from other employments, and begin at the simplest work, and such as have ability gradually get to the other branches of weaving, and thus the number of weavers is kept too great."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p.* 236.

"The trade of engine weaving seems rather more difficult to learn than the plainest fabrics of broad silk. Mr. Leago, an engine weaver, was a month before he could get on weaving by

Causes affecting supply of labour. II. Accessibility of hand-loom weaving.

himself. He says that a lad may work well at the end of a twelvemonth. Mr Joseph Pillar states, that "the whole art and mystery may be learnt in a year, and a weaver may be quite perfect in two years, although there is always something to learn from changes taking place in the business."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p.* 276.

"*The art of weaving the fabrics made at Norwich is not more difficult to acquire than that of weaving the fabrics of Spitalfields. 'If weavers are wanted,' says Mr. Hastings, 'they may be struck into existence in a month; some branches may be done by boys and girls, and what may be done by a boy can never reach above a boy's wages.*'

"Mr. Spalding gives the following evidence:—

"*Q.* What, in your opinion, are the causes of so many people being weavers?—*A.* Our trade is too easily learnt. A girl in good health at 16, can do as well as a man at all our light fabrics. Another cause is the carelessness of the parents to the ultimate good of their children; when they put them to the loom, they gain by them the first two or three years. I have a girl of 14, who can earn at some fabrics as much as I can; I have a boy of 12 also weaving. Such earnings are a great inducement to parents, but it is injurious in the long run.

"When there is a great demand for goods, the men who have been working at less difficult fabrics are set to do the finer goods; and for the lower and coarser fabrics, men and women from any other employment can be put to the loom, and soon manage to do their work passably well,

"Hence it is, that at times when there is a great demand for goods, if agricultural labourers be unemployed, there is a great influx into the weavers' trade in the villages of Norfolk, by persons of whom the regular weavers of Norwich make great complaints. These persons, it is true, are not completely master of all parts of their trade, and Mr. Athow calls them shuttle-throwers, and not weavers; still, such parts as they cannot do themselves they get others to do for them, and they manage to do all the rest of their work."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p.* 316.

We now proceed to cotton weaving, the branch of the whole trade which is the most accessible, and consequently the most depressed.

Mr. Symons.

"Among the causes," says Mr. Symons, "which increase the number of labourers, I believe the chief to be, the extreme and peculiar facility with which weaving is learnt, and the almost total absence of all the other obstacles which usually beset the entrance of other trades.

"The time which it takes to make a boy of 12 years old, of average cleverness, a thorough weaver, so that he may be able to beam, twist, and dress his own web, and require no further superintendence, has been so variously estimated by different witnesses, that I feel reluctant to name any period with positiveness, but, to the best of my judgment, it will be from 18 months to 2 years on any plain work. As to the time required to teach a boy to throw the shuttle, so that he may weave on any of the less fine reeds, to the amount of 3*s.* or 4*s.* per week, I should say two months were ample, supposing the boy to apply and profit by his instructions.

I saw a lad, named Archibald Duncan, in the Bridewell of Glasgow, who had never been taught to weave before he entered the prison, and who had been there six weeks only, and was then weaving a 10°° gingham (blue and white). The lad's own statement (corroborated by Mr. Brebner, the master) was, that he could finish the piece of 51 ells, in ten working days, at 13 hours per diem, the web being beamed, twisted and dressed, ready for him: it was paid 1½ per ell by the manufacturer who furnished it; so that this lad had been able in 6 weeks to earn at the rate of 3*s.* 9*d.*[10] per week gross wages.

"It must, however, be always recollected, that to the parent who instructs the child, and superintends him, there is a loss of time.

"No apprentice fees are charged for entering the weaving trade, nor is the indenture, if written at all, except in very rare cases, ever stamped; neither is there the least capital required to commence with; looms, with all their apparatus complete, being let at 1*s.*, and often 10*d.* per week."

Mr. Symons proceeds, in a passage which we have already extracted, to state the influence of combination, in not only excluding the Scotch weaver from other trades, but in "continually driving fresh hands to the loom, as being well nigh the only employment open and accessible." "Thus has weaving," he adds, "become as it were the common sewer of all unemployed labour."—*Vol. I. p.* 55.

The following extracts from the evidence given before the Committee of the House of Commons on hand-loom weavers, which sat in 1834 and 1835, afford valuable testimony as to the influence on the condition of the hand-loom weavers of both the attractiveness and the accessibility of the trade.

Mr. Kingan.

Mr. Kingan:—

"162. You were formerly in the habit of employing muslin weavers?—Yes.

"163. You are aware there is a great depression of price among that class of people?—Perfectly.

"164. You are aware also that they are more depressed than the other description of weavers?—Yes.

"165. Can you state why the wages for hand-loom weaving are lower than in other trades?—I think it arises from a variety of causes, but there are four which occur to me. In the first place, or rather the general result is, that a great deal too many persons go to that

trade; and the reasons why they go are four, that occur to me. *In the first place, it is the easiest learnt of all trades; a lad of* 14 *may acquire a sufficient knowledge of it in six weeks. He can be taught it generally in his father's house, he is freed from the necessity of an apprenticeship and all its disagreeable things, of being under a master seven years, the common term of other trades; when in the course of a few months he becomes a very good weaver.* Then he has another advantage over all other artisans, because he is perfectly master of his own time and of his own conduct. He works in his own house, and his contract with his master is made to-day, and not inquired into for two months or even three; his web cannot be finished in less than six weeks, and if it is two or three months there is not much said about it, so that during that time he is his own master, it is open to him to take any other job, if it offers. That is an inducement to a person to enter into that occupation of hand-loom weaving. Those are two of the reasons. There is another reason, that the wages of that trade, at one time, rose to very near treble or quadruple what they were in any other trade; it was early in the cotton manufacture. That arose from a discovery which some of the gentleman may know, I mean by the fly shuttle, a very simple improvement, but it enabled a man to do three times as much work as he did before with his hand, therefore that may be said to have trebled his wages. Causes affecting supply of labour. II. Accessibility of hand-loom weaving.

"166. In what year was that?—Very early. The cotton manufacture began about 1783, about the time of the peace; this was about 1788 or 1789 it was introduced that fly shuttle, and in the year 1790 or 1791 it was almost universal. That increased the wages of a man beyond all proportion to any other trade. I had weavers myself at that time could have earned 100*l.* a-year very easily. Before the introduction of that very simple machine, perhaps they could not have got above 30*l.* or 35*l.* a-year. There is yet recollection of those high prices; of course there are many men yet alive who received them, and all their descendants have heard of them, and that is a third inducement to young persons to enter into that trade under a hope that they may return. There is another reason; there have been more persons risen to wealth and eminence of hand-loom weavers than of all other trades put together in Scotland. I could name 40 or 50 people who were hand-loom weavers who are now men of capital and character, filling high situations. Two late Lord Provosts of Glasgow (Monteith and Dalgleish) were hand-loom weavers in my remembrance. It is owing to that a vast number of people have got forward in life; all that is known to young people, and is a fourth inducement to enter. So that the result of low wages is the effect of that prodigious influx of people into this trade rather than into any other. A fifth reason is the influx of Irish weavers on the decline of the linen manufacture.

"185. You think a good deal of the extreme depression of the wages of the weavers may perhaps be ascribed to their being in great abundance, and to the power which the manufacturers have in consequence of beating down the wages?—Yes, and likewise underbidding each other. I have remembered in the severe years of 1799, the great dearth, and in 1810, a year of great calamity in the money market, and 1817 also, in those periods the men used to beg to have work at any price they chose; we said, 'We will not give it out of the regular price;' they said, 'Give it us at any.'

"186. Do you think they find great difficulty in finding employment in other trades?—No, I do not think so; there has no other trade ever been so depressed as the hand-loom weavers.

"189. If the other trades are not struck, and these people are so miserable, how comes it they stick to this hand-loom weaving?—There is a dislike in mankind to go to a new trade; they have got habits of living at home, and among their neighbours, and they do not like to go among lads and young people to learn a new trade, such as a carpenter; that trade is never overdone, but a man who has been a weaver would not like to go and begin where probably a lad of 14 or 15 years is beginning to learn the trade of a carpenter; he will rather struggle on.

"190. But the evidence goes to establish that these hand-loom weavers have been in a declining condition for many years?—I think you may say so.

"191. How comes it, that exposed as they must be to so much misery, the parents do not bring up their children to other employments?—I have endeavoured, in the first answer I gave, to explain that; there are several things so seducing in the trade of a hand-loom weaver that I think it must account for that very extraordinary determination, so to speak, of the population to that thriftless occupation.

"192. In point of fact, you consider those four or five reasons such inducements to a hand loom weaver more than counterbalance the misery felt when in the trade?—If we were to look at the fact, the fact would prove that; I cannot imagine any other reason why a man should go to a trade that is ruinous, and has been so for more than 20 years; the present low state of wages is no novelty, it has been for 24 years, and I may say that the wages have been less than in other trades."—*Evidence of* 1834.

Mr. Kingan's evidence relates to Scotland; that of Mr. Gardner, a Manchester manufacturer, delivered in 1835, is to the same effect:—

Mr. Gardner

"1853. Do you not conceive that there are many circumstances attending the nature of the hand-loom occupation which tend to make it a low-priced description of labour?—It always will be so; the first is the facility in making weavers; the next is, there are a great many little farmers that fill up their vacant time with weaving; another thing is, there is a great importation of Irish; and another thing, a great many of the handicrafts or mechanics that are brought up in the neighbourhood learn to weave before they go to be apprenticed, and some of those will even fall back on weaving when it is paid pretty well, and mechanical trades are flat."

Causes affecting supply of labour. II. Accessibility of hand-loom weaving.

Mr. Stewart, a witness examined before the same committee, and who had himself been a cotton weaver, states that—

Mr. Stewart.

"A great part of the hand-loom weavers are sent to the trade at a very early age. I was sent myself at ten years of age; but I believe the more general age is about eleven."—Q. 3,704.

He is then asked, "At what age can a weaver maintain himself?" And answers, "As soon as his apprenticeship is done, it is supposed he will be as good a workman as ever he will be; he can produce as much cloth."—Q. 3,713.

Equally striking is the evidence of J. Brennan, also a Manchester cotton weaver. He is asked—

J. Brennan.

"6559. Can you tell the reason why competition in other articles does not cause the same reduction in price as in cotton goods; for instance, why shoemakers, who are small capitalists, and carpenters, and tailors, do not compete against each other as much as the manufacturers do, so as to knock down the price of your shoes and other things?—So they do partially; but they have not the facilities of getting those things worked as the hand-loom or power-loom manufacturers have, and there is not so much labour in the market.

"6560. There being, in proportion to the work to be done, fewer hands, the master cannot force them down as they do weavers?—No, they cannot. I will just illustrate it in this way: if 50,000 people were to come from any part to Manchester to weave those bafts and sheetings, if they were to come and engage to do it for 1*s.*, and we get 1*s.* 6*d.*, the masters would give it to them; which they could do by two or three days' trouble, in the way that the masters have their looms adapted now. *But it would take a man some time to learn the business of a tailor, or shoemaker, or any other trade.*

"6570. If there is more work to be done than there are hands to do it, will not the wages rise?—Yes.

"6571. In that case the competition of the masters will not be to lower wages, but to get hands to do the work?—Yes; but *the hands are so easy taught it now, the hands have no means of obtaining a rise.*"

III. Employment of wife and children of weaver.

We do not think it necessary to multiply quotations as to the accessibility of the trade of weaving, and shall proceed to the third of the principal causes that tend to increase the supply of weavers; namely, the employment which it affords either in the main labour itself, or in occupations subsidiary to it, to the wife and children of the workman.

It may be laid down as a general rule, that occupations in which the labour of women and children bears a large proportion in value to that of able bodied men, are in peculiar danger of being incumbered by a supply of labour, increasing in a greater proportion than the demand for it. In most of these employments, perhaps we might say in all of them, it will be found that about the age of 19 or 20 the workman's wages are as high as they can ever be expected to be. If the earnings of a girl of the same age are nearly equal, and that is often the case, marriage is to both of them an immediate pecuniary gain, as their united income will go further than the separate income of each. Under such circumstances it is vain to hope that it will be deferred, unless under the influence of prudence, produced by very considerable moral cultivation, or of long established traditional rules of conduct. During the interval between the birth of the first child and its being able to earn a subsistence, the income of the family is reduced by the interruption of the wife's work, while the expenses increase; and unless the business afford high wages (a rare and never a permanent state of things), distress, greater or less in proportion to the good or bad management of the parties, the prosperity of the trade, and the number of children, must ensue. But as each child becomes successively capable of profitable employment, it is so employed,—in many branches of hand-loom weaving at the age of six years, or even younger. Of course this precocious employment is injurious to the intellectual and moral education of the child; in many cases altogether prevents it; and the family grows up a set of human machines, with no futurity but that of treading in their parents' steps, marrying before they are adult, and giving birth to an equally degraded progeny. Such a state of things produces a rapidly increasing population, confined by ignorance, by habit, and generally by poverty—chains as strong as those of caste in Hindostan—to their own occupation. If that occupation be sufficiently expansive to receive the crowds that are pressing into it, the proportion between the supply of labour and the demand for it may be preserved. Such appears to have been for many years, and (though with occasional interruptions) still continues to be the case with the cotton spinning trade in Great Britain. Notwithstanding the early marriages, the large families, and the consequently great internal increase of the work-people employed in it; notwithstanding the great addition to their numbers from the immigration of the Irish, and of those who have quitted other businesses

Causes affecting supply of labour. III. Employment of wife and children of weaver.

the great extension of the trade has kept the demand for labour equal to this vast supply; and no permanent fall of wages has as yet taken place. But this is a rare, perhaps a solitary case; and we entertain fears, anxious in proportion to the importance of the danger, as to its continuance. In every other business admitting the labour of women and children on nearly equal terms with that of men, although the demand for labour has often progressively increased, it has failed to keep pace with the still more rapidly augmenting supply.

With a few exceptions, almost every branch of hand-loom weaving is exposed to this depressing influence. In weaving all the fabrics in which little strength and no great skill are required, boys and women, and even girls, are nearly on a par with adult men; and in those which require for the actual weaving a degree of strength or skill possessed only by men, the subsidiary processes, in the preparation both of the warp and the weft are a source of considerable profit to the wife and children of the weaver. "A weaver's children," says Mr. Symons, vol. i. p. 54, "are more valuable to him at the loom at an early age than they could possibly be at any other trade." We proceed to illustrate these views by some extracts from the Reports of our AssistantCommissioners.

The following extract from Mr. Chapman's Report applies to the woollen trade:—

Mr. Chapman.

"The young weaver just out of his apprenticeship is, perhaps, as well able to earn as he will be at any future period. Setting aside the domestic comforts incidental to the married state, his pecuniary condition is in the first instance improved by uniting himself with a woman capable of earning, perhaps, nearly as much as himself, and performing for him various offices involving an actual pecuniary saving. A married man with an income, the result of the earnings of himself and wife, of 20*s.*, will enjoy more substantial comfort in every way than he alone would enjoy with an income of 15*s.* per week. This is alone an inducement to early marriage, an inducement which we shall hereafter see increased.

"In obedience to this primary inducement, the weaver almost invariably marries soon after he is out of his apprenticeship. But the improvement of comfort which marriage brings is of short duration; at the end of the first year, the birth of a child deprives him of his wife's earnings, and at the same time adds to his expenses. During several years his condition is impaired by his increasing family, but he is sustained by the hope, that the labour of his children will in time become productive. There is scarcely any period of the weaver's life where his difficulties are so great as about the ninth or tenth year after his marriage, with a family of four, five, or six children, too young to labour; the care of the family occupies the whole of his wife's attention, she cannot possibly contribute a shilling to the income of the family, so that the whole must be fed by his hand alone.

"In the evidence submitted to me, many cases of the kind were described; to cite them, however, is wholly unnecessary.

"About the tenth year the labour of the eldest child becomes available; it is sent, perhaps, to some factory, and, as a 'half-timer,' will bring home from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a-week; even if retained at home, there is a similar profit. A girl will perform many domestic offices, and so liberate the more productive labour of the mother: a boy will afford such aid to the father in winding the weft on bobbins for the shuttle, or in such other little jobs, as will either save the hire of labour, or render the father's time more exclusively applicable to the loom, and therefore more productive. From this time forward, there is a yearly improvement; at the same time that a younger child becomes a 'bobbin winder,' or a 'half timer,' or a domestic helper to the mother, the eldest begins to learn to weave. At first the boy gets into his father's loom, when a light job happens to be in it, and weaves a bobbin; in a few months he is able to get into the loom, if tolerably light work be in it, whenever the father is called off. Soon the father thinks it worth while to obtain a second loom, and, under his supervision, the son becomes a weaver. For some years this process goes on, and even if the weaver's family be increased by new births, the increasing productiveness of the labour of the elder children more than feeds the new mouths. This improving condition lasts, perhaps, for ten, twelve, or fourteen years, and is at its maximum just so long as the eldest children abstain from marrying. Many cases of large families of workers occur in the course of the evidence, chiefly in the country villages.

"Joseph Best, who estimated his own earnings at 14*s.*, stated the earnings of his two sons at 13*s.*, making 27*s.* for the gross income of the family."

"James Whitaker, of Armley, gave evidence as to the earnings of his family as follows:—

"4. 'Have you a family?—I am a widower, with five children; my eldest is 19, and weaves in the same chamber as myself; he is as good a man as I am. The next is a daughter, but my house and the care of my family is enough for her. The next is a boy of 14, and he can earn 5*s.* a-week; but for half the year, perhaps, he has not work for more than four days a-week. My next is a boy, he is 11; he works short time with the other boy at Mr. Gott's, and when his schooling is paid, which is 2*d.*, he brings me 2*s.* 9*d.* My youngest is seven, and goes to school. All my children can read, and all can write but the youngest.' This would make the gross income of the family of five persons, when fully employed, about 32*s.*

"Jonathan Grimshawe, of Calverley, gave the following testimony on the same point:—

"3. 'What kind of goods are you making now?—Petershams of 40 porteths, 10 quarters, and 20 strings in length. We are paid £1 for weaving and spinning a lump job.'

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"4. 'How long will it take you to weave, say two pieces?—I have three looms and two jennies, and it will take us seven days to complete two pieces; that is, employing myself, my wife, and four children.' This would make the income of the family about 34*s.* 6*d.* per week. But now as to the number depending on this little fund for subsistence.

"5. 'How many have you in family?—A wife and eight children.

"6. 'How many work at home?—Four: none work from home.'

"The period of a weaver's maximum condition is, so long as one child becomes a worker for every one that marries off; not that the one gained is equal to the one lost; but as all are becoming more skilful, as all are pushed one stage forward, the aggregate gain is about equal to the loss. When, however, all the younger children have become workers, and the loss of a son or daughter who marries is not supplied, gradual deterioration commences, until at length the parents are left, with decaying physical powers, to their own unaided resources.

"Benjamin Kirk is a strong case in point. I visited his house, among many others, at Holbeck, where I found his aged mother lying on a bed of sickness. He himself was a widower; all his children were grown up and were doing for themselves; and even if he were fortunate enough to get full employment, his earnings would not exceed 10*s.* or 11*s.* to support two persons with all the expenses of sickness."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p.* 340.

The facts collected by Mr. Miles, in the west of England, are to the same effect.

Mr. Miles.

The weavers marry younger, I think, than any other class of people. Their children are employed to quill and attend about a loom till they imperceptibly obtain a sufficient knowledge to begin weaving. The weavers assert that a person cannot learn the 'art and mystery' of weaving under four years, and I believe they are correct, if it is requisite for a man to take the raw chain and return it as cloth without assistance, because there is judgment required to size and tie on; but, by the present improved system of working in the factories, there is a division of labour, and the weaver is not required to size, and he has assistance in tying on, therefore the 'art and mystery' is not required, as weaving can be learned in a short time sufficiently to earn slight wages. Mr. Samuel Marling, a manufacturer, states that a girl of 16 or 17 years of age, to his knowledge, after she had been about six months in a loom, earned 5*s.* or 6*s.* a week with occasional assistance, but she had been previously quilling and attending to the loom for about six months. Mr. Charles Staunton states that it is astonishing with what facility a child or young person may learn to weave. Mr. Smart, a manufacturer at Chalford, states that a stout girl can weave stripes as well as any man in the county, and women likewise at broad cloth. This is confirmed by Mr. N. Jones and many others.

"As the master out-door weavers introduced young labour into the loom, they proved that female labour and young persons at lower wages could perform the work.—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. II., p.* 402.

"The Rev. H. Jeffreys, of Bisley, has furnished me with a minute account of the distressed state of the poor in his parish. He states, however, that the prudence and foresight of the people may be questioned. Many men have depended on their wives and their children to support themselves by their own earnings, independent of his wages. The wives and children consequently took to the loom, or sought work in the factories; and, now that there is little or no work in the district, the evil is felt, and the husband is obliged to maintain them out of his wages.

"This facility which once existed for a mother and her children to procure sufficient money to support herself and the family without assistance from the father, was naturally productive of early marriages. It was a certain income to the husband; and his own wages he employed for his own immediate purposes, be they good or be they dissolute. On this subject I am confirmed by the Rev. Mr. Jeffreys, who observes,

"'They marry very young, and without that care for a provision for their families which restrains agriculturists oftentimes from marrying; for they think they have no need for a sum to begin with if both husband and wife have work; and then, as the children grow up, they suppose that they, the children, may easily support themselves in the mills. Again—the young people accustomed to work in the mills are very unwilling to exchange that mode of life for any other, and it has always hitherto been a matter of the greatest difficulty to persuade boys or girls to go out to service; the consequence is, the young people all stay at home, meet constantly at the mills, and early connexions are formed, sometimes ending in marriages before the parties are scarce out of their teens, and sometimes ending in a worse way. But though persons married young, if they had their health they ran no risk of being unable to support themselves and families, however large, *so long as work was plentiful.* The last few years of *extreme* distress seemed to have caused an alteration in this respect, and many of the young people now go out to service, though not before they were clean starved out.'

"In further explanation, Mr. Jeffrey observes,

"'Another point I would speak about, in conclusion, is the *improvidence* of the people, which, in the beginning of my letter, I think I treated rather obscurely; what I would say is simply this—

"'That if work were going on well, and plenty of it, persons in this place might marry young without the particular charge of *improvidence,* inasmuch as when man and wife can both work, and the children find employ as soon as they are capable of doing anything, there is not apparently the same need to lay by a little money previously, as there would be in an agricultural district. But work has not gone on well for many years past. Beggarly Bisley has long been a proverb, and the *improvidence* of the people has been as conspicuous in the way in which they have married young in spite of this, and also in the way in which

they have kept their children at home hanging on a miserable and uncertain pittance, in preference to sending them out to work for their bread elsewhere. The way in which parents will keep their grown-up children at home to this day is quite vexatious, considering that every year's experience furnishes an additional proof of the folly of it.' "—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. II., p.* 415.

These statements may be compared with Mr. Fletcher's account of the ribbon weavers.

Mr. Fletcher.

"A weaver would scorn to marry a servant girl, although she is perhaps the only one qualified to make him a comfortable home, but chooses a weaver, who earns as much or half as much as himself. And upon this fact, simple as it appears, I doubt not hinge many of the disadvantages of the ribbon weaver's condition as compared with that of other artizans. It is an *effect* of the character of the occupation by which they live. And as a *cause* it obviously opens the door to thoughtless multiplication and a low domestic and moral condition, rapidly reacting upon each other, and debasing the whole body, which loses its self-respect and the respect of its superiors, the maintenance and enforcement of which are the sole protection of lowly skilled labourers from sinking to the mimimum of animal subsistence. The early emancipation of the young by the half-pay apprentice and the journeywork systems from the domestic control, imperfect as that control is, allows them under these circumstances to make greedy seizure of a mere subsistence by the loom, though at the sacrifice of moral advantages which they are unable to appreciate; and improvident marriages are as frequent as ever, even at Bedworth.

"Such are the inducements presented by the employment which the trade offers for women and children to improvident marriage, which is much more common than in years past, that an usual age of marriage with the young men is about 20 years, and sometimes earlier. Throughout the weaving population improvident marriages are prevalent, but more especially in the single-hand branch. The saving enough beforehand to buy a single loom is too commonly neglected among all classes of journey-hands; and the effect upon the engine trade of the almost Irish condition of the contiguous population in the single-hand branch, is immediately felt through the hand-factories of the Bedworth and other masters, and even through the shops of the 'first-hand journeymen themselves,' where hands from the more depressed branch get employment if possible."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. II., p.* 8.

Mr. Fletcher has stated the causes tending to an undue increase in the numbers of the Coventry ribbon weavers; the evidence of Mr. Jenkins, a witness examined by the House of Commons Committee in 1835, shows the result.

Mr. Jenkins.

"4085. Are there more people engaged in the Coventry trade compared with the population than there used to be?—I think there must be; but I cannot answer positively.

"4086. The absolute number of weavers is increased?—Yes, the actual number; and I have reason for thinking that they are increased in comparison with the population, on this account, that almost every weaver brings up his child to his own trade, and takes many apprentices from other trades.

"4087. If the reduction in wages is disapproved of by manufacturers, and the reduction only becomes general when there is an absence of demand, if there has been a gradual reduction since 1819, does not that argue a general absence of demand for the fabric you work up?—No; there is a large portion of the trade of Coventry that has gone to Derby and Congleton; the very considerable branch of demand that exists in other places is a demand upon us also, and it would be supplied by us if we could do it as well.

"4088. Has the number of weavers in Coventry increased as the trade has departed to Congleton and Derby?—Yes, the number has increased.

"'A numerous family,'

Says Mr. Keyser, speaking of the Macclesfield silk weavers,

Mr. Keyser.

'which to a man otherwise employed would be considered an incumbrance and increasing his difficulties, is rather a source of consolation to the poor weaver, whose children, even about eight or nine years of age, are capable of earning nearly sufficient to pay for their maintenance. This consideration induces early marriages, and generally large families.'

"Weavers will remain weavers, increasing in numbers from generation to generation, striving to obtain a scanty subsistence by a trade, the knowledge of which is easily acquired, and to which children at an early age are from necessity devoted, improving only by the influence of increased facilities for education, and the consequent general advance of intellect.

"It is only by the effect of pressing want, as exemplified in the case of the Darlington weavers, that those physically capable of doing any other work will gradually abandon the loom and improve their condition, by seeking and obtaining more profitable employment.—*Keyser, Vol. I. p.* 493.

We will conclude this branch of the subject by the following extract from Mr. Otway's Report on the hand-loom weavers in Ireland.

Mr. Otway.

"In taking a general view of the hand-loom weavers as a body, and noticing such general circumstances as may require to be taken into consideration before entering on the subject of their peculiar condition or the more minute divisions into which their business is divided, the consideration of the nature of the labour employed must not fail to be noticed; the degree

Causes affecting supply of labour. III. Employment of wife and children of weaver.

of strength, skill, time, and capital required to learn and conduct it. From the evidence laid before the Commissioners, it appears that one half of the labour employed on hand-looms is that of young persons of both sexes, of the ages of from 12 to 20. Females are now generally employed in hand-loom weaving, a new feature in the history of Irish weaving; and except in the heavier and coarsest fabrics, they are equal to any, if not the best workers. The introduction of mill-spun yarn has permitted, by the greater ease with which it is wove, the application of female labour to the most successful operations of the loom; not only female, but almost infant labour; and whatever effect this may have on the condition of the hand-loom female weaving population, both in a moral and physical point of view, it must still be taken into account in forming a proper estimate of the nature of the remuneration obtainable for hand-loom labour.

"Owing to the redundancy of able-bodied men in all departments of the labour market, the application of female labour is, generally speaking, in Ireland (for hire), but very partially employed, and even compared with the low wages of the Irish labourer most poorly remunerated; and hand-loom weaving presents almost alone the important feature of affording anything like constant employment to the female portion of the population. It will also be perceived that children of both sexes, from the ages of 12 to 20, are amongst the best and most productive labourers of the loom, and that the period for acquiring a knowledge of the trade, so as, in ordinary cases, to attain the average proficiency, varies from six months to three years; and that at all periods, even from the very time the child is put on the loom, it is capable of affording assistance. Accustomed from its earliest infancy to witness the operations, to assist the winding and the incidental repairs, by almost imperceptible degrees it acquires that habit, knowledge—that language of the loom, which smoothes and lessens the difficulties of the learner. In the hand-loom weaving factories, where the most difficult and intricate fabrics are woven, the apprentices are merely at first put on as draw-boys, and in a great degree left to learn the business by observation of the process. This circumstance, though it affords a temptation to the indigent parent dangerous to the health and education of the child, and tends to induce an ill-divided number into a participation of the business, must nevertheless be taken into account.

"It is true that there are branches of the trade which require all the strength of man's labour, all the skill of intellect, and all the practice acquired by length of time; but on the Commissioners referring to the evidence, they will perceive that on those fabrics requiring this combination of qualities, the rates of wages are proportionably high. In respect to capital, with the exception of those who work on their own account for the market, and require a floating capital to procure a supply of the raw material, the necessary capital is confined to a few pounds; two to three pounds being the average price for a loom, reeds, hedles, and brushes, or from 10*s*. to 20*s*. per annum for the hire, and the small sums required for procuring in the first instance the necessary supply of light, dressing and tallow, with the wages of a winder, which labour is almost universally performed by a member of the weaver's family, who would otherwise be out of employment.

"As the trade is scattered over the country, not confined to districts and towns, and also as there are many causes in operation, of which I shall treat more fully hereafter, the weavers do not divide their labour according to the demand for it. The absence of a law of settlement, and the annual migration of the Irish agricultural labourers to England, have induced many to believe that Irish industry is of a migratory character. There can be no greater error. The Irish operatives of every class, from the highest to the lowest, are remarkable for their attachment to localities. The cottier labourer brings back his earnings in the English harvest to pay the rent of his wretched cabin and overcharged potatoe ground; the weaver, witnessing the gradual decline of trade in his district, clings to the hope of improvement in his own locality with desperate fidelity."—*Otway, Vol. I. p.* 594.

General result.

The general result of our inquiries as to the condition of the hand-loom weavers and its causes may be thus summed up. We have shown, that though there are many differences in the respective conditions of different branches of hand-loom weavers, yet, as a body, they are in a state of distress; and that the great cause of this distress is a disproportion between the supply of hand-loom labour, and the demand for it: the demand being in many cases deficient, in some cases decreasing, and in still more irregular, while the supply is in many branches excessive, in almost all has a tendency to increase, and does not appear in any to have a tendency to adapt itself to the irregularities of the demand.

We now come to the most important, and the most difficult task imposed on us by Your Majesty's Commission, namely, the reporting whether any, and, if so, what measures may be devised for the relief of the hand-loom weavers.

Remedies.

If we are right in believing that the low rate of the wages of the hand-loom weavers arises principally from a disproportion between the supply of their labour, and the demand for it, it must follow, that no measures can effectually raise their wages, except by getting rid of that disproportion, or even improve them, except by diminishing it: still, however, while this low rate of wages continues, the condition of the weaver would be improved by any cause which should render the demand for his labour more steady, or should diminish the price, or improve the quality of the commodities on which his wages are expended. These three appear

Remedies.

to us to be the only modes by which the distress of the hand-loom weavers can be removed or palliated, and they will therefore form the heads of the subsequent portion of this Report. In treating of the different plans which have been suggested to us, we shall consider first those which aim at increasing or rendering more steady the demand for the labour of the hand-loom weavers; secondly, those which seek to cheapen or improve the commodities on which their wages are expended, a class of remedies so intimately connected with the first class, that they cannot be separately considered; and, thirdly, those which aim at diminishing their numbers, or preventing their undue increase. It is to be observed, that with one exception, each of these classes of remedies might have some beneficial effect, even if unaccompanied by any of the others. The condition of the weaver would be improved if his employment were more steady, or if his bread were cheaper, or if the number of weavers were diminished, although every other element in his condition remained unaltered. But a mere increase in the demand for the labour, unaccompanied by measures for diminishing the number of hand-loom weavers, or, at least, for preventing its increase, could produce merely a temporary benefit, to be followed by distress, differing from that which now exists only by being more widely diffused.

"Even an aggregate increase of the silk trade,"

Dr. Mitchell.

Says Dr. Mitchell, and his remark applies with equal or nearly equal force to the other branches of hand-loom weavers,

"can afford only temporary relief. Many persons, looking at the official returns of the silks imported, and also taken out for consumption, are lost in wonder that there should be a complaint of the want of employment; but this is easily accounted for, as the average number of weavers is now far greater than before. As the demand for goods goes on increasing, the number of operatives goes on increasing, and fully in proportion. Every greater and extraordinary demand brings a greater number into the trade, and hence, a greater number are to suffer from want of employment, when the extraordinary demand ceases. With a small silk trade, there would be alternations of prosperity and distress; *and with a great silk trade, there are the same alternations, but on a larger scale.*

"Hence also we may see that if every ounce of foreign manufactured silk goods were to be excluded from the kingdom, and if the British public, in lieu of such goods, were to purchase our own manufactures, it would not put an end to the alternations of prosperity and distress. There would be employment for an increased number of hands, no doubt, and so far it would be a relief for a time, but it would not put an end to those fluctuations which bring distress, and would affect a greater number of individuals in proportion to the magnitude of the trade."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p.* 317,

Boards of Trade.

We must state, however, that there is one remedy which has been frequently proposed by the weavers, and by those who believe themselves to be the weavers' friends, which falls under none of these heads, and that is, the creating tribunals, generally called Boards of Trade, whose office it shall be by direct penal legislation, to raise the weavers' wages, or to prevent their fall. It is obvious that laws for such a purpose, supposing for an instant that they could be enforced, must have a tendency by raising the price of the weavers' labour to diminish the demand for it, while, by holding out the expectation of a higher reward, they would increase the supply.

Without dwelling, therefore, on the tendency of such measures, if they were practicable, to render hand-loom weaving still more a lottery, and a still more unfavourable lottery than it is now, a lottery in which the blanks, instead of low wages, would be actual destitution; without more than adverting to the oppression of fixing any general rate of wages, without reference to peculiar and local advantages and disadvantages, and the impossibility of adjusting them by law to those peculiarities; without referring to the ruin of our foreign trade, already struggling hard with the tariffs of the continent, and the local advantages of America; without dwelling even on the impracticability of the proposed measures, on the impossibility of preventing, by any proceedings which the Legislature could sanction, contracts between the manufacturer anxious to purchase labour at an under price, and the weaver anxious to sell it, or on the systematic fraud by which such laws would be evaded by the majority, or on the misery to be encountered by the few, who were forced by power or by conscience to submit to them; without dwelling, we repeat, on these objections, every one of which taken separately, is fatal, we dismiss this proposal by repeating that its tendency is to aggravate the evil which it aims at removing, to increase instead of diminishing the supply of hand-loom weavers, and to diminish instead of increasing the demand for their labour.

The principal measures for increasing the demand for the labour of the hand-loom weavers, and cheapening or improving the commodities on which their earnings

Remedies. Measures for increasing the demand for hand-loom labour.

are expended, which have been suggested to us during the course of this inquiry are six.

1. Measures directed against their competitors at home and abroad. For this purpose, many of the weavers propose the imposition of duties on power looms, and the increase of the duties on the products of foreign looms.

2. Measures for rendering the trade of the country both internally and externally more steady, for increasing the exportation of the products of our own looms, and for cheapening and improving the commodities which are consumed by our labouring population. Alterations in the corn laws and timber laws and general diminution of taxation on the other necessaries of life, are the specific measures for these purposes which have been most pressed upon us.

3. The improvement of patterns by the establishment or promotion of schools of design and an extension of the copyright for patterns.

4. More effectual repression of the embezzlement of manufactured goods and of materials of manufacture.

5 and 6. Measures for removing obstacles to the free use and circulation of labour. Of these obstacles, by far the greatest in their immediate, and the most formidable in their ultimate, effects, are those created by combinations. Objections have also been stated by Mr. Otway and Mr. Muggeridge to the statutes regulating the Irish linen trade, and the repeal or modification of those statutes has been recommended.

We shall consider these six different proposals or classes of proposals in their order.

I. Restriction of competition. Duties on power-looms.

1. The proposals for increasing the demand for hand-loom weaving by means of duties on power-looms and on foreign fabrics, are each open to the same objections. Each of them proposes to benefit a single portion of the community at the expense of all the rest. Each of them proposes to sacrifice the permanent interest of the whole body of consumers to the temporary interest of a single class of producers. In addition to the evil inflicted on the whole body of consumers, each of these plans proposes to benefit one body of producers by injuring another.

In order to increase the demand for the labour of the hand-loom weavers, the demand for the labour of power-loom weavers is proposed to be diminished. Even if the two trades were equally conducive to the welfare of the operative, this would be a gratuitous injustice. But they are not so. Hand-loom weaving is, as we have seen, even in those branches in which the power-loom has not yet competed with it, an irregular and generally an ill paid occupation. The power-loom, on the other hand, is, of the trades that do not require much strength or skill, that which affords the highest wages and the most regular employment. The regularity of employment in power-loom weaving will continue, since it arises from circumstances essential to the trade, namely, that the fixed capital engaged in it far exceeds in value the circulating capital, and belongs exclusively to the master manufacturer. If he stops the action of his machinery he loses the interest of all that it has cost him, and the machinery itself is impaired. He keeps it working, therefore, as long as the price of the finished product exceeds, or even does not fall below, the value of the raw material and the workman's wages. The high wages, indeed, cannot be expected to continue after the period when the supply of power-loom weavers has increased in a greater proportion than the demand for their labour. In time that event will occur. We cannot hope for such a continually and largely increasing demand for power-loom cloth, as to absorb, at wages above the average rate, all those whom the ease and the agreeableness of the occupation will allure. But this evil, which, if things are left to their natural course, is distant, would of course be accelerated if we were insane enough to legislate against power-looms; and the consequence would be not to raise the wages of the hand-loom weaver, but to depress those of the power-loom weaver to his level.

Mr. Chapman.

The following extract from Mr. Chapman's report shows, in fuller detail, the mode in which the proposed measure would operate.

"If the power-loom weavers were stopped by a tax, all the power-loom weavers would be thrown upon the world. What are they to resort to? Evidently to the hand-loom. But to give up the good tool, and return to the bad, would be to enhance the price of the goods produced. The inevitable consequence would be, a diminished demand; in consequence of the diminished demand, some of the power-loom weavers would not find work at the hand-loom: compete, however, they would, and so depress wages below the present low scale. If the employment of women and girls were confined to the power-loom, the above argument would be untenable; but the fact that the practice extends to the hand-loom, demands the most serious consideration of all who propose to tax the power-loom. The power-loom weavers would at once be cast upon the hand-loom, and the question is, for every hundred so com-

peting, would there be work? The answer must be in the negative. The demand for hand-loom weavers would certainly be greater than at present, but it would not be equal to the new supply, that is, to the hand and power-loom weavers taken together, and the result would be, a depression below the present wages of the hand-loom weaver. If the depression were merely down to the earnings of hand-loom weavers, it would be bad enough, inasmuch as the power-loom affords 11*s.* 2¾*d.* where the hand-loom affords only 7*s.**

Remedies. Measures for increasing the demand for hand-loom labour. I. Restriction of competition. Duties on power-looms.

"But there is another point of view in which the proposed tax should be placed. All that we can do is to prohibit the setting up of power-looms, or mules, wherever the British Parliament has jnrisdiction. It has already been shown, by the evidence of several of the very witnesses who ask for a tax, that our manufacturers have much to fear from foreign competition. The argument was good in the case of the corn-laws; so also is it good in the case of machinery. A tax, would, in fact, be a premium to the setting up of manufacturing machinery abroad; and, when too late, we should become sensible of our error, we should find foreign manufacturers too firmly established to be dislodged. America, Prussia, and Russia, might then safely repeal their tariffs; our machine tax would take their place.†

"The evil arising from the setting up of foreign manufactures was apprehended by many of the witnesses who regarded machinery as fraught with unmixed, uncompensated evil."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p.* 587.

Duties on foreign fabrics.

Results the same in kind, though not in degree, would follow any attempt to benefit the hand-loom weavers by increased duties on foreign products. As every regular trade is a trade of barter, all the silks and linens that we import are in fact received in exchange for British manufactures which we export, and every obstacle to importation is, therefore to a corresponding degree, an obstacle to exportation. Every diminution of demand for foreign commodities is a diminution of demand for the British commodities with which the foreign commodities would have been purchased. It is only the diffusion of the evil which prevents our perceiving it. We can seldom point out the individual workman, we cannot often even point out the class of workmen, the demand for whose labour is diminished by any given duties or prohibitions. But it is probable that no class is more affected by them than the hand-loom weavers. Woollen cloths alone, almost exclusively the produce of the hand-loom, form even now one tenth of our exports. To diminish then the importation of foreign silks for the benefit of the silk weavers would not merely be a sacrifice of the interest of the millions who consume to that of the thousands who produce, but would also be a sacrifice of the interest of the general body of producers; and among those producers, of the general body whose condition we are proposing to ameliorate.

II. Promotion of exportation and importation. Alteration of corn laws.

2. We now come to a very different class of remedies, namely, those which propose to render the trade of the country, both internally and externally, more steady, to increase the exportation of the products of our own looms, and to cheapen and improve the commodities which are consumed by our labouring population. We have already stated that alterations in the corn laws and timber duties are the specific measures for these purposes which have been most pressed upon us. The importance of the subject induces us to extract at some length the most important portions of the evidence respecting corn laws contained in our Appendix.

It will be seen that, with the exception of Dr. Mitchell, to whom Spitalfields and the eastern silk districts were confided, all our Assistant Commissioners found the corn laws denounced as the great causes of the existing distress, and their repeal or modification demanded as its first and most effectual remedy. We will extract their statements *seriatim*:—

Mr. Symons.

Mr. Symons—(Assistant Commissioner for the South of Scotland:)—

"By the manufacturers and weavers, as with one voice, the duties on the importation of foreign corn are alleged to be the chief cause of depression in all the departments of manufacturing industry, but more especially that of hand-loom weaving, as being the weakest, and therefore the first to go to the wall.

"It is represented by both parties as the great incubus on the commerce of the country; the pernicious influence of which, the mighty progress of machinery and the energy and skill of our artisans have hitherto alone and wonderfully enabled us to withstand.

"They state, moreover, that the same vantage ground which these elements of superiority have hitherto afforded to us in the commercial relations of the world, can no longer be retained; that the corn-laws prevent our receiving the chief wealth which the continental merchants have to give in repayment for our goods. By accumulated evidence they show that, in consequence, we are forcing corn growing countries, less adapted for manufactures, to erect factories of their own, whilst the low price of provisions enables them to work at low money wages with comfort to the operative.

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* "8*s.* 1½*d. with deductions.*"

† "It is sometimes said, 'Our foreign trade is trifling, let us look to our home trade.' In 1835, we exported to all countries woollen goods valued at 6,635,376*l.*—a trade too important to jeopardize."

Remedies. Measures for increasing the demand for hand-loom labour. II. Promotion of exportation and importation. Alteration of corn laws.

"That the high price of corn here renders competition with the produce of their looms and machinery (erected by British engineers, and worked with cheap labour) daily more difficult. That the combined effect of the corn laws, in thus compelling foreigners to manufacture for themselves what they formerly purchased of us, and at lower prices than we can manufacture it ourselves, is not only to debar us of the custom of those countries, but is rapidly driving us out of their markets. In short, that a continuation of the laws which prevent us from exchanging with other countries that which each can best produce and spare, must, under the pressure of a population increasing at the rate of nearly 1,100 per day, rapidly induce a diminished increase of the capital of the country, and consequently of the means of maintenance for the people; accompanied by the struggle of the operative to maintain, and the necessity of the employer to reduce, wages, together with the manifold misery, protracted strife, and final destitution, incidental to the progress of national impoverishment.

"The only measure desired by the weavers, or advocated by the manufacturers, as a sufficient remedy for the existing depression, is the repeal of the corn laws. They view the continuance of a tax which increases the price of food, and diminishes the amount of employment, as grievous and intolerable, irreconcileable with sound policy, and obnoxious to every principle of justice. Such, though expressed in terms less mild, was the feeling I found unanimous among the weaving body of Scotland south of the Forth, and I may safely say that their opinions on this point are the same as those held by nine tenths of the population comprising a large majority of the manufacturers.

"They consider that a greater injury would accrue to the farmer by the maintenance of a tax detrimental to the community than by its removal; and in this opinion they are supported by the testimony of more than one intelligent and extensive agriculturist; among others, Mr. Smith, of Dumfries.

"They believe that the greater consumption of the produce of dairy farms, and pasture and building lands, and barley, would amply compensate to the farmer for the fall in the price of one grain; but that if it did not, no justifiable plea could be thereupon founded for the continuation of a monopoly beneficial to the individual interests of a minority, but hurtful to the national interests of the community.

"Anxious, nevertheless, that no injury should accrue to any class, the majority of the weavers desire a gradual, but still a total repeal of the corn tax, on the principle of a fall of one or two shillings per year, which will give time to the landlords and their tenants to re-adjust their leases, and to lay down tillage-lands in pasture.

"There are, however, many who contend, that if the injury of the corn laws be great, their removal cannot be too immediate. Mr. Smith, of Deanston, near Doune, (celebrated alike as an agriculturist and a manufacturer), told me, he considered that if the corn laws could not be maintained (and he reluctantly assented to the probable necessity of a repeal), the true interest of the farmer was, that such repeal should be immediate, and *not gradual*. He believed that the same mutual agreement which after a time re-adjusted existing contracts between landlords and tenants, world take place as after the war, and that the inconveniences of a sudden change would be less than the evil to the farmer of feeling his protective duty gradually and insidiously, as it were, sinking beneath him, the effects of which he could less easily calculate and act upon than those of immediate repeal."—*Symons, Vol., I. p.* 69.

Dr. Harding.

Dr. Harding—(Assistant Commissioner for the East of Scotland:)—

"The operation of the laws affecting the importation of corn was stated by the witnesses of all classes, with scarcely an exception, to be the most injurious to the hand-loom weavers, as well as to their immediate employers. To this cause the gradual deterioration of their condition was generally, and in many cases exclusively, attributed. It would be impossible to describe too strongly the unanimity and strength of the feeling on this point which pervades the district. It was so constantly reiterated by weavers, agents, manufacturers, both of large and of small capital, and merchants, that I should ill discharge my duty if I did not thus state the fact as distinctly and strongly as the nature of this Report will admit. Their operation was said to have a peculiarly injurious effect upon the hand-loom weavers in several ways; viz.—

"1st. By pressing with greatest severity upon them, as the poorest class of operatives, since they require nearly the same quantity of farinaceous food as those whose earnings are much larger than their own.

"2dly. By preventing those countries whose staple produce is corn, from exporting it to Great Britain, and taking our textile manufactures in return, and by affording them a pretext for subjecting such manufactures to heavy import duties, as a measure of commercial retaliation.

"3dly. By encouraging foreign countries to commence and support textile manufactures, in order to supply themselves with those articles which the exclusion of their corn prevents them from purchasing from Great Britain.

"4thly. By contributing to keep the price of food so much lower in these countries than it is in Great Britain, as to enable foreign weavers to undersell our own."—*Dr. Harding, Vol. I. p.* 192.

Mr. Muggeridge.

Mr. Muggeridge—(Assistant Commissioner for the North of England:)—

"The influence of the corn laws was universally dwelt upon throughout the district assigned to me. It was contended that the effect of these laws was—

Remedies. Measures for increasing the demand for hand-loom labour. II. Promotion of exportation and importation. Alteration of the corn laws.

"1. To cause the people of England to pay a high and unnecessarily exorbitant price for their bread, whereby their physical condition was deteriorated.

"2. To prevent the interchange of British manufactured goods for foreign grain, whereby the employment of our manufacturing population was decreased.

"3. To drive foreign nations to manufacture for themselves, through our refusing to receive their corn in exchange; whereby the British hand-loom weaver had been thrown altogether out of employment, or compelled to work at a scale of wages as low as that paid to the Continental labourer, in the cheap corn-growing countries.

"4. In many cases to supersede the British manufacturer in foreign markets, which are now supplied by the cheaper wrought fabrics of other countries.'—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. II., p.* 589.

Mr. Miles

Mr. Miles—(Assistant Commissioner for the Gloucestershire District:)—

"The corn laws are almost unanimously allowed to be the cause of distress. I have a table of wages from 1820 to 1838, in periods of different years, with the average prices of corn. I find wages have been reduced 30 per cent., and corn is dearer."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. II., p.* 360.

Mr. Chapman.

Mr. Chapman—(Assistant Commissioner for the West Riding:)—

"Nearly every witness I examined considered the corn laws as exercising a pernicious influence on the condition of the labouring population, and especially upon that of the hand-loom weavers, and therefore demanded their repeal. A few extracts will show the mode in which they themselves believe the restriction of the importation of food to be injurious.

"Charles Fletcher, of Horsforth, thus stated his impressions as to the effects of the corn laws upon the condition of the hand-loom weavers:—

"'17. Have you given any consideration as to the cause?—I have. I attribute the decline, in a considerable degree, to the operation of the corn laws.

"'18. In what way do you consider they have operated?—By preventing the free exchange of our commodities with other countries. They operate peculiarly on the woollen trade in some of the countries on the continent, which have raised up manufactures for themselves.

"'19. Is there any other way in which the weaver is affected?—I think the weaver is peculiarly affected, because *the smaller a man's income, the greater the proportion he must spend in bread.* Flour is now (August) 3*s.* 4*d.* per stone of 16 lbs.; a man, with a wife and three or four children, must have two stone, or two stone and a half. Now flour has occasionally been at 2*s.* a stone, and ought not to be higher—[a voice in the crowd, "It ought to be 18*d*, if we had no corn laws"]—so that you may easily judge of the effect of taxed bread on our condition.'

"James Cromack, of Armley, gave a similar view as to the operation of the corn laws:—

"'30. What do you think are the most prominent causes of the depressed condition of the weavers?—I think it proceeds from more causes than one. First, I should say the corn laws, because the duty on foreign grain has a tendency to cramp our commerce; and by our not taking foreign produce, it is impossible for them (foreign nations) to take our manufactures. They also cause us to eat our bread dearer than we ought to eat it, and dearer than the people of any other country eat it. In consequence of this, it takes *more of our small earnings to buy food, and leaves so little remaining, that we can purchase but little else.** So that while it cepresses our own condition, it makes us depress the condition of all others; it makes us bad customers of all others.'

"James Whitaker gave his opinion respecting the operation of the corn laws; as follows:—

"'18. Have you anything to state respecting the cause of the decline of wages beyond what you have already stated?—I think the *corn laws are the first cause.* My opinion is the same with respect to their effects on commerce as Cromack stated. I think they are productive of one thing, which he did not mention; I think they have been the means of causing foreign nations to manufacture, who would not otherwise have begun, and thus they have created for us rivals in the market. I think they have been the cause of a great part of the machinery at present in operation. It is acknowledged that our goods can be manufactured by machinery cheaper than by manual labour. In consequence of the introduction of manufactures by foreign nations, our manufacturers were compelled to introduce a system of manufacturing which enabled them to compete with foreigners. I cannot see that the manufacturer could do otherwise; I am stating what many of my fellow-workmen do not agree to, but I come here honestly to state my views. My reasons for stating that the manufacturer could not do in any other way, are these: it is well known that we labour under a debt that no other nation in the world labours under. The interest of this must be paid out of taxation; besides that, we have upwards of twenty millions for the expenses of the Government, which must be met by taxation. Now, operatives in Germany and France *can afford to work for less wages, and still live better,* Taking all these things into consideration, I cannot see that our manufacturers could compete with foreigners without introducing a system of manufacturing like the present.'

"I need not occupy a large space by quoting the opinions of other witnesses on the subject of the corn laws alone. Nearly all the witnesses considered them injurious, though all were not able to state their views with equal clearness and precision. The above quotations show that the weavers are in the habit of thinking deeply on the subject; and as they do not fail

* "The effect of a high price of food in destroying the home market is too frequently overlooked. The manufacturing population are the great consumers of manufactured goods; an advance in the price of food utterly destroys their power of purchasing manufactures. They clothe themselves when bread is cheap."

Remedies. Measures for increasing the demand for hand-loom labour. II. Promotion of exportation and importation. Alteration of the corn laws.

to discuss among themselves all questions bearing upon their own condition, I found them generally very familiar with the leading arguments current upon the subject, and not unfrequently capable of putting their peculiar case in a new and striking point of view. Some of the witnesses taking a view of the corn laws not less clear than those above quoted, grouped them with taxes on raw produce, and on the raw materials of manufacture, and on the necessaries consumed by the labourer. As a specimen of this larger view of the pressure of taxation upon manufacturing industry, take the following extract from the evidence of Thomas Fawcett, one of the witnesses examined at Bramley:—

"'10. Have you anything you wish to state respecting the depressed condition of the weavers, and its causes?—Yes, I think there are two great monopolies which require revision.

"'11. What are they?—The first is the corn law; I desire its repeal, because it compels us to eat bread 70, 80, 90, and, in some cases, 100 per cent. dearer* than in France, Germany, and other countries. The corn laws force the cultivation of soils ill-adapted to the cultivation of wheat, whilst they throw land out of cultivation in other countries which could grow corn more advantageously than we can. By abolishing the corn laws, the Germans and other northern nations could supply us with cheaper bread than we can ourselves produce under present circumstances, whilst we could supply them with manufactured goods cheaper than they could make them; so that they could be better employed in growing corn for us, and we in manufacturing for them, and thus raise up a mutual interest in each others welfare by mutual intercourse.'

"Mr. Jonathan Hodgson, a cloth manufacturer, of the township of Idle, gave his opinion as follows:—

"'4. Have you anything to suggest for the improvement of the weaving body?—I consider nothing can improve the condition but an increased demand for labour, and that I think would be brought about *by a repeal of the corn laws and all taxes on raw materials, and all the necessaries of life.* I am a sincere friend to free trade, and I consider the duty on Baltic timber particularly oppressive and burthensoms on trade generally. The duties on wool, indigo, and other dye-stuffs, oil, &c. press particularly on the woollen manufacture, and, by limiting demand, on the hand-loom weaver."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p.* 576.

Mr. Austin—(Assistant Commissioner for the South-West of England:)—

Mr. Austin.

"The great and primary cause of distress is, the want of sufficient trade to give employment to all. If we can find a remedy for this, the consequent evils will at once be removed, competition will cease, wages will rise, and still the profits of the capitalist will increase.

"The only resource generally suggested is a repeal, or, at least, a modification of the corn law. The opinion is, that the consequence of the repeal of this law would be, not the lowering of wages, nor even a reduction of the price of corn, in any great degree, below an average price of 60*s.*, but that the demand for manufacturing labour would increase without lessening that for agricultural; that the same quantity of manufactured goods would be exchanged directly or indirectly for bread-corn grown at home, and consequently the same quantity be grown and consumed, and that, in addition (were the exchange allowed even at the price of 60*s.*, by the repeal of the said law, or modification of it, by imposition of a fixed moderate duty), a larger quantity of manufactured articles would be exchanged for foreign corn, which would feed those who made them; the price of corn would rise in the countries which are our competitors in manufactures, and with it the price of labour. If we remained stationary, we should be better able to cope with them than we are now."—*Vol. I. p.* 454.

Mr. Austin proceeds to give verbatim the following two communications from operative weavers, which he justly characterises as showing much reflection and intelligence:—

"I, J. M., of Cullumpton, am a weaver. My own earning, as near as I can state, upon an average, amounts to from 7*s.*, or from that to 7*s.* 6*d.* per week; I work in a broad lumb, of which there are about 70 in the town; and, in my opinion, the most skilful and best instructed part of the trade work in them. I have worked in a narrow lumb in years past. Wages both in broad and narrow lumbs, since the year 1816, has undergone many and serious changes, all of which has had a tendency to diminish wages; some by taking off a great part of the real price which usually used to be paid, and some by increasing and augmenting the quantity of material for the same or less price than aforetime paid. Many may be the evils which may be enumerated that has given cause to the many reductions which from time to time has followed in rapid succession; and my firm belief is, that the introduction of the corn law system has been highly injurious in fettering and restricting the woollen manufactory in finding vent in the foreign market. First, England, being a nation of artizans, we can in no shape require the vast quantity of manufactured goods which the operatives of our large manufacturing districts are constantly turning out; and secondly, the very limited space of country in which we live in, which consequently cannot produce a sufficient quantity of corn, which the superabundant quantity of our population stand in need of. Thirdly, and lastly, it is quite obvious that the foreigner, living in a more spacious and extensive tract of country, has from time immemorial ever been wont to direct their attention to the growth of corn, knowing, at the same time, that England could ever boast of the superiority and advantage which they possess in reference to their superior wools; it therefore necessarily follows, had not the legislator interfered, and enacted such measures in the year 1815, in restricting foreign

* "The witness over-estimates the evil, but this is no more than a common error. We must not expect a weaver to be *more* accurate than those who have better opportunities of learning the truth."

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grain finding its way to our English markets, we should now to this day more or less have enjoyed the privilege of bartering and exchanging the surplus of our manufactured fabrications for the over and above quantity of corn which the foreigner, by living in such an extensive tract of country, could in nowise consume. There may be other reasons stated, such as the exportation of our English wool, which, in my humble opinion, is nothing more or less but handing over to the foreigner a rod to inflict punishment upon our own backs."

"I, W. X., of Collumpton, weaver, have taken into consideration the principal causes of the depression of our trade, and we believe that it is owing to many and different causes, attributable to two legislative enactments.

"1st. To existing corn laws, in not allowing a trade for our manufactured goods, by a fair barter, being made between ourselves and other countries; enabling the English merchant to dispose of his articles in the foreign market, so as to be enabled to pay himself and those employed under him. Ever since the existence of those laws we find our foreign trade decreasing, and why? the foreigner, not being able to procure ready cash (or rather specie), cannot purchase at our markets, and they have in consequence of which attempted making the articles themselves. The second cause is the exportation of our grown wools, for it would be utterly impossible for the foreigner, considering every advantage they may possess, both as regards their machinery, their artists, and mechanics, to manufacture their goods without our long wools grown in England. When we were employed in foreign manufactures, we could earn a tolerably good livelihood; and we have reason also to believe our masters have, as well as ourselves, felt the baneful influence of the present legislative Acts now in operation. We may positively say our wages is reduced one-third from what we could earn at the period above referred to. Since now the baneful working of the corn-law bill, it has driven away the greater part of those rates by which we could earn a good livelihood.

"Collumpton, 27th September, 1838."

Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p. 454.

Mr. Keyser—(Assistant Commissioner for the linen district, Yorkshire:)—

Mr. Keyser.

"Manufacturers, as well as workmen, are universally opposed to the corn laws; and, with scarcely an exception, attribute much of the distress to their operation, as will appear by the evidence in almost every page. The corn laws are considered to increase the price of provision, to limit our exports, and to induce the foreign manufacturer, by the introduction of machinery, and the establishment of factories, to undersell us in every market. Opinions all tending to the same purport are variously given, one of which I cannot forbear to quote, viz.,

"*If I make a piece of cloth, and meet a Frenchman with a sack of corn on his back, I should be glad to exchange, but up steps a custom-house officer and won't let me, and I may eat my cloth if I can.*"—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I. p.* 490.

Mr. Fletcher—(acting as Assistant Commissioner for the Midland District:)—

Mr. Fletcher.

"'If we cannot have prohibition,' say the Nuneaton weavers, 'we require the repeal of the corn-laws. The return to prohibition would increase our trade. The repeal of the corn-laws would cheapen bread, and increase trade, through ribbons, among other goods, being taken in exchange for corn.*'

"The manufacturers themselves generally regard these laws as the great obstacle to their obtaining a foreign trade, which the language of Mr. Huskisson led them to hope from a free-trade system. 'Coventry,' they state, 'has no export trade worthy of mention. But a great many more ribbons have been exported during the last two years than previously. Messrs. Morrison are undoubtedly exporting Coventry ribbons to America. In looking for an export trade to counterbalance the loss of the highest class English market, the Coventry manufacturer finds that his ribbons have a limited proportion of the labour of fixed capital in proportion to the manual labour, and they cannot therefore so readily compete with the cheap labour of the continent. The cheap labour of the country is already in competition with that of the town, and, through the comparative cheapness of foreign labour, both are out-rivalled by the continent. We have now no foreign trade in ribbons which we know to be worth much. For if we enter a foreign market, we there feel the greater cost of living to which our workmen are subject, and find ourselves upon the same ground as the cotton manufacturer, who is also complaining of the existing corn-laws.†' The corn and provision laws appear certainly to be obnoxious to every charge which has been urged against a prohibitory system in manufactures; with the further disadvantage of imposing a denial, not of some particular articles of luxury, but of food itself. Their operation to the disadvantage of the Coventry trade, the Weavers' Committee endeavoured to trace; and although their views possess little of originality, they claim a full statement.—

"Such laws prevent the weaver having more employment; there are other countries which have corn, and little else, to give in exchange for manufactured goods. They are lost as customers, and the field for English labour is narrowed. This comes upon the weavers, in a great degree directly, but, in a much greater degree, indirectly. Were the restrictions removed, we might have a direct exchange of ribbons for corn with those parties, as well as an exchange of other goods; which exchange is prevented by the existing laws. Indirectly, the corn-laws restrict the trade in hardware and English manufactures generally; and, supposing those of our countrymen producing those goods had more labour and a better price for it, and their manufactures generally extended, they would purchase more freely of us the

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* Nuneaton Committee

† Cope, Ratcliff, and Caldicott.

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article of luxury we produce; in fact, not only should we get customers immediately abroad, but the number and wealth of our customers in Great Britain would be increased.

"A third effect of the maintenance of the corn-laws, besides preventing these advantages, is, that it renders bread dearer, because our own country does not grow sufficient for its own population, and the corn-laws, preventing the free importation of more of the article of bread which is thus wanted, inevitably keep up the price of the quantity internally produced. Consequently, with the same amount of wages we now receive, we should, but for these laws, obtain a greater proportion of comforts than we at present enjoy.

"Has no documents to prove the fact that Great Britain does not grow enough food for its own inhabitants, but he believes so, because the corn-laws themselves permit corn to be held in bond against cases of emergency; which proves that the governors of our own country are aware that our island does not at all times supply us. 1. Consider that these laws, therefore, deprive the workmen of some portion of the comforts which their wages ought to give the men. 2. They also prevent the English weaver meeting the foreign weaver on equal terms. The corn-laws form part of a system of which the part which protected our labour has been removed, while that which affects our subsistence from the fruits of our labour is maintained. That system is the anti-free-trade system, which we understand to be the denial of a free permission for the various manufactures and produce of other countries to enter into this. Consider that permitting the free introduction of foreign silks, without as free an introduction of foreign grain, is an injury to us. The throwing open the ports to ribbons, while we are bound to pay a certain large proportion of taxes, especially on corn, had the effect of lowering our wages, with which we had to purchase the corn which was still taxed, as well as other things." "It exposed the English weaver to an unfair competition with the foreign weaver. Is unprepared to say that the 25 or 30 per cent. duty now paid on ribbons is insufficient to counterbalance in the British market the greater price of bread; but thinks that, were it so, the corn-law would still prevent any chance of a foreign trade. Except in gauzes, we do not feel any apprehension of French competition in the British markets." "The man who produces the ribbons must first have had bread to eat in order to produce them, and the cheaper the man has that bread the cheaper he will be enabled to labour; and therefore thinks that, for a third market, under the restrictions imposed by the corn-laws, England cannot produce ribbons so cheap, of the same quality, as a country where bread is cheaper. Supposes, therefore, that foreign countries may be now prevented from purchasing English ribbons on that account.....Although France might still supply the world with gauzes, the Coventry weavers think they would stand a better chance in the competition of the world, if they were under a system of taxation not so severe, and of which system the corn-laws are the portion which press upon them most severely.....Would not be in the same position as now when *working cheaper* with *cheaper bread*, because employment would be more regular. The trade and prosperity of the country being generally increased the demand for a luxury like ribbons would be more extensive and more constant. Supposes that a repeal of the corn-laws would benefit the master by extension of his business, and the weaver by greater regularity of employment."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. II., p.* 24.

Mr. Otway—(Assistant Commissioner for Ireland:)—

Mr. Otway.

"The laws affecting the importation of foreign corn, according to all the witnesses, act most injuriously on hand-loom labour and the manufactures of the country in general. Mr. Malone and Mr. White, at considerable length, state their opinion on this important question. Mr. Whitworth says, 'The operation of the corn laws I look upon as the cause of the stoppage of foreign orders; it has operated in this way, when we would not take the corn they had to spare, they would not take the fabrics we had to spare. Corn and timber being the only article of exchange they had to give us for our manufactures, more especially in the Baltic, our corn laws have given an unnatural impetus to the manufactures of America and the Continent. They operate in this way also, that while the corn is kept at a high price in this country it is kept at an unnaturally low price on the Continent for a want of demand for it. While corn continues at a high price either in this or any country, it enhances the price of every other article of food in the same proportion; while on the other hand, the low price of corn in any country reduces the price of every other kind of provision, so that the whole effect seems to be this, that while the corn laws in England are supported, we have to manufacture, with food at a very high price, against the manufacturers of the Continent, with food at a very low price. As a proof that this view is correct, I would just instance one example:—It is well known that at Barnsley they have had a very extensive export trade in linen drills, for weaving which the weavers there have been able to earn 25*s.* to 30*s.* a-week; while in France, the same article, to my knowledge, was manufactured last year, the weaver receiving only 5*s.* a-week. The natural consequence is, that the French are lowering the trade at Barnsley. This is further confirmed by the large export of linen yarn both from England and Ireland, which has been so great of late that the French have applied to their government to lay on an almost prohibitory duty.' Mr. Ennis states, 'The effects of the corn laws are injurious; they injure us in this way:—I had an American gentleman at my house; he looked over the different descriptions of goods in this town; he said they were goods that would answer the New York market very well, but that he thought they were much dearer than the German goods. The cause of the difference is obvious; the German weavers eat untaxed bread, the English taxed. If we rely on the home trade we can never give fair wages; the weavers are so numerous that they would soon overstock the home market; and they have a right to take away any bar that may be in the way of their trade, or their being able to earn at their trade

sufficient wages. When the home market is overstocked, they have nothing to look to but the foreign trade; they are met by the corn laws there, and are forced into competition with men, as I said before, who eat untaxed bread. The conclusion I would draw from this is, that the corn laws are the great obstacle now to the prosperity of the trade.'"—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p.* 631.

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Dr. Mitchell, to whom Spitalfields and the eastern silk district were assigned, is the only one of our Assistant Commissioners who appears to have encountered much difference of opinion on the subject of corn laws. We extract the following outline of the statements in his Report:—

Repeal of the Corn Laws.

Dr. Mitchell.

"Very much less evidence has been offered on this subject in the course of the inquiry than could have been anticipated.

"There are two modes of accounting for this fact: either the manufacturers and weavers attach little importance to the subject, or they consider the policy of the Government and Legislature so fixed, that it is useless to offer any opinion respecting it: some, however, have entered on the subject.

"Some of the manufacturers of Norwich, and the weavers of Braintree, Colchester, and Reading, are for the repeal of the laws which lay restrictions on the importation of foreign corn.

"The manufacturers anticipate that the free importation of foreign corn would lower the price of provisions, and, as a consequence, lower the price of labour. If the price of labour were lowered, they consider that they could manufacture their goods at a cheaper rate, and consequently be able to come into the market in competition with foreigners in fabrics in which they feel they cannot do so at present. They consider that this is more particularly the case with shawls and other goods which require a great deal of labour to be bestowed upon them. They think that they at present suffer not only by the foreigner being enabled to obtain cheaper labour, and thereby to make some goods cheaper, but they also suppose that the foreign manufacturers are making progress, so that in time they will come into competition with the British manufacturers on more goods than they now do, not only in foreign markets, but also even in this country. They thence infer, that the corn laws should be repealed, and should be repealed as soon as possible, as every year of delay enables the foreigners to make progress; and they consider that the time may arrive when the foreigners will be so perfect in their manufactures, that the repeal of the corn laws may come too late.

"The repeal of the corn laws would, therefore, cause the extension of the sale of the British manufactures, and preserve the markets which we now enjoy.

"The weavers of Norwich, according to the evidence of Mr. Samuel Dayne, himself a manufacturer, and opposed to the corn laws, do not desire the repeal of these laws. They see that the manufacturers desire the repeal of the corn laws, in order to obtain cheaper labour, that is, that they may have men to work for less wages than they get at present. But they say, of what use would cheaper bread be to them, if their wages with which they buy it were to be reduced at the same time.

"Mr. Samuel Dayne has endeavoured to represent to them, that if cheap provisions caused lower wages, still there would be an increase of trade, and a more constant demand for their labour, and therefore their condition would be much improved.

"This argument, however, has no effect upon them. The idea of lower wages is sufficient to decide their minds, and they have no desire to touch the corn laws.

"The Norwich weavers are not unanimous on this subject."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p.* 382.

Dr. Mitchell has copied into his report the resolutions of the Braintree silk weavers' Committee. As we agree with him in thinking, that much consideration is due to these resolutions, we have extracted the material portions of them.

Resolutions of the Braintree Silk Weavers.

"We have hitherto spoken of the more immediate causes that depress the hand-loom weaver; but they are rather the effects of one common cause, and are among the fruitful evils arising from the corn laws. The real object of this unnatural law is to limit the supply of food, in order to obtain certain high prices for it, which could not be maintained by fair competition. It has not the redeeming quality of most other taxes, that of creating a revenue for the maintenance of Government, but aims at the entire exclusion of all foreign corn. It appears to us, that in proportion as the price of food increases, it being the great object for which all are striving, there must be a proportionate increase of labour given in exchange for it, and this increase of labour as naturally produces an increase of manufactured goods, which increase of goods is not demanded by a greater consumption, because the means of the great body of the consumers are not increased; hence arises those occasional gluts which spread poverty and misery among the people, and ruin among the small manufacturers. At such a time the goods cannot be disposed of but at a loss to the master, and he therefore shuts up his manufactory, or at best keeps his hands with not half employ; and these being unable to maintain themselves during such a time, are driven up and down to seek for employment elsewhere, their houses broken up, and themselves reduced to wander in a country where

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riches are spread around them, which they have created, but are forbidden to touch. Hence arises an increase of crime, frequently ending in banishment for life or a violent death.

"Another effect of the corn laws on the hand-loom weaver has been, that while they have increased the price of food by 30 per cent., they have decreased the demand for his labour, by shutting out those customers who would gladly have taken our manufactures, if we could have taken corn in exchange; but this not being permitted, the artisan has been, as it were, shut up to starve, while their foreign neighbours have been obliged to obtain goods from other countries, far inferior to this in mechanical resources; and in this way do we see our continental neighbours fast rivalling us in this respect, and cutting us off from the commerce of the world. Expediency dictated the enactment of other laws for the prevention of the exportation of our machinery, and for keeping our own men of genius starving, lest foreign nations should make use of those talents which were rusting under the corroding effects of the corn laws. But this was only another link in this chain of injustice, and a direct violation of the liberty of the subject; but like all other laws that run in opposition to the community, it was evaded by all who had the power to do so, and our best artisans were daily exported under false pretences, until our neighbours in France and other states can rival us in the texture and rapidity of production of most articles on which we are employed.

"'This competition has driven the manufacturer to a further reduction of wages, and the hands to combination among themselves to prevent them from so doing, and created an unnatural enmity between the classes mutually dependant on each other.

"'These combinations have now been formed to such an extent, that, unless the manufacturer is relieved, either from them or the corn laws, he must ultimately be driven to transport his capital to other countries not so encumbered, and leave a degraded, starving, and infuriated population, increased to nearly double in number, to settle the account as they best may with the self-made lords of the soil, for whose benefit all this misery is entailed upon them.

"We think we have now shown some of the evils arising from the corn-laws, evils which affect, in a great degree, all classes of the community, but more especially those engaged in weaving. Were a repeal of these laws to take place, an immediate exchange of the surplus manufactures of this country for corn would be the consequence, and an immediate demand for the operatives, and, as the exports from Britain consist chiefly of wove goods and yarns, all engaged in these branches of trade would be particularly benefited, while the general supply of corn would reduce the price of all provisions, so that the whole of the working community would be better off; the demand for labour among the manufacturers would enhance the price of it, and wages must rise to a fair level, and every one having less to pay for bread, would have more to spend in the purchase of other goods, which would give a stimulus to other departments of trade.

"We have thus, in a short space, given our opinion on the operation of these laws, hoping that the Commissioners will give them that consideration which the importance of the subject deserves. We have neither time nor ability to devote to the formation of any plan of repeal on which a law may be founded, but must leave it to others whose education and experience have rendered them capable of such an undertaking.

"The Commissioners will, we are confident, pardon any expressions in the foregoing resolutions which may appear harsh or uncharitable, when they reflect that they come from men who must feel keenly whether they will or no, and who therefore may be expected to give expression to their feelings in a natural and unsophisticated manner.

(Signed by the Committee) "James Lindell, and nine others."

"Such," says Dr. Mitchell, "are the remedies of the weavers themselves, after careful attention to the subject, and communicated by them in writing. I have felt it due to them, and to the central board, and to the Government and Legislature, to report in their own words the statements of the weavers of their own case."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p.* 399.

On looking throug the arguments used to support this almost universal reprobation of the present corn laws, it will be found that one of its motives, and, as far as the manufacturers are concerned, one of its principal motives, is a belief in the following three propositions:—

1. That the wages of labour are lower on the continent of Europe than in Great Britain.

2. That this difference gives an advantage to the foreign manufacturer; and

3. That the difference in wages is owing to the different price of provisions in the two countries.

We shall examine these propositions in some detail.

We must begin, however, by explaining an ambiguity in the use of the term *wages of labour*, which has exercised and continues to exercise much influence on the opinions and even on the conduct of large bodies of persons. The most obvious and the most usual meaning of that term is *the amount of money earned by the labourer in a given time;* in a day, a week, or a year. This is the signification in which we employ it in this report. But it is often used to signify *the price given for producing a given result,* for weaving for instance a given quantity of cloth. It is obvious that these two things are perfectly distinct. In the one the

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attention is directed solely to the workman, and its only subject is the amount of his income. In the other the attention is directed solely to the employer, and its only subject is the amount of his expenditure. And it will often happen that wages are highest when the price given for producing a given result is lowest. A striking example is to be found in the Third Report of the Commissioners for Inquiring into the Condition of the Poorer Classes in Ireland. The commissioners state, that the wages of the agricultural labourers in Ireland average from 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a-week, while those in England average from 8*s.* to 10*s.* a-week. But they also state, that there are in Ireland five agricultural labourers for every two in England, and that those five labourers produce only one-fourth of what is produced by the two in England; and they infer, therefore, that the Irish labourer at 2*s.* 6*d.* a-week obtains a larger share of the value of what he produces than the English labourer at 10*s.*; or, in other words, that the price given for producing a given effect in Ireland, where the wages are 2*s.* 6*d.* a-week, is higher than that given in England, where wages are 10*s.* a-week. And yet the statement that an Irish farmer has an advantage over an English one because he pays lower wages, though perfectly false, would be plausible. Using the words "lower wages," to signify that he pays less to each of his labourers, it is true that he does pay lower wages; but using those words to signify the price paid for the production of a given effect, the truth is that he pays higher wages than the English farmer.

We have said that this ambiguity has influenced and continues to influence the conduct of large bodies of persons. We alluded to the work people in combination. In those trades in which the labourers are paid by the piece, that is to say by a given price for a given effect produced, it has become habitual to apply the term wages, not to the amount earned by the workman in a given time, but to the price paid for producing the result. And consequently, to call a reduction of that price a reduction of wages, without reference to the amount earned by the workman in a given time. The consequence has been that, acting under the influence of mere names, workmen have turned out to resist, under the name of a reduction of wages, plans of operation by which the total amount of their earnings would have been augmented, though the price paid for the result of their labour would have been diminished. One of the principal objects of all combinations among workmen who are paid by the piece is, to fix one invariable rate of payment per piece. If the productive power of the workman were also invariable, this would effect its professed object—a uniform amount of earnings. But with every improvement in machinery the productive power of the workman is increased. With the same, or nearly the same labour, and in the same time, he can produce a greater result. These improvements are expensive to the manufacturer, and he proposes to indemnify himself by a reduction of the payment per piece for the work done. Almost universally the proposal of the manufacturer would be beneficial to the workman; almost universally he proposes to divide between himself and his work-people the benefit of the improvement, allowing them to earn within a given time a larger amount, while he obtains a given result at a less price. But this is called, as we have said before, a reduction of wages, a deviation from the list of prices, and is opposed with as much vehemence as if it deteriorated instead of improving the workman's condition. The great strike of the Manchester spinners in 1829, a strike which reduced thousands to destitution, was directed against a proposal of the masters, who had increased the power of their machinery, to diminish, though not in proportion to that increase, the price paid for spinning a given quantity of yarn. After inflicting great pecuniary loss on the masters, and far greater loss on the workpeople, after three months of idleness, misery, and violence, that contest ended in the submission of the spinners. The result is thus stated by Mr. Cowell, in his admirable paper in the Appendix to the Second Report of the Factories Inquiry Commission:—

"In 1829 the spinner turned off 312lbs. of yarn in the same time that he now takes to turn off 648. He was paid at the rate of 4*s.* 1*d.* per lb. in 1829; he is now paid at the rate of 2*s.* 5*d.* But 312lbs. at 4*s.* 1*d.* amount to 1,274 shillings, and 648lbs. at 2*s.* 5*d.* to 1,566 shillings. He receives, therefore, 292 shillings more than he did in 1829 for equal times of work. It is perfectly true that he does 'more work for less wages than in 1829' but this is nothing to the purpose, when the proposition to be proved is, that 'wages are lower than formerly.' I mean to say, that a spinner earns a shilling, or a pound, or a hundred pounds, in less time at present than he would have consumed in earning a shilling, or a pound, or a hundred pounds, ten years ago."—*D. I.* 119, *m.*

And yet this was the change which the workpeople resisted as an injury, and continue, indeed, to treat as an oppression.

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To recur to the first of the propositions under consideration, namely, that the wages of labour are lower on the Continent than in Great Britain, we are quite ready to admit that they are lower, if the term wages is used to signify the money earned by the workman within a given time. We believe that there are few districts on the Continent, and few employments in those districts, in which the money earned by any workman within a given time much exceeds one-half of the earnings of a workman similarly employed in England. But the difference between the sums earned by the Continental and by the British labourer does not necessarily give any greater advantage to the Continental over the British manufacturer, than is given to the Irish over the British farmer by the lower earnings of the Irish agriculturist. The really important question to the manufacturer is, not the amount of wages earned by his workpeople, but the price which he must pay in order to obtain a given result. That price being given, their wages will be high in proportion as the number of persons employed in producing the result is small, and the time in which it is produced is short. And it is unquestionably the interest of the manufacturer that, *cæteris paribus*, any given result should be effected by as few workpeople and in as short a time as possible. The interest, therefore, of the workman and the manufacturer coincide; and it is notorious that the most prosperous establishments are those which afford the highest wages. We admit, of course, that between sets of workmen, *equally efficient*, the difference in wages is a precise index to the difference in the price of the results of their respective labour; but though our information as to the wages of the continental workpeople is full, we know very little as to their efficiency. Some of the most valuable evidence on the subject is that given before Mr. Cowell by Edwin Rose, a very intelligent mechanic, who had spent a considerable time in France, Switzerland, and Germany. He is asked, "Are wages lower in France, as far as you have seen, than in England?" and, his mind instantly turning to the distinction which we have explained between wages and the price of a given result, answers—

Edwin Rose.

"If I have a shop of men in England for anything, then I have to see how much I have got to pay them for the work they turn out of any kind; but if I have the same shop in France, then I must have twice the number of hands to do the same amount of work. It is true, I pay them less a-piece there; but I have seen that you must have twice as large a building to contain the hands, twice as many clerks and book-keepers, and overlookers to look after them, and twice as many tools to do the same quantity of work as is done here in England; and the master there must have twice as much interest of money on all this; and their minds seem to me to get more bewildered with stress of work there than here. It seems to me that you should have double the number of people there to do the same amount of work, whatever it may be; but their wages are lower in money.

"But do you consider their wages higher in reality?—I really do; they are better paid, in proportion to the work they turn out, than what the English are.

"Do you judge this of the spinners and cotton-printers, as well as of other workmen with whom you met in France and Switzerland?—Certainly; I mean it in general; but I should say that the Swiss are better workmen than the French. They are more ingenious, and lay closer to their work a great deal,

"Have you, as a working man, and having been in a large manufactory at Mulhausen, and being in one at Manchester, any doubt whatever that the rate of wages is really higher in France than it is in England?—I have no doubt at all; not a bit.

"What do you think of French workmen, as workmen?—I don't think they have that perseverance that English have. I often have noticed them trying a thing, and then if it don't answer at first they seem terrified, and shrug up their shoulders, and throw it aside; but an English workman keeps trying and trying, and won't give up near so soon as the Frenchman.

"A house joiner or carpenter's wages are from 35 to 40 sous a-day. His work, compared with English work, is very rough, and but little of it, in comparison. A stonemason's wages are from three francs to four francs. They are inferior to our masons in laying foundations. Then, as to time of work, I think two English masons, in the same time, do more work, upon an average than three of theirs.

"In short, do you know any single species of labour that stands a master in cheaper in France than in England, quality and quantity of work being considered?—I don't know any, unless it be tailors' and shoemakers' wages; but I am not sure about them. Clothes are dearer in France than in England; but shoes are cheaper, the duty being off leather."—*Appendix to First Report of Factories Inquiry Commission, D. I.* 122.

Mr. Withers.

A communication from Mr. Withers, of Marchienne au Pont, near Charleroi, inserted as an appendix to Mr. Symons's Foreign Report (Vol. I., p. 161), contains some further particulars deserving attention, from the extensive experience of the informant and the care with which he appears to have collected his materials. With respect to woollen cloth, he says, "Labour is much cheaper here than in Yorkshire, but then they employ more hands to do the same quantity of work; and

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cloth is decidedly cheaper and better, in point of finish, in Yorkshire than in Veviers." With respect to cotton spinning, Mr. Withers reckons the greater ability of the British workpeople as one of the elements which, together, give us an advantage over the Belgian spinners, which he computes at 40 per cent. Proceeding to hosiery, he mentions the prices of labour per day, and in some articles per piece, and adds, as to the latter, "These prices of weaving are higher than are paid at Leicester for the same quality and size; and the other prices of labour, though they are low, as paid for a day's labour, are nevertheless higher than are paid in England, calculating the *quantity of work done* for the money,"—(p. 163.) The following is his statement as to the workpeople in the linen manufacture :—

"The average rate of wages, as far as I can depend upon my information, is as follows :—

	f.	*c.*		*s.*	*d.*	
" Girls under 14 years old . . .	0	40	=	0	$3\frac{3}{4}$	per day.
Women	0	70	=	0	$6\frac{1}{2}$	„
Men	1	40	=	1	$1\frac{1}{2}$	„
Combing or hickling 1lb. of flax .	0	0	=	0	$0\frac{1}{2}$	„

"As I have before observed, it is not the price paid for a day's labour, nor the price paid for making one pound, or one yard, or one piece; but it is the quantity, and the quality, and the waste, and many other things which must be considered, and which determine the cost price of any and every article of manufacture.

"Suppose a man be paid 2*d.* for doing a quantity of work, and it be badly done, and too much waste be made in doing it, and another man does the same quantity of work much better, and with less waste, for which he receives 4*d.*, then I say that the higher price is the cheaper; and I say this from long experience and having had frequently to calculate the difference. I will give another example from my own experience. You shall employ two men to forge each of them a machine from the same model or drawing; one of them shall do his work with half the coal, in half the time, without burning the iron, and the machine shall be fitted up with half the labour of filing. Here is an enormous difference, a much greater difference than you can make in paying these workmen. You must give to the worst of the two 3*f.* 50 *c.*, and to the other 7*f.*, and yet you will have double the profit from the latter. Now this is the case between English workmen and workmen out of England; and if you make your calculations without taking this into consideration, you will come to false conclusions, and be led into error. No man in Europe has been engaged in so many branches of trade and large undertakings on the continent as I have; continually calculating, comparing, and examining into the circumstances of each case; and I am convinced that labour is done much cheaper in England than in France or Belgium."—*Vol. I, p.* 165.

On the whole, therefore, although we are satisfied that wages on the continent are much lower than in Great Britain, and although that circumstance, if the efficiency of the labourers in each country were equal, would certainly place the British manufacturer under a great disadvantage, yet with our imperfect knowledge of their comparative efficiency we feel it impossible to decide in what branches of manufacture, and to what extent, a disadvantage arising from that cause actually exists.

But this conclusion leaves undiminished the importance of the question whether the rate of wages depends in any degree on the price of provisions. If we agreed on the doctrine that the rate of wages depends on the price of provisions—rises as that price increases and falls as that price diminishes—we should be forced to admit the inference drawn from it by the Norwich weavers, "that cheaper bread would be of no use to them, if the wages with which they buy it were to be reduced at the same time." We should feel that the corn law question was one in which the bulk of the people had little direct interest; and however we might reprobate the existing corn laws as unjust and unwise, as injurious to the revenue, to the commerce, and to the general wealth of the country, we should not feel that they necessarily pressed with peculiar force on the class for whose relief we are directed to devise measures. But if that doctrine be false—if a rise in the price of provisions have no tendency to raise wages and a fall in the price of provisions have no tendency to sink wages—it follows that no class in the community is so much interested in obtaining cheap provisions as the class whose wages are lowest, since, as one of their number has remarked, "the lower a man's income is, the greater the proportion he must spend on bread."

Without recurring to the different circumstances which decide what shall be at a given time and place the rate of wages earned in different employments, it may be laid down as a general rule that, whatever the rate be, nothing will alter it but an alteration in the proportion between the supply of labour in that employment and the demand for it.

Now what reason is there for supposing that an increased supply of food would

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increase the supply of labour, or diminish the demand for it, or that a diminished supply of food would diminish the supply of labour or increase the demand for it? It appears to us that the results would be precisely the reverse. An increased supply of food would enable the weaver to subsist with rather less exertion on his own part and to enforce rather less labour from his family. He might shorten his long hours of labour, allow his wife to devote more time to her domestic concerns, and delay the age at which his children would have been sent to the factory. The tendency, therefore, of the change would be rather to diminish the supply of labour. On the other hand the whole labouring population, being enabled to spend less on food, would be able to spend more on clothing. Mr. Chapman has remarked with truth, that "the effect of a high price of food in destroying the home market is frequently overlooked. The manufacturing population are the great consumers of manufactured goods; an advance in the price of food utterly destroys their power of purchasing manufactures. They clothe themselves when bread is cheap." Precisely the converse takes place when provisions become dear; the weaver and his family must work harder and purchase less. The supply of labour is increased, and the demand for it is, at the same time, diminished. When bread is dear, therefore, the calamity is aggravated by a consequent fall of wages; when it is cheap, the blessing is augmented by their rise. Mr. Kingan, to whose evidence before the House of Commons Committee on hand-loom weavers we have already adverted, confirms this theory by his own experience.

Mr. Kingan.

"277. Have you considered what would be the effect upon the operatives of a total abolition of the duty on corn?—I think it is perfectly obvious that if the removal of the restriction on corn lessened its price, it would be the same thing as increasing the wages of all the workmen.

"278. If the price of corn were lowered, would not the manufacturer immediately lower the rate of wages?—I think quite the reverse.

"279. Explain the grounds upon which you form that opinion, would you?—Because, practically, you always find wages fall as corn rises. In the great dearth of 1799, wages fell more than they had ever done formerly, owing chiefly to the circumstance of two men doing the work of three. If you will give very cheap corn, the men will only labour three, or four, or five days in the week, if they can get enough to support themselves, which will of course decrease the quantity of labour in the market.

"280. Would not diminishing the ability of the agricultural classes to purchase be injurious to the manufacturers and operatives, by diminishing their market?—I do not think it would be of much importance; it could only affect the landlords; all the other agricultural classes, or those dependent on them, could buy more.

"281. Do you consider, then, that the high price of food and clothing, and high prices arising from taxes, and upon the necessaries of life, requiring the working man to toil for a greater number of hours, necessitate him to over-supply the market with his commodity?—Surely.

"282. Then the statement, that whenever corn is high that wages fall, arises from this, that it tends to the over-working on the part of the labouring classes?—No doubt, *at least as to hand-loom weavers.*

"283. Then any increase of taxation, or any other cause which renders subsistence more costly to the workman, has a tendency to force him continually to increase and augment that over-supply of commodity in the market?—Undoubtedly.

"284. Have you ever been led to consider why, under a dearth and scarcity of corn, there is a tendency to fall in the wages of the labourer?—One of the reasons has been put, namely, that two men do as much as three, in consequence of the high price of provisions; but more than that, all other classes are also impoverished, trade becomes bad, money scarce, and bankruptcies take place."*

It may be said, however, that though these would be the immediate, they would not be the ultimate, effects of an alteration in the price of provisions; that a diminished price of provisions would afford a stimulus to population, which would raise the supply of labour to its former proportion; and that, on the other hand, an increased price of provisions would diminish population, and reduce the supply of labour to its former level.

In a community so situated as the hand-loom weavers, engaged, as has been shown, in an occupation peculiarly favourable to an undue increase of numbers, and with habits which aggravate the natural disadvantages of their business, we certainly fear that a mere increased cheapness of food, *unaccompanied by any other change*, would, after an interval of some years, cease to afford relief. As far as they are concerned, therefore, we believe that no alteration in the corn laws would confer permanent benefit (except indeed by rendering their employment less irregular), unless it were accompanied by measures for improving their moral and intellectual

* See on this subject the evidence of Mr. Milne, the Earl of Mansfield, and Lord Lauderdale, delivered before the House of Lords' Committee respecting Grain and the Corn Laws of 1814, pp. 50, 56, and 83.

habits. But the general proposition that such is the overwhelming influence of the principle of population, that no increase in the supply of provisions can permanently benefit the labouring classes, we believe to be absolutely false. That proposition owed its origin to some expressions of Mr. Malthus, not sufficiently qualified by him, and repeated in a still more unqualified form by many of his followers. It owed its currency to the relief which it afforded to the indolence and to the selfishness of the superior classes. But it is contradicted by the evidence of all experience. The history of every civilized nation shows that, in the absence of disturbing causes, every increase of the means of subsistence is followed by an increase of population, but not in the same proportion It is thus, in fact, and thus only, that civilization can advance. Its advance may be stopped by foreign or civil war, or by partial or foolish legislation, and it may be retarded by an increase of population, which may prevent the labouring classes from enjoying the full benefit of an increase of the means of subsistence; but that, under any institutions which the present state of knowledge would sanction, an increase of the supply of food would be followed in Great Britain by such an increase of population as to destroy its whole benefit, we believe to be totally impossible.

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On the other hand the natural tendency of a diminished supply of provisions, or of a supply not increasing with the wants of the population, is not to raise their wages, but to deteriorate their habits. The price of wheat is nearly the same in Ireland as in England, but the consequence is, not that the Irishman's wages rise, but that he is clothed in rags and subsists upon potatoes. Where provisions are cheap and wages high, as in the United States of America, the labourer eats meat; where both are high, as in England, he eats wheaten bread; where wages are low and the inefficiency of labour renders the better sorts of food comparatively dear, as in Ireland and in a great part of the Continent of Europe, he lives on the lower cerealia or on potatoes.

We believe that this generally diffused opinion that the rate of wages depends on the price of provisions owes its origin to the fact, that the price of provisions mainly depends on the rate of wages. The labourers constitute in all countries a large majority of the people, and, in all poor countries, an overwhelming majority. Their wages form the great fund out of which the price of provisions must come, and their wages also form the principal element in the cost of producing provisions. Every change in their wages, therefore, has a double effect on the price of provisions. A rise of wages raises the price of provisions by increasing the cost of producing them, and raises it again by increasing the fund for purchasing them. A fall of wages diminishes the fund for the purchase of provisions, and at the same instant diminishes the cost of their production. In countries where there is a stationary low rate of wages, both these circumstances concurring, the price of provisions must generally be low. Where there is a stationary high rate of wages, the price must generally be high. It is true, indeed, that in a country of low wages, some of the more expensive sorts of provisions may be dear, but that can be only when they are raised for exportation, or for the use of a more opulent minority. Such is the case with respect to wheat in Ireland, and, when our ports are open, in Poland. Again, in a country of high wages, where the fertility of the soil in proportion to the population is great, and there is no market for the surplus produce, provisions may be cheap, as is the case in the Far West of America. And it is true also, that an opulent and highly productive commercial community by importing the provisions raised by the lowly paid labour of poorer countries might obtain them at a low price, supposing its demand not to be so great as materially to raise their price in all the exporting countries. Such appears to have been the case with respect to Holland during the last century. Subject, however, to these exceptions, it may be laid down as a general rule that wherever wages are high provisions will likewise and consequently be high, and that wherever wages are low provisions will likewise and consequently be low. But in the former case the labourers will be fed on superior, in the latter, on inferior food.

The administration of the old poor laws facilitated the error which we have been exposing. Under the unhappy system prevalent during the forty years immediately preceding the Poor Law Amendment Act, a large portion of the labourers of England were treated not as freemen but as slaves or domestic animals, and received not strictly speaking wages regulated by the value of their labour, but rations proportioned to their supposed wants. Under the scale system the value of a fixed quantity of bread per head was allotted to every family, to be made up by the parish, so far as their earnings were deficient. Under such circumstances, wages, if we can apply

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the term to payments so regulated, rose and fell with the price of bread, just as the keep of a horse rises or falls with the price of oats. Nor have the traces of those abuses yet been obliterated. The allowance system has burthened many parishes with a population exceeding the demand for their labour at good wages. Accustomed to consider fine wheaten bread as a necessary of life, and hardened by long practice against the disgrace of pauperism, when the price of bread is higher than their usual wages can meet they require the farmer either to raise their wages, or to support them in the workhouse. He generally chooses the former alternative, and fancies that it is the natural state of things that wages should depend on the price of bread.

We differ also from the weavers, both as to the degree in which their distress has been occasioned by the corn laws and as to the degree in which any alteration in those laws can relieve it. In those branches of weaving to which the power-loom is applicable, and it becomes more and more extensively applicable every day, the weaver who adheres, by choice or by compulsion, to the inferior tool is engaged in a contest which would have been equally hopeless, and must continue to be equally hopeless, under the present or the most unrestricted commercial policy. The same may be said of the South of England clothiers. Without corn laws or with corn laws, they must yield to the superior local advantages of the North. Again, it has been shown that there are intrinsic circumstances in a great majority of the branches of hand-loom weaving which tend to raise the number of weavers to an undue proportion to the demand for their labour. The low wages in these branches depend, not on the corn laws, but on the attractiveness and accessibility of the employment. Again, many branches of hand-loom weaving require only the powers of women and children. If men will submit to do the work of women and children, they must submit to receive their wages.

But although we do not believe that the corn laws have occasioned the low wages of the hand-loom weavers, or that any change of those laws will raise those among them who make the lower branches of hand-loom weaving their exclusive employment to the condition which we should wish any artizans in the British empire to occupy, we yet feel that many of the complaints which they have submitted to us on that subject are well founded; and, being well founded, deserve, and must receive, the serious attention of the Legislature.

Their first complaint is, that the existing corn laws rob them of a large portion of their earnings. If it be true, and we think we have shown that it is true, that a high price of provisions has no tendency to raise wages—in fact, that it has a tendency to lower them—it must follow that everything that enhances the price of what the labourer consumes operates as a direct tax on his wages. The question to what amount the corn laws raise the price of bread cannot be brought to the test of direct experience. Since 1792, when we ceased to be an exporting country, we have never enjoyed an approach to a free corn trade. As soon as war ceased to interrupt our supplies, its place was taken by legislation. The question, therefore, must be left to conjecture. But those who defend the present corn laws are placed in this inextricable dilemma. They must admit either that they materially raise the price of corn, or that they do not. If they do not, what becomes of the anticipations of ruin to the farmer and to the landlord from their removal? How can we defend laws which convert those who would be our customers into our rivals; which cramp our foreign trade, and disorganize our home trade by periodical panics; which fill one half of the community with hostility against the governing classes, and distrust in the institutions of the country,—if these laws after all produce no material effect on the price of the commodity which they are intended to protect? If this be the case, nothing can exceed their mischief, except their wantonness. But if the corn laws *do* materially raise the price of corn, what answer can be given to the complaint of James Cromack, that "the corn laws force the weaver to eat his bread dearer than he ought to eat it, and dearer than the people of any other country eat it, and that consequently it takes more of his small earnings to buy food, and leaves so little remaining that he can purchase but little else?" or to Charles Fletcher's statement, that "the weaver is peculiarly affected by them, because the smaller a man's income, the greater the proportion he must spend in bread?" We have said that the amount of the tax thus imposed must be matter of conjecture. We are inclined, however, to estimate it at about 20 per cent.; or, in other words, to conjecture that if, at the conclusion of the war, things had been left to take their natural course, and we had consequently enjoyed during the last 25 years a free trade in corn, the average price of corn during those years, would not have exceeded 50*s*., instead of exceeding, as it did, 60*s*. a quarter. In Jersey, where the corn trade is free, the average price of wheat per

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quarter from the 5th January, 1820, to the 5th January, 1840, inclusive, was 51*s.* 9*d.** This price, however, is raised by the English demand. In Guernsey, the price during the same period has been 40*s.* 11*d.* per Winchester quarter, being a little more than 42*s.* per Imperial quarter.†

It is impossible, of course, to state, with any approach to accuracy, the average proportion of the income of any class of labourers which must be expended on bread; as it must depend partly on the number of the members of each family, partly on the price of bread, and partly on the income of the family. It is evident, however, that that proportion will be large in proportion as the family is numerous, as its income is small, and as the price of bread is high. If we estimate, however, the average income of each family in the poorer classes of weavers to be 10*s.* a-week, the average number of persons in each family as four, and corn to be at its average price of 60*s.* a quarter, we cannot estimate their expenditure on bread at less than 5*s.* a-week, or half their income. If, then, the corn laws raise the price of bread 20 per cent., they operate as an income tax on the poorest families of 10 per cent.

Such a tax, even if regular in its operation, would be very grievous. Such a tax, if imposed in time of peace on the classes in the community who can command attention to their complaints, would drive from power any minister who ventured to inflict or to maintain it. But to its severity it adds the further, and perhaps the greater, evil of irregularity. It does not, like an ordinary tax, impose an uniform burden, according to which the payer can regulate his expenses: it varies according to the accidents of the seasons. In plentiful years, when the low price of corn would prevent importation, or in dearths, when it rises to 73*s.* a quarter, and the low duty begins, the tax ceases. But in average seasons, that is with a price of corn between 50*s.* and 63*s.*, its force is felt, and felt of course with greater and greater severity as the price increases, until it reaches the exorbitant price of 70*s.*, the lowest price at which, under the existing law, any considerable importation can take place. Then, indeed, the corn which has been accumulating perhaps for years, which, if it had been admitted as it was wanted, would have kept prices moderate and steady, and afforded a sale for our manufactures, is thrown on the market to the relief of our necessities, but to the disorganization of our currency and our commerce. Experience has shown that when the price is under 63*s.* the duty is nearly prohibitory. Of the 9,301,941 quarters of foreign wheat which have been imported between the 15th of July, 1828 and the 5th of January, 1840,‡ only 284,893 quarters, about 25,000 quarters a-year, have been imported when the price was under 63*s.* a quarter; a rather less quantity, 250,661 quarters, were imported when the price varied between 63*s.* and 66*s.*; and when it varied between 66*s.* and 70*s.*, 642,149 quarters. But the bulk of the importation, that is to say 8,124,248 quarters out of the whole 9,301,941, did not take place until the price had reached 70*s.*; and of that quantity nearly one half, or above 3,900,000 quarters was not imported until it had reached or exceeded 73*s.*, the price at which the law deems restriction on importation unnecessary.

The effects which we have described were the direct and the intended consequences of the law. Its purpose was to raise the average price of wheat to 60*s.* a quarter, and it has succeeded in doing so. But it has produced other effects neither desired nor foreseen by its advocates. These are, irregularity in the price of wheat and disturbance of our internal and external trade.

During the 10 years, from 1829 to 1838 inclusive, for which the returns are furnished, the average annual difference between the highest and lowest weekly price has exceeded 31 per cent.; during four years out of the 10, that is in 1829, 1830, 1836, and 1838 it amounted to 47½ per cent.; in one it reached 68 per cent. The whole of this irregularity is not, of course, to be charged to the corn laws. No annual crop bears an ascertained ratio to the productive agents employed: the same field, cultivated in the same manner, may in some years produce 40 bushels an acre, and in others 10. But all combinations of chances have a tendency to compensate one another, a tendency which becomes stronger as the number of chances is increased, until all irregularity disappears. The annual produce of a farm is less irregular than that of a field, that of a county than that of a farm, that of England than that of any single county, and that of all Europe, than that of any single portion of Europe. And if we could ascertain the annual produce of the whole world, it is probable that it would

* House of Lords' Paper 174, 1840. † House of Lords' Paper 192, 1840.
‡ House of Lords' Paper, 136, 1840.

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exhibit scarcely any alteration from year to year, except the gradually increased supply rendered necessary by the wants of a population increasing in number or wealth. The expenses of transport are therefore the only obstacles opposed by nature to regularity of supply. A country situated as the British islands are in the position most accessible to the commerce of both hemispheres, might reduce those expenses to the lowest amount compatible with the amount of importation. And we firmly believe that if legislation did not interfere to aggravate the accidents of the seasons, we might enjoy, not indeed an exemption from fluctuation of prices, but a price not more than half as irregular as that under which we now are suffering.

We do not think it necessary to dwell at much length on the interference of the corn laws with our external and internal trade. The evils of that interference may be divided into those which are permanent and those which are occasional. The *permanent* injury which the corn laws produce on our foreign trade by forcing those who would be our customers to be our rivals, by affording not merely a pretext but a justification, as far as we are concerned, for the tariffs by which nation after nation is endeavouring to exclude our products, formidable as it is to our welfare, and even to our existence as a manufacturing people, inflicts no peculiar evil on the hand-loom weavers. We have already shown that the nature of their employment has created their poverty, and it would keep them poor if the market of the whole world were open to them. The same remark applies to the permanent influence of the corn laws on the home trade. It is true that they injure that trade by diminishing the general wealth and prosperity of the country; but that fact is immaterial for the purposes of this report, if it be true, as we believe it to be, that no increase of the home trade would permanently raise the condition of the hand-loom weavers.

But the *occasional* effects of the corn laws, both on our foreign and on our domestic market, affect the hand-loom weavers severely. The irregularity of their employment is one of their bitterest complaints. It is dwelt upon by every witness, and by many considered as the worst of the evils under which they are suffering. The weavers, who are employed on those branches of the trade which are affected by the caprices of fashion, must submit to some irregularity of demand as an inconvenience incident to their business; and, if their numbers were in proportion to the average demand for their labour, and they were sufficiently educated to see their situation, they would provide, out of the wages of good employment, for the anticipated period of slackness. But they form a small class of the whole body of hand-loom weavers. A very large majority are employed on articles of which the consumption is steady, so far as the consumer has the means of purchasing. Fashion has nothing to do with the use of blankets or calicoes, and, in fact, influences almost exclusively the fancy trade: and yet the woollen, the finer linen, and the cotton trade, appear to be almost equally irregular.

The great sources of these irregularities are the disturbances which, at intervals uncertain, but unhappily more and more frequent, derange our commerce. As all commerce, though effected by the intervention of money, is really barter, its success depends on the accuracy with which the different producers, who are to be parties to each exchange, have calculated each other's wants and each other's means. Any error in the calculation will be mischievous, of course, in proportion to the number and to the magnitude of the exchanges, or proposed exchanges, which it affects, and to the degree in which it renders them unprofitable or impossible. In a society with little division of labour, consisting mainly of agriculturists, raising on their own farms their own food and that of their cattle, and the materials of their clothing, and working up those materials in their own families, commercial misfortunes, however calamitous to the persons immediately concerned, have little effect on the wealth of the community. But no considerable nation was ever further removed from this simple state than England is now. We have carried the division of labour, not perhaps to its utmost limits, but further than it has ever before been extended. The result has been to render our labour eminently productive, and to distribute among our population a larger proportional quantity of the comforts of life than any numerous community, with the exception of the Anglo-Americans, has ever enjoyed. But this advantage is obtained by rendering every individual dependent on many hundred or rather on many thousand others for almost all his wants. There never has existed a society so distinctly divided into capitalists and labourers, or in which each capitalist and each labourer produced so exclusively for the purpose, not of consumption but of exchange. Any serious accident to any class of pro-

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ducers affects not only that class, and all those who have dealings with that class, but also all those who have dealings with the last-mentioned persons, until gradually, like the undulations produced by a stone thrown into a lake, the effect is diffused till it ceases to be perceptible. The expressions, "stagnation," "bad state of trade," "commercial distress," and "panic," describe merely the general embarrassment and suffering produced by the concurrent miscalculations of many individual producers and traders. To the higher classes of society, to those who enjoy fixed incomes from land or from money, or from the public service, and to those whose customers are among the higher classes, commercial distress is a mere name. They may regret its existence, but though they hear the storm it does not reach them. The general body of capitalists feel it but in a diminution rather of their powers of accumulation than of expenditure. But all these classes together, including those who are dependent on them, are only a minority of the population. The majority of the inhabitants of Great Britain, and perhaps there is no other nation of which this is true, are labourers working each for his employer, and relying for his weekly subsistence solely upon his weekly wages. In every other country the majority of the population own, or at least occupy, some portion of the soil; and even when it is not their main resource, can fall back on it to supply the deficiency of other employment. An English labourer has seldom any such resource, and we regret to add that he seldom has habits which supply the want of it. Very few even of our best paid workmen have the economy and providence which enable the high wages of one period to meet the low wages or the inactivity of another. With almost all of them low wages produce immediate distress, and want of employment immediate destitution. We do not believe that any one who has not mixed with the working classes, we do not believe that we ourselves, can adequately estimate how much mental and bodily suffering, how much anxiety and pain, how much despondency and disease, are implied in the vague terms, "a fall of wages," or "a slack demand for labour."

Absolutely to prevent, in a great commercial and manufacturing country, the occurrence of periods of commercial distress is impossible; but it is at least the duty of the legislature not to make or to maintain laws which increase their frequency. That the existing corn laws have that effect is now, we believe, after 12 years' experience, admitted. It seems to follow, indeed, from the following account of our imports since its enactment.

Years.	Total Number of Quarters of Wheat and Wheat Flour imported.
	Quarters.
1828	741,114
1829	1,663,341
1830	1,661,847
1831	2,303,974
1832	447,101
1833	297,565
1834	176,321
1835	66,905
1836	241,742
1837	559,943
1838	1,371,957
1839	2,875,427

Inspector General's Office, Custom House, London,
5th May, 1840.

It appears from this table that in 1829, 1830, and 1831, the importation of wheat was considerable; amounting, in the last-mentioned year, to more than 2,300,000 quarters, which must have cost, including the expenses of transport, at least 50*s.* a-quarter, or more than 5,750,000*l.* But the whole importation of the years 1832, 1833, 1834, 1835, and 1836, was only 1,209,634, or about half the quantity imported in the single year 1831; the average yearly importation having been 241,926 quarters, about one-tenth of the importation of 1831. In 1837 the importation began again to increase, and in 1839 it amounted to the largest quantity that has ever been imported in one year, namely, 2,875,427 quarters, obtained at a cost, at least, of between seven and eight millions sterling. Changes so great and so violent must have been mischievous, even if the corn had been purchased with our manufactures. Under the most favourable circumstances, they must have altered the channels of commerce, have disappointed many apparently

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well-founded expectations, have rendered many undertakings unprofitable, and impeded or prevented many more. But the mode in which these purchases were made was an aggravation of the evil. As they did not occur in the regular course of trade, as we were forced to buy in a great measure from countries whose staple commodities we load with prohibitory duties, and whom we have forced therefore to cultivate an independence of British supplies, we had to make the direct payments for the bulk of the corn with the only commodity that no tariff excludes—the precious metals. Few countries can bear without inconvenience a sudden and large exportation of specie. Even under the favourable circumstances of a metallic currency, and a sparing use of credit, the value of money must be altered, contracts deranged, and the data on which men found their plans and engagements falsified. In Great Britain both the monetary and the commercial system render such an event peculiarly calamitous. Our circulation consists mainly of paper, convertible on demand. Our trade, both internal and external, is principally managed by means of credit. A sudden and great demand for gold necessarily produces all the mischiefs which we have described as the results of a sudden diminution of currency; and it adds to them a violent shock to credit. Every one distrusts his neighbour, and doubts the prudence of his own undertakings. The manufacturer is afraid to produce, and the warehouseman and exporter to purchase. Where there is expensive machinery that must be kept in use, the workpeople are put on short time; those who have not this protection are retained at low wages or discharged. To this class belong, as we have seen, the hand-loom weavers.

We need not repeat the statements which we have extracted from the Reports of our Assistant Commissioners*, as to the frequent recurrence and long continuance of these periods of depression, or their description of the sufferings by which they are accompanied and followed. There are few situations more deserving commiseration than that of the workman who, under the influence of causes which he cannot control, or even foresee, finds suddenly that the labour, which is his only property, has become valueless, and may remain so for an indefinite period. "I wish to state," says one of Mr. Chapman's witnesses (and the statement is borne out by other evidence), "that we have had four panics in eight years; the first lasted half a year, the two next a quarter of a year each, and the last half a year†." In addition to the bodily sufferings of destitution, to the want of sufficient or wholesome food, of fuel, and of clothing, and to the diseases which are their usual followers, comes the still greater evil of moral deterioration. Few among the higher classes, and still fewer among the less educated, can endure real want without moral degradation. "Distress," says Robert Cantrill, an aged weaver, "makes a man hopeless; he becomes desperate, and preys upon society, and careless even of what little honest advantages are in his way, and then comes the last wretchedness."‡ Such a man is not likely to be a good husband, or a good father, or a good neighbour, or even a good subject. Can we wonder if, while brooding in forced inactivity over his misfortunes, he listens to the agitators, who tell him that they are all owing to bad legislation? When we consider how much evil he really suffers from the corn laws, can we wonder that he exaggerates their influence, or that, finding all alteration in them steadily refused by the Legislature, he cherishes wild visions of organic changes?

We have not quoted the political theories of the weavers—their plans of division of waste lands, alteration of the standard, or universal suffrage. We trust that they are incapable of being effected; and we are sure that, if they could take place, they would multiply tenfold the evils they were meant to cure. But we feel that the state of mind which they indicate deserves serious attention. The Government of this country resides in a minority, and a narrow minority; the owners of land, a small portion of the community, constitute almost exclusively one House of Parliament, and form a large majority in the other. Such a Government can be safe only while it is popular, and popular only while it is believed to be impartial. Its first prudential duty is to avoid even the appearance of selfish legislation. We are aware that many of those who support the present corn laws believe that any alteration of them would be injurious to the whole community; and though we dissent from that opinion, we respect its sincerity. But no such respect is felt by the manufacturing population, who, from their concentration, their union, their present numbers, and the rate of their increase, are even now the most powerful portion of the labouring classes, and are becoming more and more powerful every

* See pages, 18, 19, 20, 21. † *Ante* page 20. ‡ *Ante*, page 7.

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day. They find laws of which the direct effect is to raise the price of their food, and the indirect effect to lower their wages; and they will not listen to the reasoning which endeavours to prove that such legislation is impartial.

We have considered the corn laws only as they affect the hand-loom weavers, the only objects of Your Majesty's Commission. To that extent they were forced on our attention by the importance attached to them by the weavers. We trust that we do not exceed our duties when we add that we believe those laws to be also injurious to the permanent interests of every class of the community, including the class which they are intended especially to protect. But we do not think that we should be justified if we were to enter into a statement of the premises on which this conclusion is founded, or insert answers to the arguments which have been used in support of opposite opinions. So vast a discussion, even if our limits would allow it, ought not to be introduced incidentally.

For the same reason we shall abstain from dwelling at any length on the details of the alteration which we think advisable. Four plans have been proposed:—

1. Recurring to the lower scale of duties proposed by Mr. Canning in 1827, which passed the House of Commons, but was rejected by the House of Lords.
2. Immediate abolition of all duties.
3. A considerable duty, to be annually diminished.
4. A moderate permanent duty.

The first of these plans would certainly be a great improvement on the present law; but the corn trade would continue to oscillate between prohibition and freedom, with a less tendency indeed to reach the former extreme, but nearly as prone as it is now to the latter. Under Mr. Canning's Bill, when wheat was 60*s*. a quarter, the duty was to have been 20*s*., a duty of at least 50 per cent. on the average prices in the principal European shipping ports. From this point it was to rise or fall inversely, at the rate of 2*s*. per quarter, with every shilling by which corn should fall or rise, so that a rise of 10*s*. per quarter on the price of corn was to lower the duty from 20*s*. to 1*s*., and a fall in the price of corn from 60*s*. to 50*s*. was to raise the duty from 20*s*. to 40*s*. It is clear that this plan is affected by nearly all the vices of the present law. Like the present law, it endeavours to keep corn at an artificial price. Like the present law, it must prevent any steadiness in the corn trade. A duty rising as the price of the commodity falls, and falling as it rises, that is to say, diminishing as the value of the article increases, and increasing as the value of the article diminishes, is a monster of fiscal legislation reserved for the corn trade. Such a measure might have been supposed to be intended for the purpose of excluding from that trade all men of capital and prudence, and tempting into it the gamblers of commerce. The two great evils of average high price and fluctuation would probably continue if Mr. Canning's Bill, or any other measure founded on its principle, were adopted, though, of course, in proportion as the scale of duty were lowered, those evils would be diminished in degree.

The second plan, the immediate abolition of all duty, would be a great and sudden change. Every such change, even from a bad system to a good one, is productive of immediate mischief. The transition even from war to peace was followed by a long period of distress. Another objection to it is, the alarm which it would spread among our own cultivators. They have so long been told that, in the absence of the corn laws, wheat would not be worth cultivating, even on soils of average goodness, that they generally believe the statement, and to a great extent would act on it. First would probably come a diminution of cultivation, which importation could not compensate—the consequent high prices would probably produce, as such prices generally have produced, an excess in the contrary direction. And we might have to undergo years of fluctuation before the inestimable benefit of regular prices and a steady trade were obtained.

The third plan, that of a considerable duty, to be annually reduced, is the one which we should prefer. It would lead us, and, as we firmly believe, with little intermediate inconvenience, to the state most favourable to the permanent welfare of the whole community, a perfectly free trade. But if the state of political parties, and the ardent wishes and firm convictions which animate both those who demand immediate freedom, and those who maintain permanent restriction, render this compromise impracticable, and we fear that such is the case, we then recommend the 4th plan, that of a moderate permanent duty. Such a duty would allow us more regular prices, and a more regular trade than can be hoped under any other system,

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except that of perfect freedom. It would also afford a revenue. But we must admit that the revenue so obtained would be dearly purchased. A duty, indeed, on any raw produce, which is obtained solely from abroad, falls always, in part, on the foreign producer, the price never rising to the amount of the duty. But an import duty on any raw produce, of which the principal supply is obtained from our own soil, always takes from the consumer more than it gives to the treasury. For though the price does not rise to the amount of the duty, it always must rise, in consequence of the diminution of supply, and this rise of price affects the whole aggregate supply, while the duty is paid on only a portion of it. We will suppose, for the sake of illustration, perfect freedom of trade, an annual consumption of 20,500,000 quarters, and 2,500,000 of these to be supplied by importation. We will now suppose a duty of 5*s.* a quarter to be imposed, and that it excludes from our consumption the 500,000 quarters imported at the greatest expense, and that this diminution of supply raises the price of wheat by 1*s.* a quarter. The consequence would be, that, as the rise in price would affect the whole 20 millions of quarters, and the duty only the 2 millions, we should have to pay a million a year in additional price, and obtain only 500,000*l.* a year of revenue. Still there would be a revenue. Under the present system, the price is higher than it would be under a moderate fixed duty, and the revenue is much smaller.

Habitation.

Habitation.

Next to food and clothing, the most material necessary of life in this climate is habitation; as an index of the condition of the labouring classes, and as a means of improvement and civilization, its importance can scarcely be overrated. It differs from the other elements constituting the condition of the people in the extent of the gradations which may be interposed between the worst habitation in which life can be supported, and that which is most conducive to health and morality. As respects food and clothing, the interval between the provision which is sufficient for all the purposes of health and decency, and that which will not maintain existence is not great. But it is difficult to assign any limits to the extent and excellence of habitation which are conducive simply to health. A house is wholesome in nearly the same proportion in which it is well drained, well built, and its apartments are large. And where there are children of both sexes, mere decency requires four rooms, three for sleeping, and one for daily use. Four well built, well drained, well ventilated apartments, (and to be well ventilated they must be large), are therefore the least that are sufficient to afford to an average family the house-room necessary for decency, and sufficient to give them the best means of health.

On the other hand there appears to be scarcely any badness of habitation in which life cannot be endured. That a whole family should occupy one small room by day and by night is miserable. But there are whole districts in which a family occupies not one room, but one corner of a room. Such is the result of the evidence, taken by Mr. Lewis, in his inquiry as to the state of the Irish poor in England, with respect to the worst portions of Liverpool, Birmingham, and Manchester. "The Irish," says Dr. Duncan, of Liverpool, "live chiefly in lodging-houses and cellars, sometimes two or more families in the same cellar. They are frequently liable to rheumatism, fever, and chronic diseases of the lungs; arising from the badness of the dwellings."* "I once searched," says Mr. Walther, of Birmingham, "all the Irish lodging-houses in Birmingham. In several houses 12 or 14 were sleeping in a small room, not 13 feet square. They sleep four, five, or six in a bed."† "Many families," says Dr. Kay, speaking of Manchester, "often herd together in one small habitation. In these latter houses one room frequently contains all the inhabitants at night without distinction of age or sex, and often in one or two beds. In some cellars I have known 18 people, adults and children, sleep in one room, about four yards square, without window or other means of ventilation, excepting through the door, which opened into an adjoining apartment."‡

As far, therefore, as mere space is concerned, the interval between the accommodation necessary for health and decency, and that which can be endured, is enormous; equally great is the interval between the goodness of the habitation, (without reference to the number of persons whom it contains,) that is necessary for health, and that which can be submitted to.

The following description of the houses erected for the use of the Bethnal Green

* Poor Inquiry Ireland, Appendix 9, p. 18. † Ibid. p, 5, ‡ Ibid. p. 57.

weavers during the present century, cited by Dr. Mitchell, from Mr. Reed's evidence, is, as will appear hereafter, not an exaggerated picture.

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"Many of them are the worst that can be imagined, having no common sewers. The houses generally are of two stories, ground floor and one story above; the foundations of which were often laid upon the turf, or vegetable mould, and have no ventilation between the floors of the principal living rooms and the worst description of undrained soil immediately under such floors. The consequence is, that the exhalation arising from the garden-ground (for so it may be called) produces a dampness, from which the houses are exempt only during very dry weather. The roadway of the streets is of the most wretched kind, often composed of earthy and soft rubbish, and brick-dust saturated with moisture, and in many cases cut up by carts into a mass of mud, without any escape for the water but by soaking into the ground, from whence it makes its way under the houses, and, joined by the oozings from the cesspools, frequently passes off in noxious vapour, and that through the sitting-rooms of the houses I have just described. The walls are of the thickness required by the Building Act, but are in in many cases constructed of bad material, half-burnt bricks, and mortar of very inferior description. The timbers are of the cheapest kind, and of course the least durable; and the scantlings the smallest that could be used. The roofs are covered with pantiles, and but few of them pointed, the pitch very bad, scarcely enough to keep them water-tight."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I. p.* 239.

It is impossible that a population thus lodged should be in a good condition, either physically or morally. The same, indeed, may be said with respect to a population in absolute want of any of the other necessaries of life; in the latter case, however, the instant that want is adequately supplied, all further provision is, strictly speaking, a superfluity. The man who dines for 6*d.*, and clothes himself during the year for 5*l.*, is probably as healthily fed, and as healthily clad, as if his dinner cost two guineas a-day, and his dress 200*l.* a-year. But this is not the case with respect to habitation. Every increase of accommodation, from the corner of a cellar to a mansion, renders the dwelling more healthy, and, to a considerable extent, the size and goodness of the dwelling tends to render its inmates more civilized. It is unnecessary to dwell on the demoralization that must accompany the extreme degree of crowding that we have described, or the more tolerable but still degraded state of a family occupying a single room. Even when there are a sufficient number of apartments to enable a separation of sexes, still, if those apartments are ill built, or ill ventilated, they must be unhealthy and disagreeable. In all classes of society, but particularly in the lower, many of the domestic virtues depend mainly on a comfortable home. Where that does not exist, the husband and father is almost irresistibly impelled to seek his pleasures abroad, and gradually acquires habits under which the earnings that ought to have clothed and educated, and perhaps, even fed his wife and children, are wasted by the fireside of the public-house. Of the modes in which the labourer can expend his income, the legislature ought most to encourage those which contribute to the general welfare of his family: and of these, one of the principal is the improvement, and even the adornment of his habitation. Where that is miserable, nothing else that is for the common benefit is likely to be attended to.

On these grounds we agree with those among the weavers who have denounced the timber duties as one of their grievances. A subject which the magnitude of the abuse, and the long period during which it has existed, have made so unhappily trite, requires little exposition. We may be allowed, however, to state shortly that the timber duties impose on Baltic timber, in favour of Canadian timber, differential duties varying from 500 to 100 per cent. That the favoured timber is far inferior in quality, dearer at its place of shipment, and less accessible. That the increased price, however, occasioned by the duty, excludes Baltic timber from the houses built for the use of the labouring classes, while the badness of Canada timber excludes it from houses built for the opulent classes. The differential duty, therefore, affects different classes of society in different ways. It forces the more opulent to pay an extravagant price for a good material; it forces the poorer to pay for a bad material a price higher than, in the absence of regulation, they would have to pay for the good one. Like the corn laws, these differential duties are injurious to the revenue, and to the commerce of the country, and are injurious even to the shipping interest which they assume to favour. They do favour, indeed, the owners of some old ships which are unfit for any use except the American timber trade, but by augmenting by about 15 per cent the expense of ship-building, they form perhaps the heaviest burthen against which our marine has to contend. We are of course aware of the political difficulties which our present relations with our North American provinces oppose to any change. The instant, however, that an opportunity offers, we

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earnestly recommend that these duties be reconsidered, and that the duties on Baltic timber be lowered to a rate which will again allow it to be used for the construction of the dwellings of the majority of the people.

But though this would be a great benefit, and a benefit which, as it would improve, instead of impairing, both the revenue and the commerce of the country, the public may justly demand, yet unconnected with other measures, it would do but little towards removing the evils which we are discussing. The First Annual Report of the Registrar-General, showed for the year 1838 a variation of the annual mortality in different districts of the metropolis, amounting to 100 per cent., a difference nearly equal to that which exists between the most healthy and the least healthy portions of the world. The inquiries instituted at the same time by the Poor Law Commissioners into the physical causes of fever in the metropolis, have traced the comparative mortality of the unhealthy districts principally to the presence of impurities, the want of ventilation, and the bad construction of houses.

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The following extracts from Dr. Southwood Smith's Report on Bethnal Green and Whitechapel, show both the causes and the intensity of the evil.

"1. It appears," says Dr. Southwood Smith, "that in many parts of Bethnal Green and Whitechapel, fever of a malignant and fatal character is always more or less prevalent. In some streets it has recently prevailed in almost every house; in some courts in every house; and in some few instances in every room in every house. Cases are recorded in which every member of a family has been attacked in succession, of whom in every such case several have died; some whole families have been swept away. Instances are detailed in which there have been found in one small room six persons lying ill of fever together; I have myself seen this, four in one bed, and two in another. When fever once breaks out and becomes prevalent, under circumstances such as these, the poison acquires a virulence which not only proves unusually mortal to the persons immediately attacked, and to those who attend on the sick, but the evil is frightfully increased by the extension of the infection to neighbouring houses and districts. The exhalations given off from the living bodies of those who are affected with fever, especially when such exhalations are pent up in a close and confined apartment, constitute by far the most potent poison derived from an animal origin: The room of a fever patient in a small and heated apartment in London, with no perflation of fresh air, is perfectly analogous to a standing pool in Ethiopia full of bodies of dead locusts. The poison generated in both cases is the same; the difference is merely in the degree of its potency. Nature with her burning sun, her stilled and pent up wind, her stagnant and teeming marsh, manufactures plague on a large and fearful scale. Poverty in in her hut, covered with her rags, surrounded with her filth, striving with all her might to keep out the pure air and to increase the heat, imitates nature but too successfully; the process and the product are the same; the only difference is in the magnitude of the result.

"But the magnitude of the result in London, if that magnitude be estimated by the numbers attacked, is not slight. From returns received from the Bethnal Green and Whitechapel Unions it appears that during the last year there occurred of fever cases.

In the Bethnal Green Union	2,084
In the Whitechapel Union	2,557
Total . .	4,641

"Thus it appears that the medical officers attached to these two Unions alone have attended no less than 4,641 fever cases. But these returns include only the persons attacked with fever who applied to the parish for relief. Fever, it is notorious, has prevailed extensively in both these districts among people above the rank of paupers, among the people of the middle class, and in numerous instances, even in the families of the wealthy.

"2. It appears that the streets, courts, alleys, and houses in which fever first breaks out, and in which it becomes most prevalent and fatal, are invariably those in the immediate neighbourhood of uncovered sewers, stagnant ditches and ponds, gutters always full of putrefying matter, nightman's yards, and privies, the soil of which lies openly exposed, and is seldom or never removed. It is not possible for any language to convey an adequate conception of the poisonous condition in which large portions of both these districts always remain, winter and summer, in dry and in rainy seasons, from the masses of putrefying matter which are allowed to accumulate. There is no strength of constitution, no conservative power in wealth, capable of resisting constant exposure to the exhalations which are always arising from these collections of filth. But the people who are obliged evermore to breathe the largest doses of this poison are, for the most part, in a very wretched condition. In Bethnal Green they are almost universally hand-loom weavers, with the enfeebled constitutions of this class of people; not that if they had the constitutions of the inhabitants of Grosvenor-square, they could permanently resist the malaria which they must breathe night and day. Were they in robust health, and had they, in every other respect, the best means of continuing so, they must inevitably, sooner or later, by the mere residence in these places, either fall into fever, or suffer from some or other of the diseases indirectly produced by the febrile poison; but

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under the wretched circumstances in which these people are actually placed, of course they become the victims of these maladies more easily and more generally.

"3. Moreover, these people are exposed to much additional evil from the dampness of their houses. A large portion of Bethnal Green is a swamp, hardly any part of which is drained. In rainy weather some entire streets are under water, and large collections of stagnant water cover, winter and summer, considerable spaces of ground in every part of the district. The dampness of the houses is an evil almost universally complained of by the inhabitants, as well as the wet and muddy condition of the streets during a considerable part of the year. In the less open parts of Bethnal Green, and in a considerable part of Whitechapel, the closeness of the streets, lanes, alleys, and courts is most oppressive. A fresh current of air can hardly ever reach them; and the evil is greatly aggravated by the very general custom of the people permanently to close the windows of their houses, partly for the sake of warmth, and partly to prevent the real or imaginary effects of the air on the silk used in their work." —*Fourth Report of Poor Law Commissioners, App. p.* 84.

There is no ground for believing that this is a solitary or even an unusual state of things, or that the bad districts of London are worse than those of Glasgow or Manchester, or Leeds, or generally than the suburbs, which in the present state of the law rise round every manufacturing town of which the population is rapidly augmenting. What other result can be expected, when any man who can purchase or hire a plot of ground is allowed to cover it with such buildings as he may think fit, when there is no power to enforce drainage or sewerage, or to regulate the width of streets, or to prevent houses from being packed back to back, and separated in front by mere alleys and courts, or their being filled with as many inmates as their walls can contain, or the accumulation within and without, of all the impurities which arise in a crowded population?

With all our reverence for the principle of non-interference, we cannot doubt that in this matter it has been pushed too far. We believe that both the ground landlord and the speculating builder ought to be compelled by law, though it should cost them a per centage on their rent and profit, to take measures which shall prevent the towns which they create from being the centres of disease. That they have not been so forced, probably arises from the circumstance that the evils which we have described are not felt, or even known to exist, by those who principally influence our legislation—the higher and middle classes. As they are aware of the necessity of drainage and ventilation, and are able, to a certain extent, to choose their residences, no houses intended for their use, are grossly deficient in these respects; and they combine to prevent the creation or the continuance of nuisances. Those parts of our towns which are inhabited by the higher and middle classes are the healthiest in Europe. But the labouring classes have little choice of residence, they must in general live near their business or their employer, and they can seldom wait in the hope of finding better accommodation. The great cause, however, which forces them to reside in unhealthy habitations, is their general ignorance of the hazards to which it exposes them. If, like the higher classes, they were aware of the danger and refused to encounter it, better habitations would be provided for them. But when tenants are to be found for every hovel and cellar, when family after family occupy rooms which are vacant from the disease or death of the previous tenants, the builder has no pecuniary motive to provide better accommodation than his customers require. We repeat, therefore, our belief that this is not one of the matters which can be safely abandoned to the parties immediately concerned.

The following are the first recommendations of Dr. Arnott and Dr. Kay:—

"that to some authority should be confided power to cause the survey of land (in the vicinity of towns) likely to be built upon, and to enforce certain conditions on the owners and lessees of such property.

Dr. Arnott and Dr. Kay.

"Thus no building should be commenced until plans of the intended streets were prepared, describing the situation of every block of houses for such an extent of area as should be required by the Board intrusted with the regulation of the precautionary measures; duplicates of such plans should be deposited with the Board, and no building should afterwards be erected on the site otherwise than had been delineated in the plans.

"The Board should have authority to prevent the formation of streets of less than a certain number of feet in width, and to prevent the formation of courts having communication only by means of covered entries, or alleys of less than a definitive width, with thoroughfares and streets.

"It should also have power to prevent the habitation of cellars in any houses erected after the period of the enactment.

"Authority should be given to require that before any buildings are erected on any plot of ground now unoccupied, or only partially occupied with houses, such plot of ground shall be drained by such sewers as the Board shall deem sufficient; and if any owner or occupier of such land should proceed to build without having provided such sewers as the Board

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should direct, the Board should have authority to cause such sewers to be made at the cost of such owner, and should be empowered to recover the cost from him, and the Board should have authority to require that every habitation be provided with a drain communicating with the main sewer, with a proper receptacle for every kind of refuse.—*Ibid. p.* 83.

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But these remedies are only prospective. They would prevent the erection of further sources of pestilence and vice, but they would not remove the mortality, disease, and demoralization under which hundreds of thousands are suffering from the existing state of their habitations. For this purpose Dr. Arnott and Dr. Kay propose that the Boards of Guardians of each Union should be authorized to direct at the public expense.

Dr. Arnott and Dr. Kay.

"1. That uncovered and stagnant drains and ditches, or open stagnant pools of water, from which fœtid effluvia arise, should be emptied and cleansed.

"2. The drainage of any open common or waste land which appeared upon the report of two of the medical officers injuriously to affect the health of the inhabitants, or to cause ague.

"3. The removal of accumulations of refuse thrown from the houses, or otherwise collected in the streets, courts, lanes, and entries, and the cleansing of all surface drains of such streets, courts, lanes, and entries.

"4. To direct the removal of accumulations of filth from cesspools, privies, piggeries, cow-houses, stables, &c., yards of dwelling-houses, and houses, whenever two of their medical officers certified in writing that the state of such places was likely to prove injurious to the health of the neighbourhood.

"5. To cause from time to time an inspection of the lodging-houses at which paupers, vagrants, and mendicants are reported by their officers to lodge.

"6. To direct the whitewashing of the rooms of such houses at least twice every year, and if after notice to that effect from the clerk of the Board, dated 10 days previously, the inspector shall find the occupier has neglected to comply with such direction, to authorize the Board to cause the house to be whitewashed by such persons as they may appoint for that purpose and to recover the cost of such whitewashing and cleansing by application to the occupier or owner of such property, or by a summary mode upon refusal of either of them.

"7. When the inspector shall report that three or more families live under the same roof, the Board to cause such house to be whitewashed and cleansed in a similar manner at least twice annually, at the expense of the owner.

"8. The Board to direct two public surveyors to examine the state of any house which shall be reported to be so dilapidated or insecure as to threaten the safety of the inhabitants or the public, and upon receiving such report to remove the inhabitants from such house, and to direct the owner of such property, under penalties to be summarily recovered, to cause such habitation to be rendered safe, or to be removed, as may seem most expedient to the Board on the report of the surveyors.

"9. To prevent the habitation of houses which have for such causes been deserted, and from which no rent is on that account obtained by the landlord.—*Ibid. p.* 82.

Since the period when these recommendations were made by Dr. Arnott and Dr. Kay, indeed since the preceding pages of this Report were written, two important occurrences connected with the subject now before us have taken place. The one is the publication of the Report and Evidence of the Committee of the House of Commons on the Health of Towns:* the other is the introduction into the House of Lords, by the Marquis of Normanby, of a bill "For the Better Drainage and Improvement of Buildings in Large Towns and Villages."†

The evidence collected by the Committee is, of course, much more full and more precise than that on which our previous statements were founded. And we lament to say that it bears out the opinion which we have already expressed, that the bad districts of our great provincial towns are in a state as inconsistent with the bodily and mental health of their inhabitants as the alleys and swamps of Bethnal-green. In one respect, in the number of persons exposed to this physical and moral contamination, the truth far exceeds our worst suspicions.

Out of 175,000 persons, the estimated working population of Liverpool, it appears that 124,400 live in courts or cellars: 86,400 being the estimated population of the courts, and 38,000 that of the cellars.‡ The courts consist of ranges of houses built back to back, with an interval of from 15 to 9, or even only 6 feet between their fronts, absolutely closed at one end, and accessible at the other only by a covered passage, generally about 3 feet wide.§ One of these courts, 45 feet by 10, is mentioned as containing eight houses, with three rooms in each, and 118 inhabitants; one room, about 10 feet square, sometimes containing four families.‖ They are all undrained; from their construction incapable of ventilation; unvisited by the scavenger, on the ground of their being private property; and the receptacles of

* Ordered to be printed, 17th June, 1840. No. 384.
† Ordered to be printed, 29th January, 1841. No. 3.
‡ See Dr. Duncan's evidence, Q. 2374—2392, 2394.
§ Ibid. Q. 2381—2383, 2384, 2385.
‖ Ibid. Q. 2402, 2403.

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filth accumulating unremoved for many months.* But the cellars are a step lower in wretchedness: their average dimensions are 12 feet by 10; their average population five inmates, or, according to another computation, four and three-quarters to one cellar.† They have, in general, no floor; very frequently there is no window, and the top of the door is on a level with the street, so that there is neither light nor air.‡ And in these cellars and these courts reside 124,000 persons in a single town, that is, more than two-thirds of the labouring population of that town. It may be supposed that Liverpool is an extreme case; but its state appears to be decidedly better than that of Glasgow, and, in fact, on a par with that of most of our rapidly increasing manufacturing towns.

Perhaps the most instructive conclusions are those drawn from the character of the towns in which these evils are greatest. If the places most exposed to them were decayed or decaying communities, the seats of abandoned manufactures or departed trade, we might with less responsibility leave them alone in the hope that the evil would wear out as the population subject to it dwindled away, and would, in time, disappear as the general wealth of the nation augments. But it is precisely in the places where wealth is greatest and most advancing—in the most prosperous communities and the most rapidly growing towns—that these calamities most prevail. Liverpool, Glasgow, Leeds, and Hull are among the most flourishing cities in Europe: they are places of large profits, high wages, and rapid accumulation. It seems to follow that the remedies to be applied are not general but topical; and that the evil is to be attacked, not by improving the income of those who inhabit these dwellings, since it is not merely from poverty that they crowd into them, but by remedies applied to the dwellings themselves; by improving those which exist, and by forbidding for the future the construction of similar centres of disease and degradation: and such are the remedies proposed by the Committee. Their principal recommendations are three:—a General Building Act, a General Sewerage Act, and the establishment of Boards of Health,—remedies corresponding in principle, though not in details, with those proposed by Dr. Arnott and Dr. Kay. The two first suggestions are intended to be carried out by Lord Normanby's Bill; the third, which is far less urgent, will probably follow.

One of the most painful parts of the evidence collected by the Committee is the ignorance or indifference which it shows among those who inhabit these unhealthy districts. "I found it," says Mr. Mosely, speaking of the bad portions of St. John's and St. Margaret's, Westminster, "the most difficult matter to convince the occupiers of these neighbourhoods of the injury it is doing them: they are ill, but they do not know why. The especial tendency of a contaminated atmosphere is to deaden the mental and bodily energies.§ "I do not know," says Dr. Duncan of Liverpool, "that they are at all aware of the noxious influence of the situations in which they live, and of the want of fresh air and light, and of the nuisances and filth collected round them. They seem to be utterly ignorant on all these points; they have no idea whatever of the prejudicial effects of these things."‖ It is impossible to hope that persons so insensible to the evils in question will readily submit to any expense for its removal; and some of the expense must immediately fall on them, and, eventually, almost the whole. The towns and townlike villages, to which Lord Normanby's Act will principally apply, are the seats of a rapidly increasing population. In many of them it has doubled during the 40 years that have elapsed of the present century. An addition to the expense of constructing new habitations, and of maintaining those which exist must have a tendency to diminish the supply, while the demand for them will be increased, not only by the constant increase of the working population, but by the prohibition, under the 28th section of the Act, of letting, as dwelling places, after a future period, cellars and rooms which are now the abodes of thousands. Under existing circumstances, therefore, the Bill will necessarily raise the rents of the houses occupied by the labouring classes; not immediately to the full amount of the increased cost, but to an amount which, in their indifference to the consequent advantage, will excite discontent. Even many who can well afford it will grudge having to waste on drains or on windows money that might be expended on gin. On this ground we feel still further anxiety for the revision of the timber duties. Nearly half the expense of building is the cost of timber, and half the cost of Baltic timber consists of duty. The reduction of the duty from about 100 per cent. to 10 per cent. would enable its use in the dwellings of the poor; it would probably reduce the expense of their construction by nearly 25 per cent., and that of their repair much more. And in addition to the previous motives of justice and policy for the change, we believe that it would materially facilitate the accomplishment of the great objects to which Lord Normanby's Bill is directed.

* See Dr. Duncan's evidence, Q. 2396—2425, 2426—2451.
† Ibid. Q. 2147—2153, 2374.
‡ Ibid. Q. 2412.
§ Ibid. Q. 954.
‖ Ibid. Q. 2500—2507.

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The Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Hand-loom Weavers in 1835 enumerated, among the causes of the distress of the weavers, "heavy and oppressive taxation." The weavers, as might be expected, agree in this view, and urge, among the remedies for their distress, the repeal or diminution of the duties imposed on the articles used in their trade, or which form part of their consumption. As respects corn and timber, we have already expressed our concurrence; but we have felt ourselves at liberty to recommend an alteration of the duties on these commodities, because the modes in which the present duties are imposed, while oppressive to the consumer, are also injurious to the public income. They are duties for the purpose, not of revenue, but of what is called protection—for the purpose, that is, of misdirecting the capital and industry of the country, and benefiting a portion of the community at the expense of all the others. If those duties had been imposed simply for the purpose of revenue, or with whatever view imposed, if they had been beneficial to the revenue, we should have paused before we ventured to recommend an alteration in them. Until a considerable increase of our revenue or diminution of our expenditure shall occur, it is in vain to recommend the repeal or diminution of a tax without suggesting an adequate substitute. A proposal, however, for the reconstruction of our whole financial system or even of that portion of it, which most urgently requires reform, the duties on importation would be obviously out of place in this Report, even if we believed ourselves fit for such a task.

Further alteration of import duties.

But the urgency of the case, arising from the presence of an opportunity which may not soon recur, induces us to venture two more suggestions respecting our foreign commercial relations. The two greatest markets for our woven manufactures must in a very short time be subjected to a great alteration for good or for evil. The tariff of the United States of America is to be reconsidered in 1842. Our commercial treaty with Brazil expires in the same year. We will not hazard an opinion as to the nature or the extent of the concessions which may be necessary in order to enable us to retain our present intercourse with those countries, or which may be expedient for the purpose of increasing that intercourse. But we cannot refrain from expressing our earnest wish that measures may immediately be taken, supposing them not to be already in progress, to ascertain the state of feeling in the two countries to which we have referred, the points on which they are likely to require from us further facilities, and those in which they are ready to make concessions on their side, and, as respects Brazil, the capabilities of the country for an extended commerce. We believe that the United States of America are quite prepared for the establishment of a joint commission by which these questions may be discussed. And we are particularly anxious that the discussion should take place at as early a period as possible of the new Presidency, and before a general election in the United States has returned men pledged on commercial questions.

Our other suggestion respects Northern Germany. The plenipotentiaries of Hanover, Oldenburg, and Brunswick, have, we understand, agreed to renew the North-Western German Commercial League, a league founded on a tariff far more liberal in almost every respect than that of the Prussian league, and particularly so as respects British manufactures, as will appear from the following Table, extracted from a valuable article in the British and Foreign Review, No. 22, p. 504.

	Prussian Tariff. per cwt.	N. W. German Tariff. per cwt.
Cotton yarn	3½ doll.	1 doll. 1 gg.
„ twist	14 „	6 „ 6 „
„ stuffs	50 „	12 „ 12 „
Iron, coarse cast wares	1 „	„ „ 18 „
„ forged	6 „	2 „ 2 „
„ fine articles	10 „	6 „ 6 „
Linen yarn	1 „	free.
„ „ twist	2 „	thread 8 „ 8 „
„ bleached and coloured	11 „	8 „ 8 „
„ tapes, cambrics, &c.	22 „	12 „ 12 „
Twist lace	55 „	12 „ 12 „
Paper, coarse	1 „	„ „ 12 „
„ fine	5 „	1 „ 1 „
Paper-hangings	10 „	4 „ 4 „
Silk, bleached and coloured	8 „	6 „ 6 „
Silk and half silk wares	110 „	12 „ 12 „
Woollen wares, coarse	20 „	6 „ 6 „
„ „ fine	30 „	12 „ 12 „

Note.—A dollar is worth, within a fraction, 3*s.*, and contains 24 gute groschen—a gutes groschen, therefore, is worth three halfpence.

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The treaty, however, is not yet complete, and we are strongly of opinion that a favourable opportunity now exists for an arrangement between Your Majesty's Government and the countries constituting the North-Western League, which would be beneficial in its immediate results, and still more so by the example which its benefits would in time hold out to the rest of Germany. A very few concessions on our part, and still fewer, if indeed any be required, on theirs, would produce an increase of commerce between the two countries, which would be useful to us, but of course much more so, from the proportion which it would bear to the rest of their commerce, to the countries constituting the North-Western League. To the influence of such an example we attach great importance. The questions whether freedom of commerce is or is not a public benefit, whether what is called protection is or not a public mischief, are no longer considered in Germany by those alone who make political science their study. They are canvassed by merchants, manufacturers, and, what is still more important, by consumers. In every part of Germany in which the individual interests of local manufacturers do not prevail, not merely a belief in the superior advantages of free trade, but an earnest desire for it is extending. This is particularly the case in the smaller states constituting the North-Western League, in the Hans Towns, and the Grand Duchies of Mecklenburg, and in the vast regions forming the Austrian empire. In general it will be found that the benefits of commerce are best understood in the smaller states: because the less the state the greater is the proportion which its foreign commerce is likely to bear to its home trade, and also because in a small community the effect of every institution is more obvious. Russia, France, and England, all without doubt suffer from their restrictive systems, and all would be benefited by a change: but among the many causes which affect the prosperity of such vast and complicated bodies, the effect of any single one is not easily ascertained or easily demonstrated. In the simply constituted communities of the Hans Towns, or the Duchies of Mecklenburg, or even of Hanover, the influence of a single change becomes immediately perceptible. On the other hand, in the greater part of the Austrian empire there is as yet no manufacturing interest which can ask for protection at the public expense. She cannot supply her own actual consumption of manufactured goods, much less could she supply those which she would be desirous and able to consume, if a more extensive export of the produce of her own fields, pastures, forests, and mines afforded to her the means of purchasing them.

"There is throughout Austria, says Mr. Keyser, a great want of English manufactured goods. Could some arrangement be made with the English Government, such as to cause a reduction in the duties now paid in Austria, very large quantities of British goods could be there disposed of, particularly hosiery, which is comparatively dearer than any other article of wearing apparel. Thread hosiery is more generally worn than cotton.

"Many years must elapse before Austria can manufacture in sufficient quantities to export. Being more an agricultural than a manufacturing country, few persons embark large sums in factories.

"The only foreign markets to which Austria sends goods are the Leipzig and Frankfurth fairs, and this trade is only in some articles of fancy goods. In shipping to foreign ports, very little business is done. Money wages are very low, provisions and living very cheap.

"That Austria should ever join the Customs League, I consider very improbable; but, on the contrary, it would be more to her interest to admit our manufactures at a low duty."*

If the result of a negotiation with the North-Western League were a freer intercourse between the two countries, and if the benefits derived by the people constituting that league were, as we have no doubt they would be, obvious and notorious, we are firmly convinced that there would arise throughout the vast and productive dominions of Austria a desire for an increased intercourse with this country, which the Austrian Government would not be able, and we think would not be desirous, to oppose. The important questions respecting the Stade tolls might be arranged at the same time.

There is one duty, however, in which, as it belongs to the class which afford no revenue, we shall venture to suggest an immediate alteration—it is the duty on thrown silk. Silk, as imported, is either untwisted, and then termed raw, or twisted, and then termed *thrown*.

Duties on thrown silk.

We extract from Dr. Mitchell the following statement of the different qualities of thrown silk, and the amount and operation of the duty:—

"*Duty on Thrown Silk.*

Dr. Mitchell.

"The duty on organzine imported into the kingdom is 3*s.* 6*d.* per pound, on tram it is 2*s.* per pound, and on singles it is 1*s.* per pound.

* Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I. p. 515.

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"Singles are the single fibres of the raw silk, twisted or twined on themselves.

"When the fibres are not twisted, the silk is called dumb single; but when singles are spoken of, the fibres twisted single or twined on themselves are always understood.

"Tram is two or more fibres of the raw silk put together, and slightly twisted. Tram is used as shute in weaving.

"Organzine is two singles twisted together, that is. two fibres of raw silk, each previously twisted on itself, now twisted together into one. Sometimes, but very seldom, three singles are twisted together to form organzine.

"It will be seen that the higher duties are levied on the silks on which the greater amount of labour has been bestowed.

"The whole, or almost the whole, of the thrown silk imported, comes from Italy.

"During the last eight years the import of organzine and tram, according to the evidence of Mr. Alderman White, has been,—

1830 . .	1,776	bales, at 250 lbs. per bale;	this would be	444,000 lbs
1831 . .	2,780	,,	,,	695,000
1832 . .	749	,,	,,	187,250
1833 . .	981	,,	,,	245,250
1834 . .	783	,,	,,	195,750
1835 . .	937	,,	,,	234,250
1836 . .	1,654	,,	,,	413,500
1837 . .	766	,,	,,	191,500

"Of the above, the singles may not amount to above a bale or two per annum, the tram to about one-sixth of the whole, and the organzine will make the whole of the rest.

"The fine Italian organzine forms the warp for the best broad silk and Norwich goods; the coarser organzine is used for Coventry ribbons and ordinary goods.

"The import of silk from Italy, in a thrown state, according to the evidence of this most experienced and intelligent witness, does not arise either from superior skill, excellence of machinery, or cheapness of labour in Italy.

"'These are not the reasons. The Italian throwster is not more skilful than the British throwster, and no machinery surpasses British machinery; and although wages per week may appear much less than British wages, yet, when we take into account the amount of labour done by a British workman within the same time, the difference in wages is far less than at first view appears. The cause of the import of Italian thrown silk is this: much of it is made from a superior description of raw silk, which is produced in the dominions of the King of Sardinia, and he will not allow that silk to be exported in a raw state. He considers that other countries must have this silk for their best manufactures, and he is resolved that his subjects shall have the employment and profit of first converting it into fine warp or organzine, before he will allow it to be exported. In time it may confidently be expected we shall have as good silk from China and Bengal, and then we shall be independent of Sardinia. The raw silk which we import from Italy is not of the same quality as that from which the people of Piedmont make their organzine. We, however, do have some raw silk from the kingdom of Sardinia, principally white, called novi, and is the product of the duchy of Genoa, which has the sole privilege of exporting raw.'

"It will be observed, that during the first four years of the preceding account the bales imported were 6,286, but in the second four years only 4,140, being less than two-thirds of the preceding quantity.

"The money raised by the duty on thrown silk is not applied for the purposes of public revenue, but forms a fund for a bounty on exportation of manufactured silk goods. The fact, however, is, that goods made from the Italian thrown silk are seldom exported, and accordingly the importers having paid the duty, and received debentures to the same amount, payable on the exportation of an equal weight of manufactured silk, sell those debentures to merchants who export silk goods. The goods exported are generally of a cheap description, and of a plain fabric. The debentures have varied much in price, but for some time past the average price of the 3*s.* 6*d.* debenture has been 2*s.* 3*d.*"—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p.* 366.

It appears from this statement that the real duty on organzine is 1*s.* 3*d.* a-pound, that being the difference between the sum paid by the importer at the Custom-house and the price for which he sells his debenture. It appears also that this 1*s.* 3*d.* is purely lost; the revenue does not receive it, for it repays the whole 3*s.* 6*d.*; and the purchaser of the debenture does not get it, for the 2*s.* 3*d.* which he pays for the debenture is of course its full value. It is in fact wasted in the loss of time and trouble which the importer spends in getting a purchaser for his debenture, and the time and trouble spent by the purchaser before he has received from the Treasury the amount of the debenture. Under such circumstances, the obvious course seems to be to abolish at once a tax which is profitable to no one. The proprietors of English throwing-mills, however, may perhaps fear that the change would be injurious to them. We do not concur in this fear. If English skill or English machinery be inferior to the skill or machinery of Italy (which we do not believe), such an anomaly can be owing to nothing but to the benumbing effects which protection, where it is adequate, appears to produce. But, in fact, when it is recollected that the duty on organzine was in the year 1824 14*s.* 8*d.* a-pound, and that no loss appears to have been suffered by the throwsters by its gradual reduction to its present amount, it is difficult to believe that the abolition

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of the remaining duty of 1*s.* 3*d.* a-pound would affect them. If, however, it be thought that their interests would be affected, and that they ought to be protected at the expense of the community, we recommend merely that the useless and expensive machinery of debentures and drawbacks be abolished, that the duty on organzine be reduced to 1*s.* 3*d.* a-pound, and that on tram and singles in proportion, and that the duty so levied be carried to the public account.

III. Improvement of Patterns.

The third of the means proposed for increasing the demand for hand-loom labour is the improvement of patterns. The evidence collected by the Committee of the House of Commons on arts and manufactures, in 1835 and 1836, and that collected by the Committee on copyright of designs in 1840, have established both the low rank which England holds in the application of the fine arts to manufactures, and the loss occasioned by this deficiency. It appears that in figured silks, in ribbons, in printed cottons, in shawls, in short, in every woven fabric involving a design, we are far inferior in taste to France, and that the superiority of the French designs enables them to compete with us, even where their cost of production is greater, as in the finer cotton fabrics, and to exclude us from third markets, and in a great degree from our own, in the articles which they manufacture with equal advantages. So recognised and so decisive is their superiority, that some of the witnesses seem to bow before it as an irresistible law. "I consider," says Mr. Lockett, a commission-agent in the calico printing trade, that French designs are more copied than English, "because the French *naturally* bring out a superior quality of print to what we do."* The witnesses however, who, like ourselves, believe that the superiority of French over Engliish taste is neither natural nor necessary, have searched for its causes in the institutions of the two countries, and finding that in France the schools for instruction in the fine arts are numerous and have been long established, while in England they are few and recent,—that in France the copyright of designs is permanent and protected by a cheap and efficient tribunal, while in England it is in most branches of manufacture so temporary in its duration, and in others so expensive in its registration and tribunal, as to be nugatory,—and that in France a knowledge of art and a feeling for beauty is diffused by numerous and gratuitous exhibitions and by the general accessibility of public monuments, while in England almost all our monuments are locked up and our exhibitions few and generally expensive, and even when gratuitous, closed against the people on the only day when the labouring classes could enter them; finding, we repeat, these differences between the institutions of the two countries, they believe that the difference in their taste is accounted for.

In this view we thoroughly agree, and we agree on the inference drawn both by the witnesses examined by the Committees of 1835 and 1836, and by the Committee itself in its Report of 1836, that merely for economical purposes, merely in order to prevent our manufacturers from losing, by want of taste, a great part of the advantages which we derive from our natural resources, our industry, our skill, and our capital, it is necessary to adopt means for diffusing a knowledge of art, and facilitating its application to manufactures. The obvious means for these purposes are those which have been successfully used in France, and the suggestions, therefore, most usually made are—the establishment of schools of design, a better protection of copyright in designs, and more numerous and more accessible exhibitions of works of art.

Schools of design.

After the Report of 1836 was made, indeed after this Commission was issued, the Government established a school of design, and gave up to it the higher story of the rooms formerly occupied by the Royal Academy. The following extract from the papers of the council of the school show its present state and the ulterior operations which are contemplated :—

"The instructions at present given are divided into two sections :—

"1. Elementary, embracing the usual branches of study, *viz.*, outline drawing of ornament, and of the figure, shadowing, drawing from plaster, modelling, and colouring.

"2. Instruction in design for special branches of industry, and under this head is included —1st, The study of fabrics and of such processes of industry as admit only of the application of design in a modified form; and 2nd, The study of the history of taste in manufacture, the distinction of styles of ornament, and such theoretical knowledge as is calculated to improve the tastes of the pupils, and to add to their general acquaintance with art.

"In the present condition of the school, the council have only thought it expedient to provide for the practical study of the silk manufacture; and for this a teacher is employed on two days every week; but as the operations of the school become extended, it will be necessary to afford

* Evidence on Copyright of Designs. 8720.

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similar opportunities to students of design for calico-printing, paper-staining, &c. For the second section of the classes of design for manufacture, the council have resolved that, besides the instructions of the kind referred to, given by the director to individual students, as the occasion calls for it, he shall also give a lecture once a month to the whole students; and, besides these, that qualified lecturers shall be appointed to give oral instruction on particular subjects connected with the main purpose of the institution; and thus that there shall be at the least 20 lectures during the session.

"The following table exhibits the attendance of students during each month, from the commencement up to the present time:—

	Morning School.	*Evening School.*
1837—June	12	
July	16	
August	17	18
September	12	29
October	12	44
November	12	41
December	15	45
1838—January	13	47
February	13	48
March	20	58
April	20	57
May	21	58
June	25	38
July	19	27
August	8	24
September	11	20
October	12	25
November	13	22
December (2 weeks)	8	27
1839—January	12	27
February	17	29
March	21	41
April	32	36
May	27	30
June	26	28
July	28	24
August	31	31
September (vacation).		
October (2 weeks)	21	34
November	29	42
December	31	41
1840—January	36	37
February	42	41
March	41	55

"It is to be observed that the numbers stated as attending the evening school, include those only who are entered as evening students, and that a considerable number of the morning scholars also attend during the evening. The whole number of students who have entered since June, 1837, is 374.

"With respect to the attendance of the pupils, the council have to regret its irregularity and infrequency; but this is, perhaps, to be traced, on the one hand to the smallness of the number of those who, under the present discouraging prospect of employment, have come forward with the intention of devoting themselves exclusively to the pursuit of design for manufacture, and on the other to the circumstance that a great majority of the pupils are apprentices, or engaged in trade, who can only command a limited time at intervals for the purposes of study.

"At the commencement, the council decided on fixing the fees of admission to the school at the rates of 16*s.* per month for the morning school, and of 4*s.* per month for the evening school; but it having appeared, after the experience of two years, that these rates were too high, they, after mature deliberation, reduced them to 4*s.* for the morning and 2*s.* for the evening school. To this rate it does not seem that any objection is offered on the part of the students, and its payment affords, perhaps, the best guarantee for regularity of attendance.

"In providing materials of study, the council have endeavoured to procure the best examples, ancient and modern, of ornamental art, to the extent that the limited means at their disposal have permitted. The collection, however, consisting of books, prints, plaster casts, and specimens of manufacture, is, as yet, extremely meagre, and, in fact, can only be considered as the *nucleus* of such a collection as is absolutely necessary to carry out the intention of the establishment with due efficiency.

"The first care of the council thus having been to place the immediate business of the school on a safe footing, they are now enabled to turn their attention to the accomplishment of certain objects, which, though collateral, they conceive to have an important bearing on the success of the school itself. Of these, they may allude to the publication of a work of ornamental design, to serve as an elementary class-book for the Government school and for provincial institutions; as a hand-book of styles of ornament for the instruction of designers; and as a guide to the tastes of manufacturers in their several branches of industry. They have

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also had under consideration the formation of a collection of moulds of the best examples of ornament in plaster, suited to the purposes of elementary study and of design for solid fabrics, which might be disposed of to country schools or to manufacturers at a cheap rate. It has also been proposed, when the progress of the school shall have rendered it practicable, to have a periodical exhibition of the works of the students, accompanied with the produce of manufacture executed from their designs."

The period which has elapsed since the school was founded, is so short that no decided opinions can yet be formed as to the extent to which its usefulness will be carried. There has in fact been scarcely time to educate a single set of pupils. It appears to us, however, that a single school, attended of course only by those who live in its immediate neighbourhood, can produce little direct effect in increasing the number of good designers actually engaged in the business of manufacturing. But as a model and normal school, as a school in which the best modes of instruction could be held up for imitation, and pupils be educated for the purpose of becoming not designers, but teachers of design in subordinate schools, we are convinced that it may be highly beneficial. These subordinate schools should be scattered throughout the manufacturing districts, and probably instead of embracing the whole of ornamental art, might in each place be confined to the portion of art most useful in that spot. In France there are more than 200 such schools. The British Islands, with a larger manufacturing population, can scarcely require fewer.

But we cannot conceal a fear that the advantages which have been derived in France, and in many parts of the continent of Europe from schools of design, are not to be expected in England until a change has taken place in the habits and opinions of the majority of our manufacturers.—

Mr. Dyce.

"I am quite persuaded,"

Says Mr. Dyce, in his valuable Report on Foreign Schools of Design,—

"That if there is one cause more powerful than another which has contributed to retard, or which now presents an obstacle to the progress of taste in British manufacture, it is the degraded position which pattern designers occupy,—a position in which their talents find no scope for development, and their taste and judgment as artists are set at nought.

"It may appear incredible, but I assert it without fear of contradiction, that there are very few if any instances in Great Britain of industrial artists who are employed as responsible persons; that is, to whose judgment manufacturers give the least deference; whose productions can be looked upon as original works; or who are allowed even to have a voice as to the mode in which the patterns they are employed to make should be executed. This state of things, it is true, in the first instance, originated in the deficiencies of designers themselves, and their inability to cope with the skill of continental artists; but the position they have lost cannot now be regained solely by the acquisition of any degree of excellence, since the expedients universally resorted to by manufacturers have done away the very necessity of other than mere draftsmen and copyists. As the case now stands, the manufacturer takes upon himself the onus of finding the pattern, and this is everyway attended with detriment to the interests of commerce. I do not suppose I am guilty of any libel on the character of a most valuable and important branch of the community, when I say that, generally speaking, manufacturers are practically unacquainted with art, for the same may be affirmed without offence of the majority of the members of other professions; but if this be the case, and they have taken upon themselves a responsibility, which, from their education, their occupations, or perhaps their natural powers of judgment in matters of taste, it is impossible they should be competent to discharge, we shall find no difficulty in discovering the source of the shortsighted expedients by which each has endeavoured to outstep the other in the race after commercial novelties.

"The mechanical business of copying, altering, or dove-tailing patterns, already in some shape in the British or foreign market (which is all that a draftsman is now called upon to do), is neither lucrative, nor does it hold out the very smallest prospect of that kind of reputation and applause which French designers individually enjoy, and which every one knows is the most powerful motive for exertion with young artists; the consequence is, that if a youth of natural ability thinks he has any prospect whatever of succeeding in the higher walks of art, he will rather take his chance in this than submit to the thankless drudgery to which he is exposed as a pattern draftsman. If this is not true, how comes it that we have no instances of men of high artistical powers devoting themselves to design for industry? That such is the case in France every one is aware; and why is it so? Because not only is the estimation in which they are held and deference which is paid to their opinion always proportioned to their skill and abilities, but the remuneration is such as to insure them a respectable position in society.

"In Lyons, the commercial value of taste is reckoned so high, that when a young man displays remarkable powers, a house will admit him to a partnership, in order completely to monopolize his services. Even in general employment a Lyonnese pattern designer in good practice, realizes as much as 10,000*f.* per annum; which considering the comparative value of money in Lyons and any town in England, must be reckoned a sum much beyond the conceptions of remuneration on the part of English manufacturers. But why is this? For this obvious reason; the French manufacturer incurs little or no expense for the purchase of foreign designs; he does not employ agents to obtain *per fas et nefas*, a pattern of every new article

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that appears in the London or Paris market; he never suffers the loss (so frequent in this country) arising from his having manufactured the same pirated design simultaneously with three or four other houses; and therefore it is that he can afford to pay his artist highly. Though the sum he thus expends may appear large, the outlay on patterns in France is not greater than it is in England, if indeed it be so great. But the difference is this, that the money which in France is paid directly to the artist, is in England frittered away on expedients for superseding the employment of original designers;—expedients which, if law and honesty are to be taken into account, cannot be reckoned other than illegitimate, and which, if prudent, must, I fear, be thought very short sighted, because the great bulk of patterns executed in England according to the present system, must inevitably want the stamp of novelty and originality, which is not only the great characteristic of the French, but is really the advantage which the French manufacturer gains by paying liberally for the assistance and judgment of highly educated artists.

"Another evil arising from the present system, is the want of artistical taste in the execution of fabrics, especially of the coloured kinds. It is the common practice to ring the changes (if I may use the expression) on a pattern, by varying the arrangement and quality of the colours. I need not say that to do this in a tasteful manner, the judgment of an artist is absolutely necessary. Now, unfortunately, this is never (so far as I have been able to learn) put in requisition. Nominally, it belongs to the manufacturer to direct the variations of colours and effect, but virtually it is left to ignorant workmen who having a certain established mode of proceeding, put it in practice in every case, whether in respect of taste it be right or wrong.

"A few years ago, a French manufacturer of paperhangings came to this country, with the intention of commencing business. To insure his success, he brought with him a skilful designer of patterns for paper, believing that with the advantages he should enjoy in other respects, he had only to superadd the quality of excellent design (in which English papers are lamentably deficient) to drive all competitors out of the market. He engaged English workmen, and commenced his operations. His designer, accustomed to the French method, was of course not content with having merely furnished the pattern; he considered that half of his vocation consisted in seeing that no injury was done to the character of his designs through the unskilfulness of the workmen; with this view, he insisted that the tints employed should exactly correspond to those in his design; and that if the colouring were to be changed, the alteration should be according to his judgment. Could anything be more reasonable? But what was the result? The workmen struck work; they had been accustomed to make up their tints in large quantities; they had never used but three greens, or two reds, or two yellows, and so on: there were only certain changes in the arrangement of the colours which they were in the habit of making, and it was absurd to suppose that they should submit to the caprice of a Frenchman, who seemed to think there were as many colours as days in the year, and who insisted upon many minute variations of tint of which they could see no use, and which were not employed in the trade. The concern was accordingly broken up.

"I have mentioned this little history, (which is purely matter of fact,) not only because it completely marks the difference bntween the French and the English system of *mise en fabrique*, but because the comparative results which might be expected from the difference are so fully borne out by the actual state, in the two countries, of the branch of industry to which it relates. Half a century ago, I am informed, France was supplied to a large amount with paper hanging, manufactured in England; and the names of the artists who at that period gave to it its high character have even been preserved. At the present time, by reference to the French Custom-house returns. it appears that the importation has dwindled down to almost nothing, (Ret. 1836-7, 14 kilogr.;) while a visit to the shops of any of the English dealers in the metropolis will prove to what extent England is indebted to France for whatever is novel or tasteful in that branch of industry.

Copyright in designs.

It is impossible, however, to give importance to the profession of a pattern designer, unless the pattern which he is to design be made valuable. Nor can considerable temporary value be given to a pattern in which there is no property, or any permanent value to one in which there is no permanent property. This leads us to the consideration of the third of the remedies which have been suggested to us, namely, an extension of copyright in designs.

In 1838, the time at which Mr. Dyce's Report was written, and at which our Assistant Commissioners collected their evidence, the only copyright in patterns was that given by the 34th Geo. III. cap. 23. Under this Act, patterns for *printing* linens, cottons, calicoes, and muslins, have a copyright for three months. No means of registration is given, and the only evidence of originality is the date of the first publication, stamped at the bottom of each piece. Patterns printed on fabrics of silk, wool, or hair, or on fabrics into which these materials enter, or which are woven into or worked on the cloth, or painted on it, are unprotected by the Act. Nor does the Act extend to Ireland.

The only remedy given by the Act for infringement are such damages as a jury may award, to be obtained by the slow process of an action at law, with taxed costs, a remedy useless where the piratical defendant has no property, and always expensive in consequence of the difference between the taxed costs that can be recovered, and the real costs which the plaintiff must pay. The Court of Chancery, however,

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has added the preventive process of injunction—a more effectual and a more speedy remedy, but so expensive as to be scarcely ever resorted to.

In the session of 1839, however, two important Acts were passed on this subject. The first is the 2d Vict. cap. 13, which extends the 34th Geo. III, to Ireland; and adds to the fabrics within its provisions, fabrics of silk, wool, and hair, and also those of mixed materials. The second, the 2d Vict. cap. 17, gives a 12 months' copyright for patterns worked into, or worked on, or printed on, or painted on any tissue or textile fabric, except lace, and except linens, cottons, calicoes, muslins, and any other article within the 34th Geo. III. cap. 23, and the 2d Vict. cap. 13, and punishes piracy by penalties, to be summarily recovered.

The exception contained in the 2d Vict. cap. 17, excludes from its operation all printed goods, for, though the word printed is used in the clause giving protection, there are, in fact, no printed goods which are not included in the 34th Geo. III. and the 2d Vict. cap. 13, and which, therefore, are not excluded from the 2d Vict. cap. 17.

Whether the copyright of 12 months, given by the 2d Vict. cap. 17, to the patterns within its protection be sufficiently long, and the penalties by which it is protected be adequate, are questions which, for the following reason, cannot yet be answered. The Act protects only those patterns which are registered; the fee for which is one guinea, and requires three copies to be exhibited to the registrar. It appears from the evidence of Mr. Holdway,* an eminent pattern designer, that in complicated patterns the labour, and consequently the expense, of making each of these copies, is greater than that of the original design. Mr. Holdway found that three copies of one design would have cost 30*l*., being more than three times the price of the design itself. This expense, and the circumstance that the register, though it has since been closed, was at its commencement open to public inspection, and exposed, therefore, to imitation all the registered designs, prevented the registration of more than the trifling number of 14 designs for woven fabrics during the period for which we have a return, that is, from the 1st July, 1839, to the 3d February, 1840. In France, the fee is 10 francs, only one copy is required, and that copy is sealed up, until some legal proceeding renders its inspection necessary. It has been urged, that if we adopt from the French system the dependence of copyright on registration, we must also adopt the cheapness and secrecy of their register. Doubts have also been suggested as to the fitness of the tribunal, namely, a common law court, or two justices of the peace, before which the penalties imposed by the Act are to be recovered, and which, consequently, must judge whether the copyright has or has not been infringed: and it has been suggested that the French plan of a Conseil de Prud'hommes, consisting of manufacturers and workmen, assisted, when necessary, by *experts*, or persons possessing specific knowledge,† would be preferable.

It appears to us, however, inexpedient, to make at the same time the experiments of a new system of registration, and of a new tribunal, and that the better plan will be, first to try the effect of an improved system of registration, leaving to the existing tribunals, until they have been found inefficient, the decision as to copyright and the enforcement of penalties. One alteration has been already made; the register has been made close. This has been objected to by some of the witnesses before the Committee on Copyright of Designs, on the ground that more persons than one might invent and register the same design, and innocently incur penalties.‡ In this fear, however, we do not participate. We agree with Mr. Thompson, that considering the infinite variety of the elements from which designs may be taken, and the infinite variety of combinations of which they are capable, the chances against two persons uniting the same elements in the same combination, are so numerous as to make such a coincidence improbable to a degree amounting to practical impossibility.§ We believe, therefore, that the closing the register is an improvement. If the expense be diminished, by reducing the fee to a low amount, not exceeding at the utmost two shillings, and by requiring only a single copy, we believe that the efficiency of the 2d Vict. cap. 17, may be fairly tried; and we do not recommend any further alteration of that Act, as respects the fabrics which are within its provisions, until experience shall have shown its defects.

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* Evidence taken before Committee on Copyright of Designs, 184. Q. 2674, 2675, 2677.

† See the constitution and functions of the Conseil de Prud'hommes, in the Evidence of the Committee on Arts, of 1836. Q. 47 to 65.

‡ See, in the Evidence on Copyright of Designs, amongst others, the Evidence of Mr. Lee.

§ Letter to Sir Robert Peel on Copyright in Designs, p. 22.

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It must be recollected, however, that the 2d Vict. cap. 17, applies to the patterns of only a portion of the fabrics to which the hand loom is paplicable. It excludes from its protection all printed goods. They were at first intended to have been included, but when it was resolved that the copyright should involve registration, the printers, from an apprehension, which experience has shown to be well founded, that the proposed registration would be so expensive and troublesome, as to be practically inaccessible, refused to be included in its provisions. Feeling, however, the *i*nadequacy of the three months' copyright given to patterns for printed goods *by* the existing Acts the whole of the printers in Ireland, 63 out of the 67 who constitute the trade in Scotland, and a vast majority of those who are engaged in the printing trade in England, petitioned for a 12 months' copyright. Their petitions were referred to a select committee of the House of Commons, which, after an elaborate inquiry, lasting from the 20th of February to the 8th of July, 1840, reported the minutes of the evidence taken before them with the single resolution, "That it is the opinion of this committee that it is expedient to extend copyright of designs."

On examining the vast body of evidence collected by the committee, it will be found to establish the following propositions:—

First. That the existing copyright is nugatory; and that, if any copyright is to be given, 12 months is the shortest period that would be sufficient for garment patterns, and that furniture patterns require a longer term; and

Secondly. That the piracy which, in the present state of the law is almost unchecked, is in a high degree injurious to the manufacturers, whose designs are pirated, to the character of British goods in the foreign markets, and to the advance of the art of design in the British islands.

The injury inflicted on the manufacturer may be estimated when it is seen how small a proportion the successful designs bear to those annually produced. Mr. Schwabe, an eminent printer in Manchester, states that the number of designs made for him in a year is between 2,000 and 3,000, out of which not more than 500 are cut upon copper or wood for the purpose of being made use of; all the rest remain mere waste paper (105). Mr. Potter states, that his designs are about the same number, that is between 2,000 and 3,000, and that about 500 of them are made use of (388-389). Mr. John Brooks estimates his designs at the same number, and makes use of only from 400 to 600 (752-755). Mr. D. Lee estimates the annual number of his designs at 3,250, out of which rather more than 600 are made use of (4386-4397). Not more than one design, therefore, in six is actually employed; the remaining five are an unproductive outlay. But of the selected designs, only a small proportion are successful. Mr. Schwabe states, that out of the 500 patterns which he brings out every year, not more than 100 succeed (119, 120). It appears, therefore, that not more than one design in 30 is of real value, and that to obtain that one the original proprietor has to pay for the invention of 29 others, and for the engraving or cutting of four. But it is, of course, on this one successful design that the copyist fixes. Avoiding, as he does, all the risk and all the expense of unsuccessful designs, he often is able to produce articles similar to those produced by the original proprietor, and to sell them at a lower price. More frequently, however, he copies the pattern on inferior fabrics, or with less permanent and less expensive dies. Whatever be the mode of piracy adopted, the injury to the original producer is great. In both cases he is forced to discontinue the use of the pirated pattern. In the first case, because he is undersold; in the second, because the pattern becomes vulgarised by being reproduced on coarse fabrics, applied to inferior purposes.

The following extracts from the evidence of Mr. Brooke and Mr. Clarkson, taken before the Committee on Copyright of Designs, shows this very clearly:—

Mr. *E. Brooke.*

Mr. Brooke.

"1806. Are your goods ever copied by other houses?—They are.

"1807. Are those who copy them subjected to the same amount of previous expense in preparing their copies which you have been exposed to in the preparation of your original patterns?—They are not; in fact, they are at no expense in the design, and they have no risk of failing patterns.

"1808. Do they confine their copies to those patterns which have proved to be successful?—They do.

"1809. Does that give them an important advantage over you in point of expense?—I consider it does.

"1827. When one of your designs has been copied, does that circumstance injure its value in the market?—It not only injures, but very frequently entirely destroys its value.

"1828. Will you describe how that is brought about?—A pattern which has been produced at a considerable cost, and which is fit to be used by those who are in better circumstances, would cease to be bought by them immediately they saw it copied.

"1829. You are speaking of patterns used by the upper classes of society, as distinguished from those used by the middle classes?—Yes.

"1830. Is the sale of such a pattern among the upper classes injured or destroyed in consequence of its being so copied?—Often entirely destroyed.

"1831. Are patterns which have been produced at great cost, with a view to that class of consumers, thereby rendered valueless to you occasionally?—They are.

"1832. Is it a frequent occurrence?—It is very often the case.

"1833. When a design of your's of that nature has been so copied, do you continue to print it, and find a market for it?—We generally cease to print it altogether."

Mr. *Thomas Clarkson.*

Mr. Clarkson.

"2074. With what house are you connected in London?—Clarkson and Turner, of Coventry-street, sellers of chintz furniture.

"2083. How many original patterns do you produce in the course of a-year?—I should think we have at least 20 cut for us.

"2084. How many original designs may you have made, from which those 20 are selected?—I should think, perhaps, 25 or 30; rejecting, perhaps, 8 or 10 upon the average.

"2085. What is the average cost of the drawing of each pattern?—A great deal will depend upon the size; perhaps they average 6*l.* or 8*l.*

"2088. What is the average expense of cutting them?—I should say the average expense of cutting is, according to the size of the pattern, from 20*l.* to 50*l.*

"2090. Have you ever given a larger sum than the sums you have mentioned in any instance?—We have paid 70*l.* or 70 guineas for the cutting of one pattern.

"2091. Do you frequently find that, after having selected some of those patterns from the mass of original designs, those of which you had a favourable opinion upon paper have failed upon cloth?—It very often happens so.

"2092. With respect to those which you ultimately adopt, is loss sustained by you when the pattern is unsuccessful?—It occasions a very heavy dead stock, which we are glad to sell at a great reduction.

"2094. Do you find yourself exposed to having your designs copied in the course of your trade?—Very much.

"2095. And that the copyist selects the most successful of your designs for that purpose?—Certainly.

"2096. Do you conceive that the present term of protection of three months is adequate for your security, and that it affords you a fair remuneration for the expense you are at?—Certainly not; I think our particular trade requires a much greater extent of protection than almost any other.

"2097. For what reason?—Because there is very great expense, and a very heavy stock; and, generally speaking, our patterns do not become properly known frequently for twelve months.

"2102. Do you find that patterns designed three or four years ago sell as well at the present time as when they were first brought out, if they have not been copied?—We have some of our patterns of 1836, which have not been copied, selling better almost at the present time than any.

"2103. If those patterns had been copied, what course would you have taken?—We should have abandoned them, and not printed any more, and sold our stock in the best way that we could.

"2104. Why would you have ceased altogether from their production?—Because the copy would have become so common, and the style so common, of that particular pattern, that it would have been of little or no value to us.

"2108. *Chairman.* Do you state it as your general habit, that, in the case of an invasion of your copyright, and the copying of one of your patterns, you cease to print it?—The same pattern.

"2109. And dispose of your stock on the best terms you can?—Yes, very often at the same price that the pirate is selling his for, or in any other way that we possibly can to turn it into money.

"2110. What may be the average value of your stock of any one of these patterns?—From 80*l.* to 150*l.* or 160*l.*

"2111. Upon a very full or elaborate pattern, would you go to a greater expense for your stock?—Yes; we have gone to 300*l.* or 400*l.* upon the stock of a pattern.

"2112. So that the invasion of any one of those patterns would involve a loss upon the stock to an amount varying from 100*l.* to 400*l.*?—Yes; perhaps from 50*l.* to 200*l.*, because we may have a sale to some extent before it is pirated."

In the home market piracy affects chiefly the original producer of the pirated design. In the foreign market it is injurious not merely to the manufacturer or merchant, whose patterns are copied, but to the general reputation of British prints. This is well shown by the following evidence of Mr. Schuster, a foreign merchant, residing in Manchester, taken before the same Committee.

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Mr. Schuster.

Mr. *Leo Schuster.*

" 1036. Is it a part of your business to purchase and send abroad printed cotton goods?—It is.

" 1037. To what parts of the world do you send them?—A great many different markets; I may almost say every part of the world.

" 1048. Are you ever afraid of being interfered with by copies?—Certainly.

" 1085. Is it usual for patterns of original design, and evincing considerable skill and taste, to be worked off in durable colours, and upon cloth of good quality?—Certainly it is the practice in the trade, that the printer generally puts his very best patterns on the very best fabric of cloth.

" 1086. And in permanent colours?—Yes.

" 1087. In what manner are the copies executed in those respects?—The copies are made to bear the strongest resemblance to the originals, though actually they are of a spurious description, inasmuch as the colours of the copies are fugitive; but the fugitive colours can be made to resemble the fast ones, very nearly indeed; so that very few persons can distinguish them who are not practically acquainted with the trade of calico printing; they are then put upon an inferior cloth, and, in fact, produced at a much lower price.

" 1088. What is the effect produced in the foreign market by that circumstance?—In my opinion it is most detrimental; it operates in many ways to injure the general interests of trade, and particularly to destroy all confidence in British productions of that description. I know that from my own experience, having travelled frequently in foreign countries, and having heard it from many of my friends and correspondents; they say they will not buy fine English prints. Supposing in the foreign market a lady purchases a gown-piece, a print, and she finds it excellent in quality and in wear, and that the colours are permanent; she names this to her neighbour: 'See, I have made a good bargain; I have purchased a thing that answers my purpose well.' The neighbour goes and purchases a similar gown, which bears a certain mark, by which she recognizes that it is of the same kind; she says it must be the same; she brings it home, and has it made up, and the very first day she goes out in a shower of rain, and a little sun afterwards upon it, the colours disappear, and the texture of the cloth is gone; it breaks, and she says, 'How is that? I thought I had purchased the same thing as you did, but mine is quite wrong.' 'Aye, you bought an English print; that is the cause.' There is now and then a good English print; but the quantity that appear afterwards of imitations are so great, that French are the things you must purchase.

" 1089. Does that indispose the buyers in those countries generally to purchase English prints?—Yes; a certain class of buyers will not purchase them.

" 1090. Have you known this of your own knowledge with respect to some of the foreign markets with which you are connected in trade?—I have; I speak of the better classes; they will not purchase English prints on that account.

" 1112. In any of the markets with which you are connected, do you find French prints sell there in competition with English prints?—I do in almost all of them.

" 1113. Is more confidence reposed in those markets in the quality of the French prints than in that of the English ones?—Yes.

" 1116. If English prints were of the same duration of copyright with French prints, do you think they would be likely to be held in the same esteem, and purchased with the same confidence in foreign markets as French prints now are?—I hope and I believe it will have that effect. The consumers, who are at present driven to purchase French goods from fear of purchasing spurious productions in English goods, when they find that they can place dependence upon the British productions, will naturally purchase them, because they are cheaper; I mean cheaper in the real sense of the word, that is to say, an equal quality will be produced cheaper in this country in printed goods than it can be produced in France.

" 1142. When a person having purchased one of those spurious patterns on inferior cloth finds himself deceived, and goes to complain to the retail dealer, would not the retail dealer naturally answer, 'You have bought the wrong goods; these never came from the original printer; but if you deal with me in future, I will supply you with the original pattern, and with cloth of better quality?'—He might say so if he were a judge himself; but in distant countries I find very few of those retail dealers who know more about those goods than the customers; they take the goods upon trust.

" 1145. Would not the foreign retail dealer, after having been deceived three or four times, take the same precaution that an English one would; that is to say, finding that he had been deceived, would not he naturally go to an honest dealer in England, and get his supplies from him?—He would if that plan were adopted; but I doubt whether that plan is so strictly followed; I do not think that the consumer comes back to the retailer to complain to him; I think he submits to the loss, and says, 'I will not in future purchase any of these goods; I will purchase French.'

" 1220. Though the manufacture in England is much more extensive than in France, is the art as perfect in its higher departments here as in France?—I am sorry to say, that even with those limited quantities which France produces, they have attained greater excellence, and greater choice of patterns; there is much more taste displayed in their productions.

" 1221. Mr. *Ewart.* To what do you attribute that superiority in France?—I should say, to protection. A manufacturer is certain of being enabled to obtain a profit upon his productions if they are deserving of it; in fact, by his patterns being protected, by his patterns not being copied by others, of course he can devote more time to it, and more expense to the production of patterns, and he gets a superior set of men altogether to apply themselves to it.

" 1222. Mr. *Wood.* The trade being of older standing in England, and having here peculiar advantages which it has not in France, is there any reason that you can give to the

Committee why in the superior departments of the art we are inferior to France notwithstanding those circumstances?—I think I have just stated, that there is not the same protection given in this country to the producer as in France, and consequently there is not the same exertion."

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We have said that the piracy which is fostered by the imperfection of the existing copyright, retards the advance of the art of design in the British islands. As an illustration of this statement we have selected from a large body of testimony to the same effect, the following evidence of Mr. Applegath:—

"Mr. *Augustus Applegath.*

Mr. Applegath.

"2844. *Chairman.*—You have been engaged in the business of calico printing for some years past?—I have been a printer for 30 years, and a printer of calicoes for 15 years. We pay about 60*l.* a-week to designers and pattern-makers.

"2848. By pattern-makers do you mean engravers?—The people who engrave and cut also the design.

"2849. Have you found, in the prosecution of your business, that any loss has been entailed to you in consequence of the present inadequate protection to designs?—Yes, by having many patterns copied shortly after they have come out, and before the sale of these patterns has remunerated us for the expense of producing them.

"2850. Do you find that that inadequate protection tends to prevent the designing of very expensive and elaborate patterns?—Most decidedly; not only does it prevent the production of very expensive and elaborate patterns, but I find it necessary, in the working in my trade, to bring out as few original patterns as possible; I find it will not do for me to labour very much to bring out new original patterns, because, if I did so, all my patterns would be copied; no person would print with me, therefore I make up patterns one with another; I bring out a considerable quantity of patterns; I bring out as many patterns as I can do in order to baffle the copier by the variety I bring out.

"2851. That is your principle, that if one style be copied, you may still fall back upon another?—Yes, we endeavour to make a trade by variety rather than by excellence.

"2852. Do you conceive that the present inadequate protection tends to prevent the application of design to matters to which it would be applied, if a longer term of protection existed?—To anything great it does.

"2853. Are there any printed hangings for architectural decorations of rooms printed in this country?—There have been lately, within the last four or five years; I have been a good deal engaged in that trade.

"2854. Are any of them of a high class of art?—As high as we dare produce under the existing circumstances; I have specimens of them here (*producing some patterns*); patterns of that kind require a great deal of time in their production; they are like class drawings, every defect appears, and you cannot often tell how they will look till they are produced upon cloth. Here is one that we are unwilling to bring out at present on account of the expense of blocks (*producing a pattern*); it will take 32 to 35 blocks; we cannot bring it out; it would be copied immediately. Here is another pattern, which was drawn four times before we could satisfy ourselves with the effect (*producing another pattern*); this has been executed and sold; this was drawn from nature; drawings of the flowers supplied to me by the house; it may be imagined that it cost a great deal of money to draw this three or four times over.

"2858. What would the mere cost of the designing of that pattern be?—I think my employer paid 20*l.* for the drawing of the flowers.

"2863. You have stated that the class of art in the designs you have been showing is as high as you feel yourself warranted in bringing into exercise under the present term of protection; do you conceive that if that term were extended, a higher class of art could be introduced into these manufactures?—If we could be favoured with a real protection, giving us a sufficient copyright, I would immediately employ artists of the first character; I would not be content with persons that we call drawers, or even inferior artists.

"2864. Have you made any effort towards that?—I have not, further than by requesting my friend Mr. Sydney Smirke to get me drawings, and I think his father has drawn several; but he has never pleased himself.

"2865-66. Was that with a view to architectural decorations?—With a view to architectural decorations; with a view to improve the character of hangings, and also pannels for tapestry.

"2867. Those are not now produced in this country?—They are not produced by any English printer that I am aware of.

"2868. Would those be produced on cloth?—On woollen cloth.

"2869. Have any attempts been made in this country to produce designs of this kind upon pannels for the decoration of rooms?—I think there is a set of French work to be seen at Pratt's, in Bond-street, not of English manufacture.

"2870. Would that manufacture be likely to be introduced into this country if an adequate term of protection were given?—I think it would.

"2871. Would you be disposed to undertake it yourself?—I would, with proper protection. About eight or nine years ago I had the pleasure of returning from Paris with Sir David Wilkie, who was returning from Italy, and he was quite full of the Italian palaces and other

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things which he had seen, in which it is very common to decorate them with arabesques and introducing medallions in pannels. We soon became friendly in consequence of this coincidence of feeling, for I had been wishing to it for some time; and we talked about it a considerable time, and he said that if I would take it up, he would at any period, and however he might be engaged, make me a set of drawings for the purpose. But it would be of no use my troubling Sir David Wilkie to forego his lucrative occupation to make me drawings that would be immediately copied.

"2936. Is it your opinion that an extension of the term of copyright would tend to increase the number of parties that are now employed as designers?—Decidedly. If I were assured of its being carried into effect, I should seek immediately to engage two or three persons that I know.

"2937. And you would trust to the improvement of the designs that would be produced for the extension of that class of business?—I should.

"2938. Your observations refer to an extension from three to twelve months?—Yes; because I am not permitted to think of my own views, which would go to a greater extent. One strong reason why I should engage more drawers and pay them more liberally, is, that then having more time to sell our goods in, we should act with more confidence, and want of confidence is a very bad feature in the present system. I do not buy my patterns with any confidence; the draper who employs me does not order with any confidence; the retail draper does not buy with any confidence; the lady who buys the dress buys it almost with the impression that it is hardly worth while to buy it; and by and by, when her servant gets the same thing on, she comes back to the shop and actually reproaches them with having sold her a pattern which is hawked about in a common way. How we manage to get a trade I hardly know; it is only by means of exertion. I speak most feelingly upon the subject, because I have the management of our patterns. I brought out 513 patterns, last year, in a small London trade; but it is only by means of great exertion that we are enabled to make any way at all. If the Committee could enter practically into the situation of the London printers, they would see that it is a trade of the most intense anxiety."

It may appear strange that a system of piracy, so fraudulent and so mischievous, should be defended: it has, however, been defended, and measures for its prevention have been strenuously resisted, on the following grounds:—first, that, if an extended copyright in designs were given, the proprietors of the protected designs would charge too high a price for their commodities, to the injury of our foreign trade: secondly, that designs though protected in the home market would be copied abroad, and that the foreign copyist would monopolise the advantage which is now obtained by the British copyist: thirdly, and this, of course, is the real motive for the opposition, that copying is profitable to the copyists.

The first of these grounds requires little remark. Manufacturers may be trusted with the management of their own affairs. The times are passed for legislating on the presumption that men would continue to injure their own trade by excessive charges. But in fact it is clear that an extension of copyright would enable all those who print from their own designs to diminish their prices. The chance of having the value of the whole stock on which a pattern has been printed reduced 50 or 100 per cent. by the piracy of the design, is one element in the cost of production, and must obviously be charged for by the manufacturer, so far as he can regulate his prices: that is, so far as he manufactures successfully. Remove this portion of the cost of production, and of course the portion of price which was occasioned by it must cease. We firmly believe that an extension of copyright would render our foreign trade more extensive and more secure. The second ground of objection is opposed to the evidence, which shows the inferiority of British to foreign designs. While that inferiority continues, we can have nothing to fear from their imitation. If, on the other hand, an extension of copyright should in time enable us to rival the French in taste, such an improvement would be cheaply purchased by the inconvenience, such as it might be, of our becoming the imitated, instead of the imitators. The third ground, even if the fact were true, which we doubt, does not deserve serious refutation. Every other sort of robbery might be defended as profitable to the robber.

On the whole, therefore, if our recommendation that the expense of registration be diminished is adopted, we further recommend as an immediate measure, that the fabrics which are now excluded from the 2d Vict. cap. 17, be subjected to its provisions, and if, as we think probable, it be found on experience that a 12 months' copyright is insufficient, that, as a future measure, the period of protection be prolonged. But we must repeat our conviction that, neither the establishment of schools of designs, nor the extension and protection of copyright, essential as they are, will give to our manufactures the improvement of which they are susceptible, unless they are accompanied by measures for cultivating and raising the popular taste. Mr. Dyce has well remarked that—

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"In matters of taste, it is no otherwise than in commerce; the production must always depend upon and bear an exact proportion to the consumption; it is, therefore, not less necessary to create the demand for tasteful design in industry than it is to provide for its exercise. The more expensive articles of commerce will always find purchasers, so long as wealth and its concomitant advantages of education and cultivated taste exist; but it is not among the wealthy, or in the more costly productions of industry, but among the less opulent classes of the community, and in the every day supplies and consumption of the market that the real character of national taste is discernible; and the standard of this, as it appears to me, can only be raised by informing the minds of those who are to become the purchasers, as well as cultivating the talents of those who are to supply the things purchased. Every one admits, that the great evidence, which we find in France, of the knowledge and love of art in the cheaper kinds of manufacture, is due to the ample opportunities of study provided for the common people. For myself, I do not hesitate to state, as the conviction forced upon me by the inquiries I have made, that in those opportunities, embracing the innumerable elementary schools, public exhibitions, and other gratuitous means of fostering taste, the secret of the influence of the schools of design, properly so called, is to be found, and not in the completeness of their system of tuition."

IV. Repression of embezzlement.

A fourth measure, which has been proposed for increasing the demand for hand-loom labour, is the more effectual repression of embezzlement of manufactured goods and of materials of manufactures. The temptations to the embezzlement of materials and its facilities are great. The weft and yarn which the manufacturer delivers in loose skeins return to him, as a part of the woven article, in so dissimilar a form, that an abstraction, not exceeding one-tenth, can scarcely be detected, except by a practised eye, and after minute examination; its only effect is to make the web one-tenth thinner than it ought to be. Again the material passes through several different hands, the manufacturer's agents, the winder's, and the weaver's, each of whom may hope that his theft may be charged on another. And when once embezzlement has become common, there seems no probability of its being detected in any particular instance, while confined within its usual limits. It requires, however, more than most kinds of theft, the co-operation of a receiver, indeed of a system of receivers. The material is useless to the purloiner himself, or to any one but a manufacturer. But a manufacturer of sufficient capital to be a putter out of work, or the owner of a factory, would not venture to purchase materials directly from a weaver or a winder. Persons set up as dealers in weft or yarn, combining that business with the trade of a huckster in the country, and of a petty shopkeeper in towns, purchase in small quantities, at a low value, from the actual embezzler, and resell to unscrupulous manufacturers. And these manufacturers supply, at prices under the prime cost of the honest manufacturer, a class of equally unscrupulous warehousemen and merchants. The system is well described in the following extract from the Report of the Committee, who considered this matter in Glasgow.

"The persons principally concerned in the resetting (*i. e.* receiving) of manufacturing materials, may be divided into various classes. One of these consist of what are called bowl-women, and other hawkers of small wares, who, in manufacturing districts, in exchange for money, or for the articles they have for sale, purchase from hand-loom weavers, winders, and warpers, all the yarn they can conveniently retain without being checked or detected; and who also purchase from girls, operatives, and servants of every description, employed in warehouses, cotton-mills, silk and power-loom factories, &c. all the manufacturing materials they can steal from the establishments in which they are employed.

"Another class of resetters consist of what are called Small Corks, or Bowl-cork manufacturers. Some persons belonging to this class employ a considerable number of weavers; but it is more common to find them employing individually only a very limited number. They are in the habit of purchasing warps, either from cotton-mills at a fair price, or from runaway weavers and resetters at a resetting price. The weft required for such warps is usually purchased at about one-third or one-fourth of its value, from weavers who make thin cloth, and thus are enabled to retain and dispose of a portion of unused materials, which, if they acted honestly, would be returned to their employers. This class of resetters is also supplied with weft by bowl-women, thieves, or other previously noticed classes of resetters, who purchase and collect stolen manufacturing materials.

"The last class of resetters to be mentioned, consists of warehousemen or merchants—some of them possessed of great wealth—who, instead of manufacturing themselves, find it more profitable to purchase, without asking questions, goods either stolen, or made wholly or partly of stolen materials. Such merchants are usually either in what is called the country trade, or in that of supplying wholesale buyers with the goods they purchase from weavers, bowl-cork manufacturers, and from persons of every description, who offer to sell them at lower prices than manufacturers who pay cash for all their manufacturing materials, can manufacture them. This highest class are seldom or never convicted of the crime of resetting. Stolen materials, after being worked up into goods, can never be distinguished from what are not stolen. And even when stolen goods are traced and found in their possession, which sometimes happens, it is always impossible to prove that they knew they were stolen when they

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purchased them. Formerly, the trade of this highest class of resetters was considered exceedingly disreputable, because it was, and still is known, that all the stolen manufacturing materials are worked up into the goods purchased by this class of merchants. Now, however, in consequence of the rapid increase and great extent of this trade, and the fortunes made in it, notwithstanding its demoralizing influence, it has unfortunately almost ceased to be regarded as discreditable.

"The three last-mentioned classes of resetters, in order to carry on their several trades, are mutually dependent: the second class purchase from the first; and the third from the second. They thus form a chain, by which stolen materials pass through the various manufacturing processes, till they at length fall disguised into the general trade and consumption of the country."*

It is remarkable, and it is perhaps one of the proofs that the embezzler of materials of manufacture is, as we have said, more than most other thieves dependent on the receiver, that embezzlement prevails in very different degrees, in different branches of trade, and in different places. In the silk manufacture it scarcely exists: in the woollen there is little of it, and apparently only in a few neighbourhoods. Even in the linen and cotton trades, it does not appear to be extensive in any part of England, except in the manufacturing districts which are nearest to Scotland. But in Scotland and in Ireland, it seems to prevail wherever cotton or linen fabrics are woven, and to be one of the principal difficulties with which the manufacturer has to contend, and one of the principal of the intrinsic causes which reduce the weaver's wages.

Mr. Symons.

Mr. Symons, in his Report from the south of Scotland, says:—

"It appears that reductions of wages usually begin by a class of manufacturers termed 'small corks,' who are recently risen from being weavers, and employ from four or five, to as many as two hundred weavers on their own account; selling their goods not in the regular market, but to cash warehouses and commission agents. This class of manufacturers have increased of late to an immense extent.

"Their goods are generally sold cheaper, and, after careful investigation, I am compelled to believe, that though there may be many exceptions among them, *the majority of these small manufacturers purchase stolen weft.*

"That the embezzlement of weft is carried on to a very considerable extent, there appears no question; it is stolen by factory girls from the mills, from the warehouses by the persons employed in them, and in a great measure by the women who wind pirns, and to whom it seems too great a temptation to be resisted to dispose of a spindle of weft.

"The persons who are at the head of this traffic reside chiefly in Belfast, and in Bridgeton, and the Salt-market in Glasgow. They employ a number of women and hawkers, who tramp up and down the whole of the western counties, and, wherever there are cotton weaving districts, under the pretence of selling crockery or bowls; hence the term 'bowl-weft,' and 'bowl-corks.'

"The demoralisation caused by this system is widely spread, and pernicious to a degree, which it is not easy to exaggerate. The weavers at large admit, and sorely lament this evil; they suffer from it in all ways; for their webs are, in the first place, frequently fined for being too thin; and their wages lowered in the second; because the small manufacturer is, by the low price at which he can buy the stolen material, enabled to undersell the regular manufacturer. It is thus a double robbery of the weaver, the winder of the pirns usually spending the produce of the weft she sells. The police officers, and even certain superintendents of police, are more than suspected of compromising these cases of theft for money.

"Houses in a very large way of business deal almost exclusively with these small manufacturers; one house in particular, both in the retail and wholesale trade, who formerly manufactured their own goods, having found it impossible to make them so cheaply as they could buy them ready made from the small manufacturers, have for the last few years dealt exclusively with them, and have abandoned manufacturing altogether."—*Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I. p.* 60.

Mr. Symons supports this general statement by much detailed evidence. We think that we shall give the clearest view, both of the extent of the evil and of the applicable remedies, by extracting the following communication from Mr. Andrews, the Procurator Fiscal of Maybole.

Mr. Andrews.

"The practice of embezzling cotton and other yarns given out for manufacture is, perhaps, more prevalent at the present time in this district of Ayrshire† than ever it was before.

"The principal manufacturing places in the district are Girvan, Maybole and Crosshill, to each of which, work from Glasgow and Paisley is sent weekly. The number of workmen in these places and other villages may be 4,000.

"The embezzlement by winders not connected with the weaver's family is, I am sure, very trifling; while, on the other hand, the embezzlement by the weaver or his wife or family is enormous; and such is the profit to the purchaser of such weft, that regular and organized establishments exist for its purchase.

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* Report of the Committee superintending the Fund for Preventing the Stealing of Manufactured Goods and Manufacturing Materials, pp. 4—6.

† District of Carrick.

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Mr. Andrews.

"In Maybole the system has been brought nearly to perfection. In order to commencing such a trade, the business of a pawnbroker (unlicensed, of course) is commenced, where the needy or dishonest workman finds a ready market for the yarns, and which are generally parted with at one-sixth of their value, and that value often given in goods at an enormous price, and of inferior quality. Sometimes money is paid at the rate of 2½*d.* for what would cost the manufacturer 1*s.* Again, persons travel the country ostensibly selling articles of dress and trifling wares, which they barter with the weavers' wives for weft, and immediately sell it in bulk to the brokers. I have known of children being bribed by a penny, and a promise of sweetmeats, to steal the weft from their parents.

"The loss to the manufacturer is in this way immense; I should suppose at least 1,200*l.* yearly in Girvan, Maybole, and Crosshill; while the consequences to the weaver are most distressing: for instance, when a weaver or his family parts with part of his weft in this way, he endeavours to make it up by weaving the cloth much *thinner* than is specified in the ticket; the consequence is, that a great part of his wages is forfeited for thin work. Again, many of them dispose of the weft under the idea that they will be able to replace it before the web is finished (which can always be done by purchasing from the broker at his own price); and in this belief the workman continues to put in the stipulated quantity of weft. It almost always happens, however, that the workman is unable to supply the weft by purchase, and he then goes to the broker, and gives his clothes, or those of his wife and family, in exchange for the required supply of weft; and these he is never able to redeem; the consequence is, nakedness, starvation, and disease.

"The weft thus acquired, is sent to Glasgow and Belfast, where it is readily bought by small manufacturers, and made into cloth, which undoubtedly can be sold at a less price than goods regularly manufactured.

"While, however, a ready market can always be found in Glasgow and Belfast for such weft, a practice has become common for these manufacturers (from Glasgow, I mean) to send chains of webs to the country, to some of their confederates, who again purchase the weft from the weavers, and finish the web, and return it, having thus perhaps a higher remuneration than if they had transmitted the weft to Glasgow.

"It may be asked, is there no means of putting an end to such a system? There are two difficulties in the way, and the first and principal one is, that the agents (some of whom deal in the articles themselves) will give no aid towards its suppression, nor have the Glasgow manufacturers hitherto interfered to interrupt it.

22 G. 2, 17 G. 3, c. 56.

"The second difficulty is, that the law as it now stands regarding the punishment for such offences is so highly penal, and, being in the English form, is so complicated and so dangerous to the Scots' practitioner, that few procurators fiscal are at all inclined to become complainers. The slightest error, either real or supposed, renders the complainer liable to be called into a superior court, and, as he has no interest to support the judgment, it often happens that a convicted buyer or receiver of embezzled materials is permitted to escape on the mere threat of a bill of suspension; and this will continue to be the case so long as the prosecutor is not protected by those manufacturers who have an interest in fair trade. The informer or prosecutor gets at most only a moiety of the fine, and from this all his expenses and trouble have to be paid, and these, I am certain, are seldom less than 10*l.*; while to support the conviction before the High Court of Justiciary would cost at least 40*l.*; and most likely, after the judgment was declared unobjectionable, the fine is irrecoverable.

"In the district to which I have alluded, I am not aware that any case has been brought under the statute, where I was not either the complainer, or the conductor of the case for the complainer, and at the same time taking upon myself the responsibility of the outlay, besides the loss that might arise from non-payment of my professional labour; and it has so happened that, from failing to satisfy the justices (where, in my opinion, the case was clear) that a conviction should follow, or from the total inability of the persons convicted to pay the penalty, I have been at least 15*l.* of outlay, besides my professional trouble. I have often had promises held out to me that the manufacturers of Glasgow would protect and remunerate any person under such circumstances; but although I have made known to them the whole circumstances now detailed, I have never been favoured with an answer.

"It cannot be expected, under such circumstances, that the public prosecutor, and far less a private individual, will interfere to check the crime of embezzlement.

"On this part of the subject I may conclude by observing, that in my opinion, no statute, how perfect soever, could check the crime of embezzling cotton and other materials of manufacture without the hearty co-operation of the manufacturers in large towns, and that of their agents in the country; how that is to be obtained I cannot point out, as assuredly the agents are fully aware of the evil, and the manufacturers ought to be so too, from the numerous notices of convictions and trials, if not from the too frequent occurrence of *thin* cloth.

"I hold, however, that the law itself should be in the best working order possible, and yet I do not think the statutes on this subject are so. It is perhaps not possible to make what I consider the defects of the law *apparent*, without rather a minute and lengthened commentary on the statutes; but as you seemed anxious for my opinion on the subject, I will consider the statute 17 Geo. 3, c. 56, section by section, so far as it relates to embezzlement, and point out what my experience in a twenty years' practice under the statute would suggest as improvements.

"It does not occur to me that the statutes are deficient in the enumeration of crimes or offences embraced by their provisions; indeed the distinct enumeration of the crimes, and the persons likely to commit them, denounced by the statute so far back as 1777, would infer that, from the extension of population, a revision of the law was necessary.

"The first alteration I would recommend, regards the *exclusive* jurisdiction given to the

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justices of the peace to try the offences under the statute; I do not say that this tribunal is inefficient, but there is no dispute that, generally, it is difficult to get justices to attend. The crimes are mostly committed in towns governed by magistrates, and I can see no good reason why the magistrates of such burghs as have a town clerk or assessor, should not be competent to the trial of all offences under the statute committed within their ordinary jurisdiction, as well as the sheriffs of counties, whose jurisdiction again would extend over the whole shire.

Mr. Andrews.

"The first section of the statute 22 Geo. 2, is amended by the first section of 17 Geo. 3, c. 56, so far only as the punishment is varied; the mode of proof, by the oath of the owner, or any other 'credible witness or witnesses,' being left entire. By the law of Scotland, a witness must be *competent* or *admissible* before he can be *credible*, and even after that, the credibility is a matter of some nicety. In no case can a conviction take place against a *receiver* of embezzled materials, without the evidence of the *seller;* and hesitation exists to consider *him* a *competent* or *admissible* witness: on principle, he is, perhaps, quite admissible, because although he is liable to punishment for having been the seller, yet his *interest* is to clear the accused, and if adduced for the prosecutor, the objection does not operate. Still there is hesitation and difference of opinion; and to bring the matter to the test by a judgment of the High Court of Justiciary, no prosecutor on his own responsibility will be a party to.

"At the same time, without the testimony of the buyer or seller, as the case may be, no conviction need be attempted, as care is taken that the *giver* and *receiver* of the yarn, whether for money, exchange or pawn, are the only persons present; but it would set the matter at rest, if in any alteration of the law it was declared that the buyer and seller are competent witnesses as against each other, leaving (as must be the case in all cases) their credibility to be judged by the nature of their testimony. This remark will apply to the mode of proof throughout the statute.

"The punishment, again, should in all cases of embezzlement, sale, &c, be a penalty recoverable in the most summary manner by warrant of distress in the first instance, and the *mode* of *executing* the *distress* should be *specially* pointed out; because although that mode of attachment is familiar in English practice, it is quite foreign to the usual form in the law of Scotland. It is, in fact, unknown in our practice, and for its form and mode of execution, the practice of England has to be referred to when occasion demands, and few, if any, practitioners have an opportunity of informing themselves on this important point in sufficient time to carry the law into execution in proper time.

"Again, if no distress can be found, then the delinquent should suffer such imprisonment as may be deemed sufficient. In all cases where a conviction is obtained, and where no appeal is taken (of which afterwards), power should be given to detain the delinquent, not exceeding *three* days, until it is seen whether or not he has goods and effects to answer the distress; if he has, he will then be set at liberty, and if he has not, his person is, in the meantime, safe to suffer the alternative of imprisonment.

"Section 2—Provides, that all crimes shall be tried by two or more justices. This seems a proper provision for many reasons, which it is of no importance to enumerate.

"Section 3—Provides a penalty and punishment for the receivers of embezzled materials, quite different from that enacted by the 1st section against sellers, perhaps on the adage, 'that without receivers, there would be no thieves.'

"The only changes I would suggest on this section is, that, for recovery of the penalty, a warrant of distress should be granted in the first instance, as recommended in the observations on section 1st.

"I see no use in giving power to any judge to cause the delinquent to be whipped; it is a cruel punishment, not now necessary, from the already improved and still improving state of prison discipline.

"Section 4.—As regards a second offence and its trial by the quarter sessions is, to say the least of it, expensive and inconvenient. There is no good reason why a second offence should not be tried by the ordinary tribunal. On the contrary, there is every reason to maintain, that the person guilty of a second offence has not, under this section, the chance of fair play; as for that second offence, there is no power of appeal as for a first, for so I construe the import of section 20th to be afterwards noticed.

"Section 5.—This seems to apply to a third party, not the embezzler, selling or offering to sell, and inflicts the punishment applicable to the crime of buying in section 3d. This is a very round-about way of stating the punishment, and might be much amended by a special declaration of the extent of the punishment. This would not only save expense, so far as the length of the original information or complaint is concerned, but would also lessen the chance of errors which occasionally occur, from the necessity of quoting different sections of a statute as applicable to an offence and its punishments.

"Section 6.—I have never had any practice under this section, although I am aware that the practice of working up embezzled materials is a very common one.—It has, for instance, of late become very common for private families to purchase Thibet yarn from weavers employed in the manufacture of shawls, for the purpose of making stockings, and from the fine texture of this material, it is preferred to silk, and looks equally well. A great deal of it is bought in this way by private families.

"But a greater quantity is bought by stocking-makers, who work it into stockings, and hawk these through the country. This section may with great propriety be retained, and improved by specifying the fine and imprisonment.

"Section 10.—The next section requiring any particular notice is the 10th, by which a power of search is given in the *day-time only*, and that on a complaint on *oath*. Perhaps to permit a search at night might lead to abuse; but to do away with the oath could not. At

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best it is but an oath of *credulity*, and creates expense and trouble without a single good purpose served.

"Section 13.—This section provides for the disposal of yarns *after* conviction, and so far it is well enough. There are, however, a numerous class of cases, where no sale can take place under the statutes. I allude to the case of embezzled yarn, &c. found on carriers' carts and on board of steam-boats. The most valuable seizures are made from these vehicles of conveyance, and yet there is no way of bringing these materials to sale, as that power under the statute is only granted where a *previous conviction has taken place.* Here no conviction can take place, as neither the carrier nor the master of the vessel are cognizant of the kind of goods conveyed, which, indeed, are seldom addressed to any one, and *never acknowledged.* In many instances yarns of considerable value have been permitted to rot just because no warrant of sale could be obtained. The remedy is so easy as to require no observation.

"Section 14.—In place of fixing the punishment as in this section, I would, as formerly noticed, state the punishment in the section where the crime is declared.

"Section 19.—Here again the complaint on oath is brought into view, and on it the justices are empowered to grant a warrant to apprehend. As already observed, I would abolish the oath altogether, and give the justices the power either to issue a warrant to apprehend, or to cite the offender on a short *inducice*. In some cases apprehension is the best mode of proceeding, but in others it is unnecessary.

"Section 20.—The power of appeal, *which is only given to the accused by this section,* is positively hostile to the ends of justice, in so far as it effectually defeats the warrant of distress. Where a warrant of distress is granted, all the accused has to do is, to take an appeal, and lodge a recognizance by a sufficient cautioner. This it is an easy matter to procure, as he has generally plenty of money, and puts the amount of the penalty into the hands of a responsible acquaintance, who immediately signs the recognizance. *The obligation of the cautioner is discharged by producing the person of the appellant at the appeal court.*

"The appellant thus gains time to dispose of his whole effects; and although the judgment be affirmed at the quarter sessions, the warrant of distress is of no avail, and the delinquent goes to prison, glad to save the penalty by suffering incarceration. The consequence is, that the complainer pays the costs, which average in each case 10*l.*

"Now although I would by no means take away the power of appeal, I would only give that privilege under such conditions as would, in some measure, prevent the consequences alluded to. For this purpose, I would make the cautioner always liable, under his recognizance, to produce the *person of the appellant* at the bar of the appeal court, under the penalty of satisfying the conviction, *and also under the penalty of* 10*l. sterling to defray costs should the judgment* be AFFIRMED. In this way the expenses would be secured; or a more effectual security would be, to make the cautioner liable for the whole penalty in case the judgment was affirmed. This would not prevent appeals, but it would tend to lessen the crime.

"It will further be observed, that this section gives no power of appeal to the complainer, and yet the instances are by no means few where the justices have acquitted a prisoner in the face of the clearest evidence, merely because he did not happen to be notorious as a dealer in such articles, although long known to the fiscal as such. In such cases, if the prosecutor had had a power of appeal, the ultimate issue would have been different. In all and every case the prosecutor should have this privilege.

"Section 21.—A form of conviction which this section provides is at all times inconvenient. The form of Scotch procedure does not require it, as the judgment could easily be made clear and distinct without any *set form,* any deviation from which, by mistake or otherwise, only leads to disputes and after-litigation.

"I have thus briefly adverted to such enactments in the statute as I humbly conceive may be amended with advantage. If the time had permitted, I might have been more minute in the proposed alterations. Should a Bill be brought into Parliament to amend the present law, I may perhaps have an opportunity of seeing it, when I may again trouble you with such remarks as occur to me. I would only suggest, in the meantime, that any Act of Parliament on this subject, as applicable to Scotland, should be couched in the phraseology of the legal practice of that country, and where a mode of diligence is introduced unknown to that practice, that the mode of executing that diligence should be succinctly laid down without (as hitherto) referring to English practice, which is generally unknown.

"I may further observe, that although the alterations suggested would have the effect of making the law work better, I have no confidence that the crime could be put down. The temptation to commit the offences is great, from the profitable nature of the traffic. I am far from certain that any crime is attentively looked after where the statute confers the power of prosecution on any person who chooses to complain, and yet to confide that duty to the procurators fiscal is attended with difficulty, inasmuch as a fund would be required to pay costs. To tax the manufacturers for such a fund might not be agreeable, and any attempt to make the funds of the counties liable would be resisted; while, on the other hand, the Government might object to bear the burthen. It appears clear to me, however, that until some such fund is provided, the traffic can never be put down.

"Maybole, 7 June 1838. "*W. Andrews,*
"Procurator Fiscal."*

From the intimate connexion between the weavers and manufacturers of the north of Ireland with those of the south of Scotland, it may be supposed that

* Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p. 85.

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practices usual in the one country prevail also on the other. And this appears to have been the case at the time when our Assistant Commissioners visited Ireland. Mr. Kennedy, one of the most extensive manufacturers in Belfast, stated it to be his opinion that half, or indeed more, of the goods sold by the warehouses in Belfast for the home-trade were made of embezzled yarn.* Mr. Harling, also a manufacturer, stated that two-thirds of the entire goods sold in the Belfast warehouses for the immediate home-trade were the produce of embezzled weft.† It is unnecessary, however, to dwell on the evidence as to embezzlement in Ireland, as we have reason to believe that it describes a state of things which no longer exists.

At the close of the last session, an Act, for which Ireland is indebted to Mr. Labouchere, the 3d and 4th Vict., cap. 91, was passed, "For the more effectual "prevention of frauds and abuses committed by weavers, sewers, and other persons "employed in the linen, hempen, union, cotton, silk, and woollen manufactures "in Ireland;" and we are informed that it has in a great measure suppressed the receiving, and consequently the theft of manufacturing materials in the north of Ireland. It is to be in force for one year, and from thence to the end of the next session. We recommend that, during the session of 1841, an inquiry be made as to its operation; and if the report be, as we have reason to expect, favourable, that the Act receive such modifications, if any, as may appear advisable, and be made perpetual: and we recommend that, at the same time, a special inquiry be made as to the expediency of legislation on similar principles for England.

In Scotland, however, the evil appears to be far more extensive and more intense than in any part of England, and the existing means of repression to be glaringly deficient. We recommend, therefore, that the attention of the Lord Advocate be immediately directed to the existing state of the law as to the resetting and embezzlement of manufactured goods and materials of manufactures, and that he be requested to frame a bill for its improvement. In the hope of facilitating this labour we annex in our Appendix‡ a copy of the bill prepared for this purpose by the Glasgow committee, whose report we have already quoted. It is the bill alluded to in the 8th and 9th of the queries submitted by the committee to Captain Jeffrey and Captain Miller, the superintendents of police in the gorbals and royalty of Glasgow, and generally approved by both those officers.§

V. Abolition of restrictions on the Irish Linen Manufacture.

A fifth measure, which has been proposed for increasing the demand for hand-loom labour, is the removing obstacles to the free use and circulation of labour. Mr. Otway and Mr. Muggeridge have stated the statutory regulations of the Irish linen trade to be among these obstacles, and have recommended their abolition or modification.‖

Both the Scotch and the Irish linen manufactures grew up under the system of restriction and regulation which the political economy of our ancestors deemed necessary to prevent men from misunderstanding their own interests and misdirecting their own industry. The 13th Geo. I. cap. 26, laid down rules for the manufacture and sale of yarn in Scotland, specifying minutely the material out of which it should be spun, the reel on which it should be wound, and even the number of threads to be contained in every hank. After stating that linen cloth was often made of a length or a breadth for which there was no foreign or home demand, it specified the dimensions to be assigned to each piece. It imposed penalties on every person exposing to sale or buying, or even carrying from place to place, either yarn or linen varying from the prescribed regulations, and gave general powers of searching all places suspected of containing them. It required all linen to be measured and stamped by a public officer before it was exposed to sale, and enabled the crown to create a Board of Trustees, afterwards called the Linen Board, whom it directed to lay down rules for the manufacture and sale of linens and yarns, and to appoint stamp masters and inspectors to carry them into effect. The 24th Geo. II., cap. 31, increased the penalties on the contravention of these restrictions, and facilitated their infliction.

Under these restrictions the linen trade of Scotland struggled on for nearly a century, until at length, in 1823, after many previous unsuccessful attempts, a strong and combined effort was made to shake them off. The Imperial Board of Trade consulted the Linen Board as to the propriety of the proposed change, and a parliamentary paper, entitled "Copy of a Letter relative to the Inspection of

* Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p. 778. † Ibid., p. 785.
§ Appendix p. 131.
‡ Reports from Assistant Commissioners, Vol. I., pp. 91, 92.
‖ Otway. Reports from Assistant Commissioners, Vol. I., p. 643. Muggeridge, ibid., p. 708.

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"Linen and Linen Yarn in Scotland, and Copies of the Documents referred to in "the said Letter," ordered to be printed the 19th of June, 1823, contains the answer of the Linen Board. In that letter the Board state,—

"That the law for nearly a century past has been in operation; that the habits of spinners, weavers, manufacturers, and buyers, have grown up with it, and the manufacture has increased from two millions to thirty millions of yards annually. That before resolving to overthrow or even to disturb a system from which such important benefits have to a certainty arisen, a case of strong and irresistible necessity ought unquestionably to be made out; but the Board, with full means of knowledge, are utter strangers to any such necessity. That the Board cannot help viewing the proposal as unnecessary, impolitic, and dangerous; and are clearly of opinion that the provisions of the 13th Geo. I. and 24th Geo. II. have been framed with great wisdom and a thorough knowledge of the subject, and are just as necessary now as they ever were."

The Legislature, however, were unmoved by the fears and the arguments of the Linen Board. The statutory restrictions and regulations were all swept away, and the result enables us to estimate their value. That result is, that the manufacture which, during its fettered state, took nearly a century to increase from two millions of yards to thirty millions, rose, when unfettered, in less than 17 years from thirty millions to above sixty millions, the annual exportation from the single port of Dundee having for some years past exceeded sixty millions of yards.

The Irish Linen Board preceded that of Scotland, having been established in pursuance of the 9th Anne, cap. 3. We shall not enumerate the numerous Acts, now repealed, by which the manufacture and sale in Ireland of yarn and linen were restricted, but proceed at once to the 5th and 6th Wm. IV. cap. 27, the Act now in force. The principal provisions of this Act, so far as it relates to the question now before us, are these:—It requires all flax, sold or exposed for sale in any open fair or market, to be of uniform quality throughout each parcel. It requires that (with the exception of millspun yarn) all brown linen yarn sold in open market or fair in Ireland shall be of uniform quality and made into hanks, each hank containing 12 cuts and *no more*, and each cut 120 threads and *no more*, and that every hank be one yard and a quarter in length and two yards and a half in circumference. It forbids the sale in open fair or market of any brown linen cloth which shall not be of uniform quality, or to which any material rendering it more difficult to bleach, or tending to deceive the purchaser, shall have been applied, or which, being of the denomination yard wide, shall not be 37½ inches broad at least, or of the denomination of three-quarters wide which shall not be 28 inches broad at least, and so on as respects the other denominations. All these prohibitions are enforced by fines. It then provides for the appointment or continuance in office in every county of seal-masters and inspectors.

The duty of the seal-master is carefully to view, examine, and measure every piece of brown linen which shall be tendered to him; and, if it shall appear to him to be merchantable and agreeable to the directions of the Act, to seal it and mark on it its length and breadth. He is entitled to 1*d.* for every 25 yards which he seals, and is liable to damages on the part of the buyer if any piece vary in quantity or quality from his certificate. And it is enacted that, under a penalty of 5*s.* per piece, no person shall in open market or fair sell or expose to sale, or buy or agree to buy, any brown linen which shall not have been previously sealed in manner directed by the Act.

The duty of the inspector is to examine all brown linen, linen yarn or flax exposed to sale in the market or fair to which he is appointed, and to seize any that may not be conformable to the regulations of the Act.

We add the statements of Mr. Otway and Mr. Muggeridge as to the working of of the Act:—

Mr. Otway.

Mr. Otway.

"Most numerous are the frauds practised on and by the seal-masters. The weavers often underlap the web, efface the seal and the mark of the price at which it was sold, and offer it to other buyers; they also endeavour to stretch the cloth after it is sold, and often injure and tear the web in the effort to do so. Cloth, thus stretched, shrinks again; and after the buyer brings it home he finds it is short of the quantity marked on it; he then summons the inspector of linens; he again summons the seal-master, who then endeavours to recover from the weaver, but is often baffled by the circumstance of the weaver's giving fictitious names. The income of the inspector arises from the fines of the seal-master; he has a direct interest in the continuance of this injurious system of litigation, and is exposed to the constant temptation of a compromise with the seal-master. Nothing can be more injurious than the whole system

* Muggeridge. Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p. 695.

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The seal-masters and inspector not only are a tax on the weaver, who pays so much for the marking of the web, but they prevent the buyer from using that circumspection which all purchasers should use. The system holds out not only temptations to fraud to the weavers but to the seal-masters, who are generally also weavers and sellers of cloth in the market. There seems to have been no care whatever bestowed on their selection.

"A seal-master, if he followed the provisions of the Linen Act, could not seal and measure more than 10 webs between the time the webs come in and the hour appointed for the sale to commence, 10 o'clock. For the sealing of each web of 25 yards long the seal-master is entitled to 1*d.* In order to obtain as many pence as he can within the limited time, he evades the duties imposed by the Act, and only measures the breadth of the web, which is done in an instant, and then seals it. The web is thus offered for sale without any real protection from fraud to the buyer. After each web is sold it is returned to the seller, who has the custody of it until four o'clock, the hour for delivery and payment. During this interval the seller brings the web back to the seal-master, in order to get it measured, examined, and sealed at both ends. Had this process taken place before it was exposed for sale, and if the buyer, after the agreement for sale, did not return the cloth to the weaver, much of the fraud and inconvenience which now take place would be obviated.

"I should earnestly recommend the abolition of both seal-masters, inspectors, and trustees, and the leaving of the market open for the buyer and seller to arrange their own bargains as their mutual interest would point out."*

Mr. Muggeridge.

Mr. Muggeridge.

"The uniform and invariable practice in Ireland, in all the markets I attended, is not to measure the length of a piece before it is offered in the market, but to affix the seal to it previously; and when it is sold, then, and not before, it is measured, and the length marked on it in figures, and paid for accordingly. It should be stated that this deviation from the letter and spirit of the Act is said to be made solely in reference to the feelings and interests of the weaver, whose cloth, if subjected to the rumpling and tumbling consequent on its being measured, would present a less attractive shape or appearance in the eyes of the buyer. Dr. Boyd, the seal-master of Coleraine, told me that any attempt to measure the webs before their sale 'would produce a revolution among the weavers.'

"The result of all this parade of official measurement is precisely this:—The bleacher or merchant having bought a piece of linen in a public market pays for it, at a place appointed by him for the purpose, in the afternoon of the market day, according to the number of yards it contains, as attested by the seal-master's stamp, the actual measurement being very frequently dispensed with. When he gets it home, he almost invariably measures it on his own premises. He finds, perhaps, it is a quarter of a yard less than stamped, and, according to the Act of Parliament, he comes on the seal-master for the full value of the loss sustained, which, however, is never estimated at less than the price of a yard. This he receives. The seal-master then calls on his deputy, or measurer, to reimburse him the amount he has been called on to pay; the seal-masters generally hiring men to measure for them at so much per day, and making it a condition that they shall pay any claims made upon their employer for over measurement. The measurer, in his turn, falls upon the weaver who made the web, and makes him refund the deficiency; a refusal of which would, it was stated, invariably lead to future close measurement of the webs subsequently presented for sealing.

"Thus it frequently happens, that the poor weaver, who has actually paid a public officer for measuring his web, finds that, three weeks or a month after he has sold it,—parted with it, and received payment for it,—he is compelled to refund a certain sum, on the plea that it is not the length which the public officer has duly certified it to be, and for which certificate or seal he had previously paid a fee. These are cases, it was alleged, of almost constant occurrence, and always regarded as of hardship or oppression. It was also urged, that if at the bleach-green the deficiency in the stated length turned out to be but one inch, which a web might 'creep in,' either from the heat of the atmosphere, or from being placed in a peculiarly dry room or warehouse, the general practice was to deduct the price of a yard; but extend what it would over the measurement, no extra payment was ever made.

"The surveillance of the seal-master, incomplete and inefficient as I have shown it to be, extends only, it must be remembered, over such pieces of linen "as are exposed for sale in open fair or market." The proportion of the linen manufactured in Ireland so 'exposed for sale in open fair or market,' is every day decreasing. The bulk of the trade has fallen into the hands of manufacturers employing weavers, and their transactions being conducted mostly through private sale, do not come within the jurisdiction of the seal-master; and if they did, it would probably be found that the manufacturer was his own seal-master, and combined both characters in his own person.

"Many of the trade, apart from the merely operative weaver, who is the seller, urge that the office of seal-master is one of great protection to buyers; and unquestionably, to those who are too indolent, or, as was formerly alleged, 'whose time is too valuable' to be taken up with ascertaining the quality of the material they are purchasing,—to such persons the office may be of advantage; and no doubt if every man, be his calling what it may, who went to make a purchase of any article, could have its exact quality and quantity previously tested by an experienced public officer, without any cost to him, many dear or bad bargains might be avoided. But inasmuch as this is not the case, and in all other commercial or trading transactions, men are left to the exercise of their own skill and discernment,—or, if they seek other

* Otway. Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p. 643.

opinions, as a man buying a horse frequently employs a veterinary surgeon, they are called on to pay for them,—I cannot discern either reason or justice for compelling the poor hand-loom linen weaver to pay, by statute, the salary of an officer whose advantage, if any, must be to the buyer, and to his detriment as the seller.

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"*Regarding therefore the nature of the office of seal-master, the mode in which its duties are ordinarily performed, the want of uniformity of system in the number, responsibility, and character of the appointments, and the altered position of, and manner of carrying on the linen manufacture, since the period of the creation of these officers, I recommend that the office of seal-master be abolished.*

Mr. Muggeridge.

"The next class of officers under the Linen Act, of whose position and duties it is desirable to take a brief survey, are the 'inspectors of brown linen, and linen yarn and flax markets.'

"The office of inspector was always viewed with favour by all, save the dishonest portion of the trade, but by singular infelicity the statute appointing them also provided, that 'it shall not be lawful to impose any fine, charge, or impost whatsoever for the remuneration or emolument of such inspector.'

"The linen committees attempted to get over this obstacle in the Act, by appointing inspectors, with a private understanding, that they should not be called upon to pay over any fines they might succeed in levying, but retain them as remuneration for their services and trouble. On these conditions many respectable persons undertook the office, and, in almost every instance, the most advantageous results are stated to have followed.

"It will be obvious to the Board, that just in the degree, however, in which the efficiency of the inspector raised the character of a market, and rendered less frequent the attempts at fraud, did he lessen his own income, by the comparative decrease of the number of fines he was enabled to levy. Whenever a market became perfectly honest, he was deprived of all remuneration, because there was nothing for him to seize or fine. This result was actually produced in almost every instance in which the inspector was really a zealous and active officer; and in consequence the office of inspector has, in such places, fallen into desuetude.

"I am perfectly satisfied of the inefficiency of the present arrangements on this subject, and of the great distinction existing in the degree of surveillance exercised over the manufacture in the various linen markets throughout the country. In some few, there is yet, perhaps, adequate inspection. In others, it is less perfect; and in many more, there is none at all. It is unquestionably desirable that an uniform system should be adopted: and this, I think, could in no way be so effectually secured as by taking away the appointments from the county committees, many of which are acting at variance with each other, and placing them in the hands of an officer, to whom, when appointed, they should be responsible, and who should himself be made responsible to higher authority.

"In the consideration of this subject, it should, however, be borne in mind, that every year renders the necessity of any such appointments less and less imperative. As regards the yarn markets, where the services of an efficient inspector would be the most beneficially exercised, the quantities of hand-spun yarn offered for sale are rapidly diminishing, and giving place fast to the mill-spun yarn, against which there are no complaints of deficiency in count or length, and consequently no call for, or need of inspection.

"Again, the quantity of cloth 'exposed for sale in public market,' and which alone comes under the cognizance of an inspector, is as rapidly decreasing, generally speaking, as the hand-spun yarn, under the widely extending system, now so prevalent, of manufacturers giving out materials to be woven for them, which they dispose of, when finished, in their own lapping-rooms or counting-houses, and which very rarely finds its way into the public market.

"This system, and the use of mill-spun yarn, are both so obviously politic and desirable, that I have little doubt that, at no distant day, we shall find the linen manufacture conducted in no other manner, and no necessity existing for any inspectors. At the same time, as many prejudices, and many erroneous views of self-interest, may retard some few years longer this impending result, and as the present plan of inspection is not only inefficacious, but absolutely partial and pernicious, I feel its abolition to be so desirable, that, if it could not be procured on easier terms, *I would recommend that Her Majesty, under the royal sign manual, be empowered to appoint a proper person to be Inspector-General of yarn and linen markets in Ireland, and that such person be authorized to appoint inspectors for counties or districts, or places; the whole to hold office during pleasure, and to be remunerated by fixed salaries.*

"There are 49 markets in the province of Ulster, and not as many more in the remaining provinces. If the average cost of inspection of each market was 40*l.*, which would, I should suppose, be ample, the total annual charge of such an arrangement throughout Ireland, including the salary of the inspector-general, would not exceed 5,000*l.*

"It would be for consideration whether the inspectors should, as is the present custom, retain the amount of fines they levy, or any and what proportion of them. These would necessarily vary very much in amount. The fines levied by the linen inspectors of the county of Derry I found to be, from 1829 to 1838, 592*l.* 19*s.* 2*d.*, giving an annual average of about 65*l.* Those levied in the markets of Moneymore and Magherafelt, for three years amounted to 90*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.*; the Kilrea market, for the same time, 73*l.* 10*s.* 6*d.*; but these afford no criterion whatever of what would be the sum levied under more efficient control and inspection.

"There are other duties, apart from mere inspection, which might, with great advantage to the trade, be required of the inspectors, if persons of character and responsibility."*

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* Muggeridge. Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p. 699.

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It will be seen that both Mr. Otway and Mr. Muggeridge recommend the abolition of sealing, and that Mr. Otway recommends the removal of all restrictions, and that the sale and manufacture of yarn and linen be allowed perfect liberty. Mr. Muggeridge recommends that either the office and the duties of the inspector be abolished, or that the appointment be vested in the crown, and the duties remunerated by salary: and he has added to his report the draft of a bill for carrying this change, and some others, into effect. But he adds—

"I must disclaim being regarded as following the bent of my personal opinions or impressions. These would lead me simply and unequivocally to urge the entire repeal of the Act regulating the linen manufacture of Ireland, and to leave the manufacture of that country to the same freedom from legislative restraint enjoyed by the rival manufactures of England and Scotland, and which, in the case of the latter especially, I have shown to have been conducive to such advantageous results."*

Our own inquiries lead us to the same conclusion, and we recommend therefore that the enactments 5 and 6 W. IV. cap. 27, requiring the linen yarn and cloth exposed to sale in open fair or market in Ireland to have certain given qualities, be repealed, and that the offices of seal-master and inspector be abolished.

VI. Releasing work-people from the tyranny of combinations.

We now proceed to a far more serious obstacle to the free use and circulation of labour, that created by combinations among workmen, an obstacle which we have already described as more mischievous than any other in its immediate, and more formidable in its ultimate, effects. We shall preface our suggestions for the improvement of the law respecting combinations by a short statement—first, of the principles on which, we believe, that any legislation on that subject ought to be founded; and secondly, of the manner in which it has been dealt with by the law of England.

We believe that the property of the working man in his strength and skill is as real, and ought to be as much respected by the law as any other property which the law recognizes.

We believe that the right of the working man to employ that property in the way which he considers most for his interest, so far as he does not interfere with the exercise of a like free will on the part of another, is a right as sacred as any right for the protection of which laws are maintained.

We believe, therefore, that it is the duty of the state to protect that property and that right, and that it may be guilty of a breach of duty by acts of commission or of omission. By acts of omission, if it does not protect the labourer from injury on the part of those who assume to dictate to him what he shall do and what he shall not do; by acts of commission, if it assume itself to dictate to him, and to force him to pursue or to abandon a given proceeding, not on the ground that he is interfering with the free will of another, but because his conduct may be detrimental to himself, or to his master, or to the general wealth of the society. We believe in short that in this, as in almost every other matter, the duty of the government is simply to keep the peace, to protect all its subjects from the violence, and fraud, and malice, of one another, and having done so, to leave them to pursue what they believe to be their interests in the way which they deem advisable.

The following outline of the law of England as respects combinations will show that we have been guilty of both these errors; that we have attempted to do much that was unjustifiable, and have left undone, and now leave undone, almost all that we ought to do.

The common law of England considers all conspiracies as misdemeanours, and on indictment and conviction by a jury as punishable by fine and imprisonment, and by the further liability to give sureties at the discretion of the court for the future good behaviour of the criminal. And it includes, under the general head of conspiracy, all confederacies where either the purpose or the means are unlawful, whether the object be to effect a lawful purpose by unlawful means, or an unlawful purpose by any means whatever; and according to high legal authority, all confederacies to prejudice a third person.† The law allowed any labourer, not being a villein, to refuse to work more than a certain time, or for less than a certain rate of payment, or on any other conditions which he thought fit to require;‡ and it allowed the master to impose what conditions he thought proper; but the instant the labourers or the masters attempted to make common cause,§ the instant

* Muggeridge. Assistant Commissioners' Reports, Vol. I., p. 708.

† Rex *v.* Journeymen Taylors of Cambridge, 8 Mod. 11. Rex *v.* De Berenger, 3 M. and S. 67. Rex *v.* Fowler, 1 Earl, P. C., cap. 11, s. 11. 1 Hawkins, P. C., cap. 72, s. 2. Clifford *v.* Brandon, 2 Campbell, 369, Rex *v.* Eccles, 13 East 230, in notes. Regina *v.* Best, Lord Raymond, 1167 S. C. 1 Salk. 174.

‡ 8 Mod. 11, *ubi supra*. Rex *v.* Morley and others, 6 T. R., 636.

§ Rex *v.* Parsons, 1 W. Blackstone, 392.

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the members of either body agreed to support one another in their requisitions, the law held the purpose of the agreement to be prejudicial to third persons, or injurious to trade in general, and therefore an unlawful agreement, or, in other words, a conspiracy, and therefore a misdemeanour, and the parties engaged in it might be indicted either as having conspired among themselves, or together with other parties unknown. It did not matter whether the acts by which the objects of the agreement were to be effected were or were not in themselves unlawful. The crime consisted in the agreement itself, and an indictment might be sustained by simply proving the agreement, without showing that a single act had been done to carry it into effect, or by proving various acts done by the parties tending to one common end, from which a common design, and an agreement to effect that design might be inferred. In the indictments at common law accordingly there are found general charges of conspiracy to raise the wages or to shorten the hours of labour of the confederates or of others, or to dictate to their employers the mode of carrying on their business, and, in other counts, in the same indictment, are found more detailed charges of conspiracy evidenced by simultaneous refusals to work, by solicitations of others to join in the conspiracy, or to form distinct conspiracies, by subscriptions, or by solicitations of subscriptions, or by other acts innocent in themselves, but considered proofs of an illegal agreement; and other counts are added, charging the parties with acts illegal not only in their purpose but in themselves, such as assaults, riots, or the exciting others to commit breaches of the peace.*

Proceeding on questionable grounds of public convenience, the common law erected into crimes acts in themselves perfectly innocent, and subjected acts really criminal to punishment on account not so much of their own qualities, as of the purposes to which they were subservient. It was oppressive, and, like all oppressive laws, demoralizing; men's ideas of right and wrong were confounded, when they were told that each man's separate attempt to raise his own wages was blameless, but that any concerted effort was a crime; that a mere agreement to make such an effort was a crime, and that an assault or a riot exposed its actors to far severer punishment when used as evidence of a combination to raise wages, than when regarded as merely endangering the persons and property of their fellow-subjects.

But the law was not only oppressive, but ineffectual; not in its description of the offence, or in the evidence which it required,—in these respects it was comprehensive and manageable,—but in its mode of procedure. That was the dilatory, expensive, and troublesome process of indictment, a proceeding generally felt even by those who have leisure enough, and funds enough to be able to resort to it, to be a greater evil than submission to the conduct which it might enable them to punish.

We shall not attempt to trace the progress of the statute law on combination. The titles of the different acts on this subject will be found in the first section of the 5 Geo. III. cap. 95, where their mere enumeration occupies six pages. Most of them are confined to particular places or particular trades. One of the most important was the 12 Geo. I. cap. 34. It was intended to protect the woollen manufacture against combinations among weavers, and after declaring, in accordance with the common law, all agreements by societies of weavers or others for regulating prices, advancing wages, or lessening hours of work to be illegal, it subjects all persons entering into such agreements, or attempting to put them in force, to imprisonment and hard labour for not exceeding three months, on conviction, not, as at common law through an indictment, but *on summary process before two justices*. The assaulting or abusing masters for non-compliance with rules attempted to be imposed on them by the men, or the sending threatening letters to them, was made a felony punishable by seven years' transportation.

The 22 Geo. II. cap. 12, extends the provisions of this Act to persons employed in the manufacture of hats, silk, mohair, fur, hemp, flax, linen, cotton, fustian, iron, and leather.

The great statute against combinations was the 39 & 40 Geo. III. cap. 106, which extends to workmen engaged in every manufacture. It contains, like the previous Act of Geo. I., a declaration of the illegality of all agreements (except of course between masters and their own workmen) for raising wages, lessening labour, preventing masters from employing whom they pleased, or "for controlling the conduct, or in any way affecting any person carrying on any manufacture or business in the conduct or management thereof." It punishes workmen parties to any such agree-

* See printed precedents of indictments in the Crown Circuit Companion, 127—134. Indictment against Journeymen Leather-dressers, 4 Wentworth, 100; against Smiths, ibid. 113; against Labouring curriers, ibid. 120; against Lamplighters, 6 Wentworth, 375; against Wheelmakers, 3 Chitty, Crim. Law, 1163; against Serge-makers, ibid. 1166; against Weavers, ibid. 1167; against Rope-makers, ibid. 1170; and see 2 Chitty, Crim. Law, 506; Rex *v.* Philips, 6 East, 464.

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ment, or endeavouring to carry it into effect, or attempting to prevent others from taking employment, or inducing them to quit it, controlling masters in engaging men, or, without reasonable cause, refusing to work with any other workman, attending meetings for such purposes, or inducing others by summons or intimidation or persuasion to attend such meetings, with imprisonment for three months on summary conviction before two justices. It declares contributions to such purposes forfeited, and imposes fines on all persons contributing or collecting contributions. Combinations among masters are declared equally illegal.

This was the last English Act directed against combinations, before the great alteration of the combination laws in 1824, and it appears, probably in consequence of the facility afforded by the powers of summary conviction, to have rendered the common law remedy by indictment almost obsolete. It did not, however, oppose combinations with much success, for they increased, both in extent and in violence during the 24 years that the 39 & 40 Geo. III. was in force, more rapidly than during any previous period. At length in 1824, Mr. Hume obtained a Committee to inquire, among other things, "into the state of the law and its effects, so far as relates to the combination of workmen and others to raise wages, or to regulate their wages and hours of working." The Committee sat for three months, and collected much valuable evidence; the result of which they embodied in eleven resolutions, of which the following are the most material:—

"That the laws have not only not been efficient to prevent combinations, but have had a tendency to produce mutual irritation and distrust, to give a violent character to combinations, and to render them highly dangerous.

"That the statutes which interfere as to the rate of wages or hours of labour between masters and workmen should be repealed, and that the common law under which a peaceable meeting of masters or workmen may be prosecuted as a conspiracy, should be altered.

"That it is absolutely necessary to enact a law which may efficiently, and by summary process, punish either workmen or masters, who, by intimidation or violence, interfere with the perfect freedom which ought to be allowed to each party of employing his labour or capital in the manner he may deem most advantageous."

In pursuance of these resolutions, the 5 Geo. IV. cap. 95, was passed.

The first section repeals all the existing statute law on combination.

The second section alters the common law, by enacting, that persons combining to advance or fix wages, or alter hours or quantity of work, or to induce others to quit their service or return their work, or combining, not being hired to refuse to work, or to regulate the management of any business, shall not be subject to any punishment at common or statute law.

"The fifth section enacts, That if any person, *by violence to the person or property, by threats or by intimidation,* shall wilfully or maliciously force another to depart from his hiring or work before the end of the term for which he is hired, or return his work before the same shall be finished, or damnify, or destroy any machinery or work, or prevent any person not being hired from accepting any work or employment; or if any person shall wilfully or maliciously *employ violence to the person or property, threats or intimidation towards another,* on account of his not complying with or conforming to any rules or regulations made to obtain an advance of wages, or to alter the hours of working, or to decrease the quantity of work, or to regulate the mode of carrying on any business, or the management thereof; or if any person, *by violence to the person or property, by threats or by intimidation,* shall wilfully or maliciously force any master or manufacturer, or his foreman or agent, to make any alteration in their mode of regulating, managing, conducting, or carrying on their manufacture, trade, or business—every person so offending, or causing, procuring, aiding, abetting, or assisting in such offence, being convicted thereof in manner hereafter mentioned, shall be imprisoned only, or imprisoned and kept to hard labour, for any time not exceeding two calendar months."

The 6th section repeats the 5th, with the insertion of the word *combine*, thus—"If any person shall *combine*, and by violence, &c., force another, &c."

The intention of this section is not clear: it does not make the *combination* the offence, nor does it alter the punishment.

A summary mode of procedure before two justices, and powers of conviction on confession or proof on oath by two witnesses are then given, and it is further enacted, that no appeal shall be allowed against any conviction under the Act; but no master, or the father or son of any master, in *any* trade or manufacture, can act as justice under the Act.

The Act of 1824 cannot be said to have had a fair trial, for it was not allowed to continue in force for a single year. At the beginning of the very next session the House of Commons appointed a Committee "to inquire into the effects of the

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5 Geo. IV., and to report how far it might be necessary to repeal or amend that Act."

In the Report the Committee state "the existence of a system of combination directed to purposes highly prejudicial, and supported by insult, intimidation, and the most atrocious crimes." "At this moment," they say, "the greater part of the manufacturing labour of the kingdom may be said to be under the dominion of the committees of the respective associations, which are themselves under the influence of agitators, who dispose and govern it according to their will, deriving power and importance from the dissensions which they foment, and after subverting the natural relation between the employers and the employed, are rashly urging the destruction of trade itself, reckless of the individual misery, the crimes, and public calamities by which it must be attended." They enumerate, among the means practised to effect intimidation and submission to the regulations of the combined workmen, "warnings, threats, assaults, and the infliction of the most cruel injuries by throwing vitriol, deeply concerted attempts to assassinate, and, as far as intention went, the perpetration of actual assassination, for which conviction has been obtained."

They add "that they have been deterred in some instances from pressing their inquiries, lest they should lead to some suspicion of the quarters from which information had been derived, and place in jeopardy the lives of the individuals on whom the suspicion of having given it might fall."

The result of this Report was the 6 Geo. IV. c. 129, the Act now in force respecting combinations.

That Act, after reciting that the provisions of the 5 Geo. IV. had not been found effectual, "That combinations are injurious to trade and commerce, dangerous to the tranquillity of the country, and especially prejudicial to the interests of all who are concerned in them;" and that it is "expedient to make further provision, as well for the security and personal freedom of individual workmen in the disposal of their skill and labour, as for the security of the property and persons of masters and employers," by its first section repeals the 6 Geo. IV.

The second section repeats the repeal of the previous statute law on combinations.

The result of these two sections would have been simply to revive the common law on combinations, in its wide and, as we think, oppressive extent, but also with its inconvenient procedure.

The third section therefore subjects certain acts, nearly the same as those punishable by the 5 Geo. IV., to summary punishment. As it is the law now in force, we extract it. It enacts that—

"If any person shall by violence to the person or property, or by threats or intimidation, *or by molesting or in any way obstructing another, force or endeavour to force* any person to depart from his hiring, employment, or work, or to return his work before the same shall be finished, *or prevent or endeavour to prevent any* person not being hired or employed from accepting work or employment; or if any person shall use or employ violence to the person or property of another, or threats or intimidation, *or shall molest or in any way obstruct another for the purpose of forcing or inducing such person to belong to any club or association, or to contribute to any common fund, or to pay any fine or penalty, or on account of his not belonging to any particular club or association, or not having contributed or having refused to contribute to any common fund, or to pay any fine or penalty, or* on account of his not having complied or of his refusing to comply with any rules or regulations made to obtain an advance of wages, or to alter the hours of working, or to alter the quantity of work, or to regulate the mode of carrying on any business, or the management thereof; or if any person shall by violence to the person or property of another, or by threats or intimidation, *or by molesting or in any way obstructing another,* force *or endeavour to force* any manufacturer or person carrying on any business, to make any alteration in his mode of regulating, managing, conducting, or carrying on such manufacture or business, *or to limit the number of his apprentices, or the number or description of his journeymen, workmen, or servants;* every person so offending, or aiding, abetting, or assisting therein, being convicted thereof in manner herein-after mentioned, shall be imprisoned only, or shall and may be imprisoned and kept to hard labour, for any time not exceeding *three* calendar months."

We have printed in Italics the new matter contained in this clause.

The fourth and fifth sections exempt from punishment at common law persons meeting for the *sole* purpose of determining the wages which the persons *present at such meeting* shall demand or pay, or the hours or time of working, and also persons entering into an agreement, verbal or written, *among themselves*, as to the wages which they shall demand or pay, or the hours or times of working.

By the seventh section justices of the peace, on information on oath, may summon a person charged with an offence under the Act, or, if they think fit, issue a warrant, without previous summons, for his apprehension, and on his appearing, or on *proof*

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of his absconding, may convict him, on confession or on the oath of *one* or more witness.

The 12th section gives to every person convicted under the Act an appeal to the quarter sessions, and directs the execution of the judgment to be suspended, on his own recognizance, with that of two sureties in 10*l.* for the prosecution of the appeal.

The 13th section enacts that no justice, being also a master in the particular trade or manufacture, corncerning which an offence is charged, shall act as justice under the Act. The previous Act extended (as we have seen) the prohibition to all masters in any trade or manufacture, and the father or son of any master.

A form of conviction is added, in which the *name* of the person convicted must be inserted.

We have already stated that the 6 Geo. IV. has revived the common law against combinations, with this exception, namely, that it exempts from punishment persons meeting to determine the wages or hours of work which the persons present at the meeting shall require or give, or entering into an agreement among themselves for such purposes.

All other combinations or agreements to the prejudice of third persons are still conspiracies, and on indictment, punishable at the discretion of the court by fine and imprisonment, to which, in the case of an assault in furtherance of a combination to raise wages, the court can, under the 9 Geo. IV. cap. 31, sec. 25, add hard labour for any term not exceeding two years.

We are inclined to believe that the state of the law in this respect is not generally known. It seems to be supposed that combinations are not punishable unless accompanied by violence, intimidation, or molestation. This is true as respects the statutory punishment, but not as respects the far heavier punishment awarded by the common law. All meetings or agreements whatever for the purpose of affecting the wages or hours of work of persons not present at the meeting, or parties to the agreement, are conspiracies. So are all agreements for controlling a master in the management of his business, in the persons whom he shall employ, or the machinery which he shall use. So of course are all agreements not to work in company with any given person, or to persuade other persons to leave their employment, or not to engage themselves. In fact there is scarcely an act performed by any workman as member of a trades' union, which is not an act of conspiracy and a misdemeanour.

The material points, besides the re-introduction of the common law, in which the 6 Geo. IV. differs from the 5 Geo. IV., are the extension in some measure of the statutory offence, by the omission of the words *wilfully or maliciously*, as necessary characteristics of the offence, making "the *endeavour to force*" punishable, adding to the prohibited *means* "*molestation and obstruction*," and to prohibited *ends*, the forcing persons to belong to a club or association, or to contribute to a fund; increasing the punishment from two months' imprisonment to three, and enabling a conviction on the oath of a single witness, and also on proof the person charged is absconding.

But it gave to the party convicted an appeal to the quarter sessions, and directed the execution of the judgment to be in the mean time suspended.

More than 15 years have now elapsed since the 6 Geo. IV. was passed. A time sufficient to show how far the provisions of that Act have affected the recommendation of the Committee, "That the most effectual security be taken that legislative enactment can afford that, in becoming parties to any associations, individuals be left to act under the impulse of their own free will alone; and that those who wish to abstain from them should be enabled to do so, and continue their service or engage their industry on whatever terms or to whatever master they may choose, in perfect security against molestation, insult, or personal danger of any sort whatever."

A general opinion that this purpose had not been effected, occasioned, in 1838, the appointment, by the House of Commons, of a Select Committee to inquire into the "operation of the 6 Geo. IV., and generally into the constitution, proceedings, and extent of any Trades' Unions, or combinations of workmen, or employers of workmen in the United Kingdom, and to report their observations thereon to the House."

The inquiries of this Committee were directed almost exclusively to Ireland and Scotland, and even in those countries scarcely extended beyond Dublin, Belfast,

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and Glasgow. And, as unfortunately has often of late been the case with Committees of the House of Commons, they were unwilling or unable to perform that part of their duty, which consisted in observing on the evidence, but separated without a Report. The evidence, however, is printed, and enables us to judge how far, in the places to which the inquiries of the Committee extended, the 6 Geo. IV. has succeeded in giving freedom to the workmen. But, as we have already stated, England was almost excluded from the inquiry, only four witnesses connected with that country having been examined, Mr. Foster, the stipendiary magistrate of Manchester, and Doherty, M'Williams and Arrowsmith, who, as working cotton-spinners, took an active part in the great strike in Manchester in 1829.

The three last mentioned witnesses affirmed, that at the time when they were speaking, that is, in the summer of 1838, labour was free in Manchester, and that a person who chose to make his own bargain with his employer might do so without fear of injury or annoyance. It is impossible, however, to read their evidence without feeling that they came forward to defend a system, in the promotion of which they had been long and actively engaged. And it must be remarked, that their evidence contains admissions somewhat inconsistent with its general tendency. Thus, W. Arrowsmith says, that when men have been found to misrepresent their master, "We give the men a reprimand, and will not allow them to make any resistance." (3773.) Doherty, that if the men complain of any grievance, their statement is inquired into, "and if not correct, the men are ordered to continue their work." (3401.) And he mentions an instance, in which, after several discussions in the ruling committee, the men at a particular mill "were ordered back to their work." (3417.) He admits, that if the strike of 1829 had continued longer, it probably would have manifested itself in violence and bloodshed. (3418-19-20.) He admits, that if a man were found working at an under price, an appeal would be made to the combination to know whether something could not be done to stop it. (3488.) He is asked whether men who belong to the union associate with those who not? and answers, Yes; but when pressed by the further question, "Do they walk with them or *converse* with them?" he is forced to reply, "No. I think it is very rare." (3609, 3610.)

Mr. Foster's evidence, though expressed in very guarded terms, is more explicit. We will extract some of its more material passages:—

Mr. Foster.

"3219. Were you acting officially, as a magistrate, in the year 1829?—I was; I was appointed in the year 1825.

"3220. Can you state any instances of violence that occurred in that year?—There were about that period several cases of partial violence, arising out of obstructions thrown in the way of new hands going to their work, in the place of those who had turned out.

"3221. Will you explain what you mean precisely by 'partial?'—I mean there was no general disturbance or riot.

"3222. No bloodshed?—No.

"3223. No beating?—There were many instances of assaults committed on workmen who had been engaged in the place of those who had turned out.

"3224. So as to endanger life or limb?—I believe not so as to endanger life; there have been some very serious assaults.

"3225. Were those cases brought before you?—Some of them were.

"3226. Did they appear to be acts of deliberate assault, or of violence arising out of a row?—In general, I should say, not acts of deliberate assault, but arising from the determination of one party to go to their work, and of the other party to prevent it if they could.

"3227. And then a general row?—Sometimes; there were also instances in which parties were followed to their own homes, and assaults deliberately committed upon them; but I should say those formed a small portion of the assaults which took place.

"3229. Did these assaults prevent the knobsticks from persevering?—In many instances it made it very difficult, and in some instances the master stated it was quite impossible for them to replace the old hands with new hands. In 1833 also, there were several instances of similar breaches of the peace.

"3230. That was another period?—Yes; there was a considerable number of cases brought to the sessions in 1833, and also in 1834.

"3259. I collect that it is your opinion, with the opportunities of a knowledge of the facts you have, that the freedom of individual labour is not interfered with by combination in Manchester?—I cannot say that; the system which has prevailed, where there has been a strike, of watching the parties employed at particular mills, has undoubtedly had the effect of deterring parties, not only by means of persuasion, but also of intimidation, from working.

"3260. Then, on the contrary, your opinion is, that the freedom of individual labour has been interfered with?—In that way.

"3261. That is by persuasion, which can hardly be said to interfere with individual freedom, and by intimidation, which certainly does interfere with it?—Exactly.

"3262. But that intimidation has never, to your knowledge, been worked out to the extent

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of violence to the parties?—There have been many cases of assaults which have been clearly connected with the determination to prevent the new hands being employed where the old ones had turned out.

"3263. To work out the system of intimidation?—Yes; that was the object of it.

"3264. Then to that extent, free labour has been interfered with in Manchester by intimidation; all these measures necessarily implying intimidation, and actual intimidation, by the assaults that took place?—*There have been cases of assault, as I have stated, but free labour has been more generally interfered with by the general intimidation which parties are under by seeing that the mills are watched from morning to night, and by their apprehensions that personal violence may be offered to them.*"

This evidence we think establishes that, even in Manchester, labour is not substantially free, and all the information that we have received leads to the belief that in most of the manufacturing districts the workman who resists a combination exposes himself to equal or to still greater danger and insult. As a proof of this, we may refer to the evidence collected by our Assistant Commissioners, particularly to Dr. Mitchell's account of the combinations in Norwich, which we have already inserted, *ante*, p. 32, and to that given in the Report of the Constabulary Commissioners. A portion of the evidence of Mr. Henry Ashworth, one of the most eminent manufacturers in Lancashire, is so instructive that we venture to extract it:—

Mr. Ashworth.

"The operative spinners, about 40 of the men, turned out in 1830, and thereby threw out of employment about ten times their own number, chiefly women, children, and young persons, who had not the slightest interest in the dispute.

"The dispute, such as it was, scarcely deserved to be called a pecuniary one, inasmuch as the sum was less than 2*d.* per spinner per week upon wages averaging above 30*s.* per week. The fact was, we refused to lay aside our accustomed mode of reckoning and adopt one which was proposed to us from the union.

"Our works being at a stand, we advertised for other spinners, and they soon began to throng to the mill from distant places, but chiefly from Manchester, where a strike had recently terminated, leaving many of them unemployed.

"The roads for many miles around our mill were piqueted by relays of unionists, who paraded night and day, and being armed with large sticks and other weapons they deterred every person who attempted to pass if he had the resemblance of a spinner; and on one or two occasions they stopped the public coaches on the road from Manchester, examined the passengers, selected those whom they conceived to be spinners, and drove them back to Manchester, using great violence in many cases: yet, amidst all this confusion, we were unable to establish a single case of assault against any one, no constables being at hand, and the public not daring to face the odium of interference.

"Our mills and premises are situated at the junction of three townships, to all of which we pay the police rates. We sought the protection of the constables, but without success. In two of the townships the office was evidently filled by persons who appeared to consider it a local duty affixed upon them, for which there was no sort of emolument to be received beyond the casual payment of fees for the service of any legal process. These officers, being incompetent, were unwilling to take any steps for preserving the peace, although they knew that it was broken every day. In the other township, that of Little Bolton, the constable, when applied to, tendered his services with apparent sincerity, and engaged to provide a proper escort to the mill for such hands as might call upon him for protection; but we afterwards discovered that he had allowed a spy belonging to the unionists to remain in his house, who apprised that body when applications were made, and thus enabled them to intercept the parties. Thus by collusion the constabulary power, for the expense of which we are largely rated, was turned against us. We complained to the magistrates, but got no redress. They merely observed that they considered it very unhandsome behaviour in a public servant.

"In spite of these annoyances we at length succeeded in procuring a fresh supply of hands. The unionists then became so much exasperated that a detachment of them, under the direction of what was called a destruction committee, entered our premises at midnight, ransacked the dwelling-houses of the workpeople, and beat them with bludgeons in a most barbarous manner; they also broke a great many windows, and did other damage to our property. Indeed they manifested so much vindictive violence that no one could have estimated the extent of life and property which would have been sacrificed had the rioters not been deterred by the ringing of an alarm bell, which caused them to disperse.

"We were repaid by the county treasurer for some portion of this loss and damage; but we sustained a heavy loss from the interruption of our trade, and those of our workpeople who were not interested in the strike endured great privation from being thrown idle. Had this neighbourhood been in possession of a constabulary force strong enough and duly authorised to put down the system of piqueting, and give due protection to the willing workers, this vain contest might perhaps not have been entered upon, or, if it had, its duration would have been much shortened."*

This is a very painful state of things, miserable to the labouring classes, whose

* First Report of Constabulary Commissioners, p. 162.

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freedom is destroyed, and whose properties and persons are endangered, who are forced to choose between want and outrage, disgraceful to the governing body in the state which leaves untried any probable remedy, and alarming to all, however remote from the scene of outrage, who think of the purposes to which organised mobs may be turned.

But we lament to say that the state of things in Scotland, so far at least as Glasgow is a sample, is still more distressing and still more formidable. The tyranny of the combinations appears to be better established there, to be more systematic and more ferocious, and to inspire, as might be expected, greater and wider intimidation. This will appear from the following extracts from the evidence taken by the Committee of 1838:—

"Mr. *Houldsworth*, cotton manufacturer, Glasgow.

Mr. Houldsworth.

"4. Have any combinations existed at any period amongst the operatives in the cotton manufactories at Glasgow?—Yes, ever since I became connected with trade, in the year 1827. They are conducted by a committee of the workmen, chosen from delegates that are sent from each of the cotton-mills in the neighbourhood.

"17. By what means do the operatives carry their laws into effect?—Generally it finishes by a turn-out; a strike.

"18. Suppose an individual operative does not agree to follow their directions, what happens in that case?—He is frequently maltreated.

"19. In what way?—Threatened that if he does not give up his employ or go away he will be abused, and if he should still persist, in many instances he gets attacked, knocked down, vitriol thrown upon him, or otherwise. In 1832 I was called upon, about 10 o'clock at night, to come down to our houses where our workmen were residing, in consequence of one of our workmen having been attacked at night; his head much cut; his face bruised.

"23. Were there any particular circumstances connected with a strike that took place in 1832?—We had continually round the mill a large number of guards guarding the premises; those guards were put on by the workmen.

"24. For what purpose?—In order to prevent any new workmen from coming to our mill to get work.

"25. What steps did they take to prevent them?—They accosted any man that had the appearance of a spinner, and said everything they could to prevent him going to work with us; they threatened him, and in some instances the men were attacked.

"26. Were they injured?—In the case that I before mentioned, a man of the name of Currie was very much abused one night; his head cut and bruised.

"27. Did those guards prevent any man from coming?—Sometimes they had that effect.

"28. How did the strike that took place in 1832 terminate?—It terminated in the men yielding a certain point to us, and our yielding the principle of paying that they wished. It was an individual strike. We were the only party who had a strike in 1832 in Glasgow connected with the cotton trade.

"29. What particular circumstances were connected with the strike that took place in April, 1837?—There was one circumstance occurred of a man of the name of Arrol, whom we had employed as a spinner: he was followed by a large crowd from our mill door, a crowd of about 100 people; he fled from them along the river-side towards Glasgow; they called names after him, and I believe some stones and dirt were thrown; *he took refuge in a shop, but the shopkeeper turned him out, as he was afraid of his property being destroyed.* He was there rescued by the policemen and put on board the ferry-boat, and taken across the river Clyde to be out of danger. At this time the crowd had amounted to 200 or 300, and his own impression was that, had they not been prevented, his life would have been taken away.

"30. Was John Smith in your employ who lost his life?—Yes.

"31. What were the circumstances of that case?—John Smith formerly belonged to the workmen's union, and had broken off from that union, and came to work with us on the master's terms during the turn-out of 1837, and he was shot in the night of the 22d of July, 1837, when he was walking with his wife in the streets of Anderson, near our works.

"36. Were the workmen who did not join the combination generally in a state of apprehension of receiving personal injury for not joining?—Yes, they always stated so to us.

"37. Was this apprehension general throughout persons engaged in the cotton manufacture?—I think it was.

"38. Do you consider it safe for persons to work at Glasgow who do not join the combination?—They always run a certain risk.

"53. Did you take any means to guard against that danger?—We generally employed policemen to protect the works at the different hours at which the workmen came in and went out.

"54. How far was that protection effectual?—In most instances it was effectual at that time, but then we could not protect the men when they went out in the evening from their own dwellings; it was generally then that the attack took place upon them. We cautioned them as much as we could to keep in doors always at night.

"55. Do you think that any workmen would be safe in Glasgow who gave evidence against the persons engaged in combination?—I scarcely think they would if it was important evidence.

"56. Do you think that you are in personal danger in giving your evidence?—No.

"57. Why do you think that workmen would be in danger and that you would not?—*Because I think, generally speaking, they have more animosity against those workmen who work against their wishes than they have against their masters.*

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"58. *What degree of danger or hazard do you think they are subjected to?—To all kinds of annoyances; they are scouted at by the whole trade; they are not allowed to work in any mill where the unionists have sway; they would be left to starvation were it not that they sometimes employ themselves in other businesses as labourers.*

"59. *Are they exposed to risk of personal injury?—Yes.*

"60. *To what extent?—It has even gone so far as their being shot at, and vitriol being thrown upon them, and their being knocked down and abused in a variety of ways.*

"62. In the strike in 1837, do you consider that there was such ground for apprehension as men of ordinary firmness and courage would be moved by?—Yes, I think there was; but not so much as if it had happened in the winter months. It was during the summer of 1837 that the turn-out took place.

"63. What is the cause of the difference between the danger in the winter and in the summer months?—They have more opportunities in the dark to threaten and molest people than in the summer.

"64 Did the danger vary at different periods of the strike to the workmen who worked against the rules of the combination?—Yes; it was considered towards the latter end of the strike that the intimidation was much greater, and the fear was much greater on the part of the new hands.

"65. Can you explain to the Committee how it came to be greater towards the latter end of the strike?—Because it was generally acknowledged that a secret committee had been appointed by the union.

"66. Why did the appointment of a secret committee increase the danger?—Its object was considered to be to molest, to abuse, and maltreat the workmen in any way that they could possibly manage, in order to prevent them from working.

"79. Have you ever heard whether or no certain masters have been singled out for destruction?—I have heard it so said.

"80. Do you believe it to be the fact, upon any information that has reached you?—Yes.

"84. The information has been of such a precise nature, that the masters have found it necessary for the sake of self-preservation not to go out after dark, except in carriages?—Yes, I have heard it so said.

"85. And you believe it to be the fact?—Yes.

"Mr. *Charles Todd*, also a manufacturer in Glasgow.

Mr. Todd.

"453. Did any of your workmen suffer any injury in the strike in April, 1837?—No, we prevented that; for when the mill was put on, it was a stipulation with the hands that we engaged, the men denominated 'nobs,' that they were not allowed to go out of the premises under any pretence, to avoid assaults and those unpleasant circumstances that always occur in those cases.

"509. Can you give the Committee any information whether persons were exposed to danger who worked during a strike?—My own personal feeling is, that there was no man we took into the works but was exposed to personal danger, and as a proof of that, the precaution I took of not allowing any person to go out of the premises.

"510. Could any other precaution free them from danger?—I do not think it; they are so liable to be assaulted in their houses, and in going backwards and forwards, and in all manner of ways. I have tried a good number of ways, but I have never tried one that is effectual but that.

"512. Do you conceive that, although they were guarded home, they would be subject to assault in their houses?—I would not like to risk it."

By far the most important information given before the Committee is that of Mr. Alison, the sheriff of Lanarkshire. And it is important not only from its contents but from the impartial situation of the witness, and from his having derived (as he states, 1842) all his information from the workmen, and from facts which came before him as a judge, never having had, directly or indirectly, the smallest communication with the masters. The whole of it is material, but we can extract only a very few of the more important passages.

Mr. Alison.

"1841. What do you conceive to be the objects, and what is the mode of operation, of the cotton-spinners' association?—I conceive the cotton-spinners' association to be founded upon the same principles, and directed to the same objects, with all the other combined trades in Glasgow, and I presume in the empire; which are, to keep up wages as much as they can, to exclude other competitors as much as they can, and to secure, as much as possible, an equality of employment to all persons in the trade, whether skilled or unskilled; and if those objects cannot be obtained by other means, to employ intimidation and violence without any reserve.

"1851. When I say that they employ violence without reserve, what I mean is this, that in the first instance their principle is to obtain their objects by a strike, either directed against a single master or directed against the masters in general, according as the strike is founded upon a quarrel with an individual master or upon a quarrel with the masters in general; the moment that strike takes place they begin to use intimidation to the new hands. I do not think there has been a single instance of a combined trade in Glasgow having had a strike in which intimidation did not begin the day after.

"1852. Have you known, from your own knowledge, that that is the course which the operatives have followed in general?—Invariably; the moment a strike takes place, intimidation either in words, in gesture, or in violence, commences to the new hands. They do not in the first instance proceed to extreme acts of violence: they do not wish to violate the law in

the first instance; but they think they are entitled either to intimidate persons who interfere with their labour, or to intimidate all witnesses who appear against them.

"2091. Do you yourself believe that a man could be hired in Glasgow to shoot a nob for the sum of 20*l.*?—I know for certain that a man can be hired for a less sum.

"2093. I say decidedly that in the last stages of a strike the cotton-spinners seem to attach no more weight to human life than we would in a contest with the French; that they consider they are engaged in a desperate contest with the other party, and that they would speak of the death of the other party as we would of the unfortunate rebels burnt at St. Eustache or at St. Charles in Upper Canada.

"2094. During the three years and a half that you have been sheriff, what evidence of facts have you to sustain that opinion; such evidence as you yourself would require in a court of law?—I have heard from great numbers of witnesses that it was a perpetual subject of conversation among the cotton-spinners in the latter stages of a strike, 'How has it happened that nothing is done yet; the secret select has been on so many weeks, and there is nothing done yet?' And I have asked the witnesses, 'What do you mean by nothing done?' and they have said that there was nobody shot last night."

Mr. Alison was examined at great length, respecting the combination of 1837, mentioned by Mr. Houldsworth and Mr. Todd, which terminated by the murder of J. Smith and the arrest of three persons charged with forming the secret select committee of the combination, and of having, in that capacity, directed the murder. On the trial the prisoners were convicted of violence, but on the charge of murder a verdict of *non proven* was found. It was resolved not to ask Mr. Alison any questions on matters respecting which he had given evidence on the trial. But we have thought that the following portion of his examination ought to be inserted.

Mr. Alison.

"1896. Have you any reason to know, without referring to the trial itself, whether any secret select committee was appointed by the cotton-spinners at any time?—The statement I am now to give was not brought forward at the trial at all; it was given by witnesses who were arrested by me in connexion with that violence, but they were not brought forward at the trial; they did not appear in the evidence laid before the jury.

"1899. What was the statement made to you?—I received information, in the beginning, on the very day on which the trial was first put up, that was the 10th of November, that there were witnesses in Glasgow, who had come forward at the eleventh hour, who could give important information in regard to the trial; and it was in consequence of that that the trial was put off. When I returned to Glasgow, on the 12th of November, I immediately sent for those witnesses. I found that they laboured under the most dreadful apprehensions; they refused to meet me.

"1900. Apprehensions of what?—Apprehensions of death.

"1901. From whom?—From the associated cotton-spinners. They refused at once to come to the sheriff's office; then I said, that I would meet them at any public-house they chose to appoint, in the suburbs of Glasgow; but they would not come; they said, if they were seen going into the same public-house with me, their lives would be immediately in danger. At last I agreed to meet them in the evening, in a tavern in Glasgow.

"1902. Was it your judgment that that was a feigned terror or a real terror operating upon the minds of the people?—I saw at once that it was a real terror, because they had no object to gain by it; they had no claim to any part of the reward; and the consequences to which they subjected themselves were immediate imprisonment for several months. I had no means of protecting them but by sending them to prison; and they got not a shilling of money by it.

"1903. What was the substance of the information?—I met them in the evening. They came in by one road into the tavern; I came in by another; and we separated in the same way, each going a different way in the night, so as to elude observation.

"1904. Do you mean that you met in a dark room?—No, the room was light; but it was ten o'clock at night. They told me that they had received information from two of the members of the committee as to the mode in which the secret select committee was appointed. They were examined separately, and anxiously examined by me upon the subject, and the result of their information was this: they said, that a slip of paper was sent to all the 38 cotton factories of Glasgow, desiring them to send in a delegate forthwith to decide upon important matters connected with the strike. They exhibited some of those slips to me, which I could exhibit to the Committee; but the slip was merely to say, that they were requested to send a delegate to deliberate upon important matters. The 38 delegates accordingly met in the committee-rooms. Those 38 delegates chose a select commitee, consisting of 12. The select committee of 12 were chosen openly, without concealment, by the whole 38; and it was perfectly understood by all the trade, when this notification was sent, that the object of this was to appoint a secret select committee for the purpose of perpetrating violence; but it was not expressed either in the notification or in the debate upon the subject. After the 38 had appointed 12, which they did openly in the rooms, the 12 had then a secret meeting, which was in a dark room. The secretary of the association then took the names; every person brought a name, written down by himself, of one of the 12 whom he recommended to form the secret select committee. The names in the dark room were put into a hat, and delivered to the secretary, who took them out of the room and read the names in the light: the three names then which had the majority of the voices were those which he selected; the three that were at the head of the list; and those three formed the secret select committee.

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"1905. Do you mean that he read them out?—He read them to himself in the light, apart from the other twelve, and, having read the whole twelve, he selected the three which had the greatest number of votes, and immediately threw the whole of the tickets into the fire. He then returned into the dark room and broke up the meeting without saying anything, and he then sent, in a subsequent part of the day, an intimation to the three upon whom the votes had fallen that they formed the secret select committee, who afterwards met and deliberated upon the subject entrusted to them, so that no person, even of the secret select committee, knew the three, except the secretary.

"1906. What object was to be entrusted to those three?—The objects to be entrusted to those three were the perpetration of acts of violence, assassination, fire-raising, and assault. The secret select committee was not appointed, in general, until other methods had failed. The first method used by the cotton spinners always was to appoint guards round the mills, which was done openly, the instructions to the guards being to oppose the nobs by all means; if they could, by fair means: if not, by foul; and then if the guards could not effect their object, and if the guards were put down by the authorities, then the secret select committee was resorted to as the last resource.

"1928. *Did they state to you what the powers of that secret select committee were?—The duties of the secret select committee were to organize means of putting people to death or of setting fire to the mills of refractory masters, or where there were refractory workmen, but particularly punishing nobs by breaking their legs, and other acts of violence.*

The following statements of Mr. Alison are more general:—

Mr. Alison.

"2116. Is there any connexion in your opinion between the combination of the cotton-spinners and the distress of the hand-loom weavers?—I gave some evidence on that subject in a former examination, in answer to the questions of my Lord Ashley; but I am strongly impressed with the effect it has had upon the circumstances of the hand-loom weavers, and I was so much aware of it that I recommended to Mr. Symons, the Government commissioner who is now investigating the state of the hand-loom weavers of Glasgow, to turn his attention particularly to that subject; but he told me just before I left Glasgow, that such was the terror of the witnesses in the hand-loom line on the subject of strikes, that out of the first 20 he had examined, he had only been able to get one who would utter the words 'unions' and 'strikes,' but in the twenty-first witness he did stumble upon one who was less alarmed, and he gave important evidence upon that subject. *I am perfectly convinced that the distress of the hand-loom weavers is mainly and almost entirely to be ascribed to the exclusive monopoly established by the forcible conduct of the trades in all other lines, which prevents their sons getting into any other line.*

"2117. Preventing the free circulation of labour?—Preventing the free circulation of labour; every trade is fenced round by prohibitions, which render it impossible for a person to get into it, except a son or a brother, or some near relation of an already existing member; in short, it is the old spirit of monopoly revived in the persons of the skilled labourers, with this difference, that it is not a few merchants, but a few hundred or thousand workmen, who exclude a hundred thousand of unskilled workmen.

"2118. Who operate tyrannically upon all those who would wish to dispose of their labour freely and without the influence of those unions?—Who operate so tyrannically that the lower orders find it impossible to oppose any resistance to it. I am convinced that if a sufficiently vigorous and powerful government were established in the manufacturing districts, to restore the freedom of labour, the immediate effect would be a great increase in the persons brought to trial for those offences, because in the transition from the present state, which is one of unlimited despotism on the part of the skilled trades, to one of freedom on the part of the unskilled trades, there would probably be a great contest. *The present tranquillity arises from the comparatively irresistible power of the skilled trades, which nobody thinks of resisting, any more than they would think here of resisting the Queen's guards.*

"2119. In fact, it is a complete system of castes?—It is a complete system of castes, which are operating to exclude all persons from those particular lines, except the favoured connexions of the skilled trades; it throws down all the others to the lowest point of depression.

"2120. The real sufferers are not the masters so much as the other workmen who are excluded. I am quite sure that for one complaint which I have received from the masters, I have received 50 from the workmen suffering under the system.

"2121. By 'skilled,' you do not mean skilful?—By 'skilled labour,' I mean the labour of those peculiarly difficult trades to learn, which have got an organization of trades' unions, such as cotton-spinners, iron-moulders, colliers, iron-miners, and so on; and by 'unskilled labour,' I mean the labour that is easily learned without an apprenticeship, such as the labour of a ploughman, a hand-loom-weaver, or a scavenger."

It might be supposed that we had now told the worst, and that no tyranny could be more absolute, more oppressive, or more merciless than that of a Glasgow combination. But the state of Dublin is now as much worse than that of Glasgow, as the constant presence of a disease is worse than a tendency to its recurrence. The disposition to outrage, to maim, and to assassinate, which in Glasgow appears gradually to grow with the misery and exasperation of a prolonged strike, seems in Dublin to be an habitual feeling. In both places assassination appears, if we believe the evidence which we have quoted, to be deliberately planned and executed, but while in Glasgow it is the weapon last resorted to in a desperate strife,

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in Dublin it is inflicted in the mere wantonness of power, as the most effective punishment of the disobedient. As specimens, and, we regret to say, merely as specimens of the means by which the Dublin combinations assert their authority, we extract the following passages from the evidence of Mr. Fagan, Mr. Curry, and Mr. Mackie.

"Mr. *James Fagan*, timber merchant and manufacturer of timber.

Mr Fagan.

"3823. Is labour free in Dublin?—With regard to the sawyers it certainly is not, and never was, to my knowledge.

"3824. What has prevented it from being free?—Unquestionably combination among the tradesmen themselves.

"3825. Has that combination been conducted peaceably, or by intimidation and violence?—It has had several degrees; for a long time it was done by intimidation, and a few years ago there was frightful sacrifice of life.

"3826. Were there any murders?—There was a man murdered out of our establishment, at six o'clock on a summer's evening, in a populous street.

"3827. What was the man's name?—Thomas Hanlon.

"3828. He was in your employment?—He was.

"3830. It was a hideous murder?—It was, for there were more than 30 concerned in it.

"3831. With what did they kill him?—Principally with bludgeons, what are called in the sawyers' trade 'opening sticks;' it is a sort of stick they have to put into a portion of the cut timber.

"3833. What year was that in?—I think it was in 1829 or 1830.

"3834. Had he given any kind of provocation at the time he was attacked?—At that period no sawyer was allowed to work in what was called the hard-wood yards except on day's wages; no task-work was permitted at that time.

"3835. When you say 'was allowed,' who prevented them?—The character they bore at that time was 'body-men,' and there were none to be had but body-men.

"3836. That is combinators?—Yes.

"3837. What did they prohibit?—They prohibited any man from working that did not belong to their body, and they prohibited any man from working in those particular concerns except on regular day's wages.

"3839. Under what penalty did they threaten?—Up to the period that I am alluding to now they had beaten and abused many; they abused people in our establishment previously to that.

"3840. By 'abuse' you mean violence?—Beating them; I think they broke one man's leg, and disabled another man up to the day of his death, which was only about a year ago.

"3841. How was he supported afterwards?—I gave him employment as a sawyer in one of my country establishments.

"3842. But he had been so severely beaten that he never recovered?—Never.

"3843. Had they then beaten several before the period of Hanlon's murder?—They had, so as to kill one or two people; they did not absolutely kill them at the moment, but they died afterwards of the beating; men who brought timber into Dublin sawed.

"3854. Have the instances of brutal violence been many and severe?—Extremely so; there never was a fouler deed in the world than the murder of Hanlon. They not only murdered the man first, but they returned a second time, when in the agony of death, and beat him in a most dreadful manner on his limbs and head, and every part of him, and that in one of the most populous streets in Dublin.

"3855. In the presence of a number of people?—There were considerable numbers from the time it took.

"3863. The unfortunate man was murdered for no other reason than that he preferred working by piece-work?—And not belonging to the body; he did not pay tribute to the body; but I speak from hearsay. They required that he should pay so much a week, and two guineas entrance.

"3864. And for not complying with those terms that horrible assassination took place?—It did; he was frequently threatened previous to it, and he was allowed to go away an hour before the rest of the people.

"3865. That he might get home by daylight?—Yes.

"3866. And therefore it was that they murdered him in the clear day?—Yes; all the circumstances are on record.

"3876. Were you obliged to take any precautions for your own protection?—I carried arms for two years.

"3877. What arms did you carry?—I carried pistols.

"3878. Did you deem it necessary for your safety to carry those?—I did, and frequently discharged them in the yard in walking about to show that I had them. I was in that situation for two years in Dublin, that no one that saw me, as I walked the street, imagined that I would reach home. I never went out without going out one way, and coming home another, or under a strong impression that something would happen.

"4186. You have no doubt that your life was in constant peril for two or three years?—I have no doubt of it; and from a communication made to me, that if I had remained in Dublin one Saturday night, I would have been sacrificed.

"3980. There was a society in Dublin known by the name of Welters?—There was.

"3981. A great many outrages, attributed to them, were committed?—There were.

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"3982. Last year were there not a great many?—A great many.
"3983. A number of people beaten?—Yes.
"3984. What were the Welters?—The name they gave themselves.
"3985. A secret society?—Yes.
"3986. Were they supposed to be day labourers?—Yes.
"3987. And many of them were supposed to be idle persons that did not work at all?—The heads of them and some of the parties that had been convicted of riots were known to be so.
"3988. The combination of the trades, though not as such belonging to the Welters, yet did they derive advantage from the force and power of the Welters in intimidating?—I do not know it of my own knowledge, but I frequently heard it.
"3989. That was the common opinion?—It was.
"3990. That if any men violated their rules the Welters would deal with them?—I believe they exchanged a sort of execution of judgment between each other, one party doing to-day, and another party doing in return upon another occasion.
"3991. So that a man who was to be beaten of one trade was seldom or never beaten by persons of his own trade whom he might know, but by individuals belonging to some other trade employed for that purpose?—So it is generally understood since Hanlon's murder.
"3994. Hanlon, who was murdered, was a man of very good character?—He was a man of excellent character, and it was on account of his character and his large family that he was employed. I myself was willing that the man should have left the employment previous to the murder, *but he said that his family would starve;* my father, who was very much opposed to combination, hired the man, or allowed him to continue: if I had had my own way I would have dismissed him.
"3995. From an apprehension of this happening?—Yes; he always carried a hatchet with him, and he had a hatchet with him when he was murdered.
"4025. Did it appear upon that trial, that that murder strictly arose from that class of combination, or that it arose from the violent feelings excited by combination?—That preconcerted measures were adopted for his murder appeared evident upon the trial, because they were regularly summoned week after week, a time appointed, and lots drawn, and a regulation entered into, that whoever the lot should fall upon (I am now speaking of what appeared at the trial), that any man that did not wish to join in it should find a substitute, paying him; and I believe on that occasion some one or two apprentices got their freedom for joining in it.
"4026. I was a regularly planned murder?—It was.
"4027. Were they not out three or four days without meeting Hanlon?—They were; and they employed the opportunity of a sawyer's funeral to perpetrate the murder; and as it was passing through Thomas's-street, it was about the hour this man was in the habit of returning home, one man, that was the leader, brought 32 of them into a public-house, and gave them a glass of spirits each.
"4028. Was that plan traced up to the managing body of the association?—I am speaking of it now as it appeared from the managing body.
"4029. Was it proved to have been done not only with their privity, but by their design and their order?—Decidedly from the principal person in it, who was a man of their own body.
"4031. *Among the murderers there were some men of previous good character?—Excellent character.*

"Mr. *W. Mackie,* builder.

Mr. Mackie.

"7022. In the year 1832 I had a workman that had been with me many years; he had two sons apprentices, and during the time of the cholera the father died of cholera; I wished to be useful to the boys, and retained them in my employment. In about a week or a fortnight after his death, when I went down amongst my workmen one Monday morning, they were sitting on their benches; I asked them for what reason they were sitting there and not going to work; they said I had two boys in my employment that the trade knew nothing of, and they could not continue to work unless I would discharge those boys; I said I would not. They told me I was perfectly acquainted with the rules of the house, being once connected with them, and that each of them would be fined 5*l.* if they went to work. They went away; and after they went away I made every exertion to get a fresh set of men, which I could not succeed in getting. They left the two boys with me and my foreman, and remained in that way about eight days, and during that time I was continuing business; and at last they took away my foreman from me, and the two boys; they ordered the foreman out of the house, and also to destroy the papers of instructions I had given him, and even to set my business astray, that I might not be able to go on without calling in the men.
"7041. Do you know of any outrage being committed besides?—Yes, I received several threatening letters during that time, and I applied to the authorities for protection, and asked leave to carry arms, which I did. I have carried them, and have been forced to continue them to the present day.
"7042. The system of terror and apprehension has since continued?—Yes, and still continues.
"7043. Do you know of the commission of any actual outrage?—Yes, on the 2d of February 1835. The foreman who I then had was formerly my apprentice, and I was forced to trust him to conduct the business; he continued with me, and in February 1835, about five o'clock of Saturday evening, he was coming down to get paid; about a fortnight before that he had got an apprentice, for which he got 34 guineas; he wished me to take him; I

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said I did not wish to take any more apprentices; but if they would give him the apprentice-fee I would hold myself amenable for learning him the business. I considered that created a jealousy, and they met that foreman, Costello, within about 100 perches from my own house, and my building concerns, and they beat him very severely; persons carried him to an apothecary's shop, and had his wounds dressed, and he, the surgeon, fearing further danger, advised him to be taken to the hospital, where he might be quiet.

"7044. What time was it?—About five in the evening.

"7045. And I believe daylight?—Just daylight.

"7046. He was much cut?—He was dreadfully cut; his limbs dreadfully abused, and his head dreadfully cut.

"7047. Did he remain long in the hospital?—I think he was about a fortnight or three weeks in the hospital.

7048. "Did you take him back into your employment?—Yes, I did, and I was under the necessity of supporting himself and his family; and for three months he could scarcely do anything but walk about the yard.

"7057. Have you known of any other outrage?—My house was broken. I went into the country on the 9th of October 1837; the evening after I left home I went down to Mr. Pakenham's, at Arbracham-glebe, and that evening a number of men entered the house, and broke the two shop windows. I am in the ironmongery business. They destroyed the goods in the house, and beat the two young men, one very severely; they came in waving their sticks, and calling out, was I at home.

"7061. *By carrying arms, you protect yourself?—Yes; I stay in the house as much as I can, but I cannot stay in entirely.*

"7062, *You do not feel safe going out on ordinary occasions without arms?—Not at night.*

"7063. *Do you always go armed?—Yes, I always carry two brace of pistols when I go into the country in the car, and I always carry one pair of pistols in my pocket.*

"7064. *It is not from affectation, but the expectation of danger, you carry arms?—I am confident if I had not had that protection I should have been injured.*

"7065. *And perhaps killed?—I do not doubt it at all.*

"7146. Do you conceive that the system of combination is worse or better since the alteration of the law in 1826?—I think it is worse.

"7147. In what respects is it worse?—There have been a great deal more depredations done.

"7148. By depredations, do you mean dishonest acts, or violence?—What they call slating or beating.

"7158. Have you anything to suggest to the Committee by which the law could be altered beneficially for the general interests of society, looking at the interests of masters and men?—I do not know of anything, only that the men should be at liberty to earn what they can; there are many workmen able to earn twice as much as another, and the body compels a bad workman to get as much as a good workman.

"7159. And the general effect is, that a good workman does not get so much as he otherwise would?—Not so much as he deserves, and there is nothing to encourage him.

"7160. And a bad workman gets more than he ought to do?—Yes.

"Mr. *John Curry*, timber merchant.

Mr. Curry.

"6588. Do you reside in the city of Dublin?—I do.

"6589. How long have you been in the timber trade?—I think more than 30 years.

"6590. Have you had occasion to know anything of the state of combination or the effect of combination in Dublin on that trade?—So far as my own personal knowledge goes not much, except in connexion with the employment of sawyers.

"6591. You have not experienced any injury yourself personally?—Our establishment has experienced injury; I have not experienced any personal injury.

"6592. What injury has your establishment suffered?—We thought it right in the prosecution of our business to get timber cut in America into one-inch boards, and we brought them here for the reasons I can detail to the Committee, if they desire; but on their arrival the sawyers sent a notice to each purchaser of timber, that if they bought any of those deals in our yard the people would not cut that timber for them; they served a notice on each of the retail timber merchants in Dublin to that effect.

"6593. You brought them in to facilitate your business?—Yes; everybody who is acquainted with the trade knows that the outside boards are the most valuable; those which lie at each side the heart is of the least value; when the timber is felled in America we get the selection of the outside boards at very little extra cost, and the heart timber or unsaleable part is used there for the purposes of the country.

"6594. You thus avoid the expense of buying that which would be nearly useless in the freight, and charge being precisely the same?—Yes.

"6599. Were those notices effectual?—Yes; we were obliged to enter into a compromise with the sawyers through one of their agents, and to say that we would not sell those inch boards in Dublin, and the consequence was that we sent them over at a large expense to Liverpool, where they were sold.

"6601. Of course that was a discouragement to your proceeding in that trade?—We could not repeat the importation of them.

"6605. Of course nobody else would import that sort of timber in Dublin?—No, as long as the present system of intimidation continues; remove the intimidation, and the trade may make what regulations they like, for, like all other trades, that will find its own level.

"6606. Have you any doubt that intimidation, to a great extent, has existed in Dublin?—Not the least doubt, that is a matter beyond all doubt.

"6607. To the extent of loss of life?—Yes.

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"6608. The combination in Dublin is enforced, according to your evidence, by actual intimidation, actual outrage, and actual loss of life?—Actually by all those three.

"6609. Do you conceive it is mitigated or increased latterly, since the discussions have taken place?—I do not know to what period the question would extend; but after the trials which took place, after those men were brought under the influence of the punishment of the law, there was a sort of apparent quiet for a time, but I do not believe the system of combination in Dublin is broken up, I mean as connected with intimidation.

"6611. When did the trials take place which created the lull?—One of them referred to a transaction which I presume was identified with our importation of three-inch plank; a person in Worburgh-street, of the name of William Mason, was so severely beaten that he lay a long time very ill, and his life was despaired of.

"6612. How long ago was it?—August 1836.

"6614. Where was Mr. Mason beaten?—I have no personal knowledge of that; I believe it was in New-street.

"6615. A crowded street in Dublin?—Yes, a populous street.

"6617. Do you know the circumstances out of which that arose?—He was looking at the importation of a cargo of our deals, when I said, 'We have got in some new deals, but I fear we cannot sell them to you, for I believe you would get into peril if you were to buy them:' he said, 'I do not regard that; I never had a quarrel with a sawyer in my life; lay them aside and I will purchase them.' There was a man standing by, supposed to be connected with the sawyers; immediately afterwards, this outrage on Mason followed.

"6620. He was very brutally beaten?—Very brutally beaten; I saw him at one period during his illness, and I thought he would not have lived.

"6621. He was a respectable man, and had given no other cause of offence?—I never heard of any; he was a very respectable man; I am not aware of any offence except his offending the sawyers.

"6626. You have no doubt that the intimidation by the workmen on employers violating their rules was extreme in Dublin?—It was extreme.

"6627. *No man who violated those rules could conceive his life safe for eight and forty hours?—I would not consider my own life safe, violating those rules, for one day.*

"6628. *That is the general impression of the city?—It is the general impression in the city of Dublin.*

"6629. What form did this intimidation principally assume; in what way was it carried into effect?—I understand, I am only speaking from what public reports sent forth, that there was combination among the various trades, and a sort of lot drawn, that the first persons whose names were drawn were to commit the violence, that one trade was employed in avenging the breaches of regulations in another.

"6630. By this species of appointment they were not so likely to be known?—I presume that was the reason.

"6632. You mean to say that there has not been in Dublin anything like free labour for some years?—There is no such thing among a great number of trades in Dublin.

"6633. The employers are compelled to submit to regulations made by the operatives?—They are completely at their mercy.

"6634. And that of course from the system of intimidation and outrage?—Entirely so.

"6637. In what way were you informed by your workmen that you must send away the deals?— A message was sent by one of the sawyers working in our yard through one of our clerks, that we had better not have imported those deals, and a printed notice was served afterwards on each of the retail yard-keepers, that if those planks were purchased by them, they would not cut any timber that was purchased in our establishment.

"6640. Was there any intimation of violence in the notice, or only abstinence from buying?—There was no notice of violence.

"6641. What made you suppose that they would have recourse to violence, if they purchased those deals?—Because I know that in almost every instance, where their rules were broken, they had recourse to violence.

"6649. *What was the objection those men had to your taking in those deals?—Because if we imported the deals three inches thick, instead of two, they would have more work in the reduction of them.*

"6658. You never disobeyed their regulations?—No; they made me conform to them, for they made me export my planks to Liverpool, instead of selling them on the spot.

"6659. Is there any person in Dublin who now imports similar planks?—No.

"6660. Does Mr. Martin?—No; they love their own persons too well."

The evidence to which we have referred, and of which we have extracted a very small portion, relates to the period between the passing of the 6 Geo. IV. in 1825, and the sitting of the Committee in 1838. But we see no reason for hoping that in the interval between 1838 and the present time, any improvement has taken place in the feelings or in the habits of the combined workmen. "In the hospital at Sligo," says Mr. Hickson, "I saw a man who showed me his wrist, laid bare to the bone with a sickle by a party of combinators, because he refused to leave his work at their bidding, to compel his master to give higher wages. It was melancholy to meet with instances of barges sunk in the canals, or set on fire, starch manufactories destroyed, riots occasioned by the exportation of potatoes, vitriol thrown upon the person; all indications of the same disposition to effect an object

Mr. Hickson.

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by violent means that could not be attained by any other."* There seems some reason to fear that, in the north of England, if there has been a change, it has been for the worse. Not three months ago, in December 1840, two workmen were put to death, in the neighbourhood of Ashton, in a manner as cruel and as deliberate as any of the worst cases that have disgraced Glasgow or Dublin; and the attempt to destroy a whole family by blowing up their dwelling house failed only by accident.

We now feel it our duty to record our conviction, that if the ruling power of any community allows other authorities to frame rules affecting, in their daily habits, their employments and their properties, large bodies of men; to affix to the breach of these rules penalties rising, through every gradation of suffering, from simple insult to mayhem and death, and to proceed in organised bodies, and in the face of day, to inflict these punishments;—that ruling power has abdicated its functions so far as respects those among its subjects whom it has surrendered to its self constituted rivals. When we are told that in Glasgow the power of the combinations is irresistible, that no one thinks of resisting it any more than they would resist the Queen's guards; when we are told that in Dublin no one who violates their rules can consider his life safe for one day; it is obvious that in these cities, so far as the manufacturing population is concerned, the ruling power is not the State; the prevalent law is not the law of the land; and the punishments most to be feared are not those inflicted by the legal executive.

To admit that there is no remedy for such evils would be to despair of the institutions and prospects of the country; to admit that they may be remediable and not to endeavour to suggest the means, would be a failure in the duties imposed on us by your Majesty's Commission.

But we own that it is a task which we approach with great diffidence. The contest between the law and the combinations has now lasted for several centuries, and scarcely an Act has been passed which does not recite the inefficiency of the previous legislation. During this long struggle a feeling has grown up among the workmen, that the law to which they have been opposed has been partial and oppressive. And we must own that much of it has deserved that character, and more of it has appeared to do so.

We have already stated, among the vices of the common law, its tendency to confound men's ideas of right and wrong by treating as highly criminal an agreement to do acts, which, when done without concert, is admitted to be blameless. It was absurd to suppose that its prohibitions could be enforced, and that men living together and having a common end could be prevented from combining to effect that end. To a certain degree it checked combinations, but it rendered those which existed in its defiance violent even to ferocity. Persons engaged in illegal acts are instinctively violent: nothing is more peaceful than commerce; but smugglers, that is to say, those who pursue a commerce which the law prohibits, are proverbially ferocious. Men who know that they are criminals by the mere object which they have in view care little for the additional criminality involved in the means which they adopt. They take those which are most obvious and most effective, and the readiest are intimidation and violence against those who oppose or even who refuse to aid them. Before the 5 Geo. IV. combination, and violence for its promotion were both criminal, and they had both gone together. That Act attempted to separate them. It declared combination innocent, but violence punishable. The workmen do not seem to have understood the distinction. If combination were innocent, the instrument by which they had always attempted to enforce combination must be innocent too; and the fact that it was illegal was no proof that it was morally wrong, for the legislature itself admitted that it had formerly punished what was morally right, and might therefore be suspected of doing so now.

We fear that the feelings generated by the old law still continue, and that, although the working classes are the persons most interested in destroying the despotism of combinations, the attempt to do so will receive little assistance from any sympathy on their part.

Nor do we hope for general co-operation from the masters. It is a prevalent notion that, as workmen have a common interest in raising wages, so masters have a common interest in lowering them—and that as the workmen combine against a workman who accepts low wages, so the masters combine against a master who gives high ones. This opinion is not merely erroneous: it is the very reverse of the fact. As the price of every commodity depends on its average cost of pro-

* Mr. Hickson's Report, p. 61.

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duction, it is the interest of every master that the cost to every producer but himself should be as high as possible, since on that cost will depend how much he can ask for what he produces himself. His jealousy therefore is directed, not against those who pay more, but against those who pay less than himself. He sympathises with his workmen in their indignation against knobsticks, and is not very anxious to resist a strike that is not directed against himself.

Besides the general rivalry which arms every master against every other, there are whole classes in a state of especial warfare. A workman assisted by new machinery can, as we have already remarked, produce, within the same time, a much larger quantity of finished work than would be obtained from old machinery. One spinner on the new mules, carrying 1,000 spindles, can throw off per hour three times as much yarn as could be spun on the old mules carrying only 336. By dividing this advantage between their spinners and themselves, giving to the spinner a rather less sum per hank or pound of yarn spun, but rather a larger sum per day or per hour, the owners of the improved machinery obtain a superiority which enables them to undersell and perhaps to ruin their rivals. A remedy which we regret to say is often resorted to by the owners of old machinery is to represent to their own workpeople this change as a lowering of wages, and to turn against it the force of a combination. Again, the establishments which are situated at a distance from markets and shipping ports cannot contend with those which are more favourably placed except by obtaining cheaper labour, an advantage which they can generally procure in country districts to the benefit of their neighbours as well as of themselves. How such an arrangement may be defeated by their rivals is well shown in the following evidence of Mac Williams, a spinner examined by the Committee of 1838 :—

"3649. Do you know instances wherein the masters have encouraged strikes?—I do; I before stated that they have generally been the instigators of strikes, but I will instance one case in particular: there was a mill a few miles from Manchester, at Bollington, where the same description of work was carried on precisely as was carried on amongst many of the fine mills at Manchester; it happened, however, that the master of that mill was paying considerably less prices for his yarns being spun than was paying in Manchester. The masters generally intimated to their men that that mill must either be brought out, the men must either be brought out, or that the master must be brought up to the same price. Our association took the mill in hand."

We do not mean to say, that the general body of masters, or even a majority of them, would be guilty of such conduct; nor do we affirm that all those approve of combinations who are ready to turn them against their rivals. We can understand that finding such a weapon they may use it, but had much rather that it did not exist. But admitting that the body of masters have a general and strong dislike of combinations amongst workmen, we yet fear that in separate cases a large proportion of the masters will often be favourable to the combined workmen, and favourable to them, as in the instances to which we have alluded, in their most unreasonable demands, and will therefore give little assistance, if they are not guilty of opposition, to the execution of the measures which we have to propose.

In the year 1838, when the evidence from which we have so largely borrowed was taken, the local police both in England and in Scotland was generally in an inefficient state; and many of the witnesses examined by the Committee, and still more of those examined by the Constabulary Commissioners, believed the most effectual remedy for the violence of combinations to be an improved police. Such was the opinion of Mr. Hume, the principal author of the 5 Geo. IV., as appears from the following extract from his examination by the Constabulary Commissioners :—

Mr. Hume.

"Has your attention been directed to the operation of the Act in question as regards intimidation and acts of violence?—Yes. At present intimidation and combination are allowed to continue, evidently against the letter and intention of the Act, producing many of the evil consequences of the interference with the freedom of capital and labour, which the law was intended strictly to secure. I stated to the County Rate Commissioners, in my evidence, the present defective system of police, and that it would be productive both of protection to industry and economy to the county if a separate and distinct police were established in each county, having their time entirely devoted to that duty, and liberally paid for their services, to secure the performance of their duties, and place them above temptation. I stated also, that it appeared absolutely necessary that they should be free from local connexions, which renders the present constables so very inefficient. I consider that it would be of as much use to the workmen themselves as it would be to the masters to be advised in time as to the consequences of the course they were taking when they happen to be misled to an illegal course. I am decidedly of opinion that the Government have not given the repeal of the Combination Law,

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a fair trial. The object was perfect freedom to masters and men in their agreements as to the hours of labour and wages, and yet they have never given that protection necessary to secure either. The constables are inefficient, the magistrates are inefficient, and the working classes, through ignorance, are often involved in breaches of the law which, under the alterations I have suggested, would be avoided."*

It is obvious that, unless supported by an efficient police, neither the 6 Geo. IV., referred to by Mr. Hume, nor indeed any other law whatsoever, could have a fair trial; but we think there is sufficient evidence that the failure of the Act was not occasioned solely by the inability of the police to enforce it. If we were required to point out the spot in the British Islands, or in the whole of Europe, in which combination is most absolute, and the 6 Geo. IV. the least operative, it is Dublin. But Dublin possesses, and has long possessed, a large and well organised police. We trust that the 2 and 3 Vic. cap. 93, authorising the local authorities to create a constabulary force, will be generally acted on; and we hope also that it will lead to a more uniform and a better centralized system of police. But we believe that there are defects in the 6 Geo. IV. which would render it inefficient even if supported by a good police in England and Scotland, as it has been inefficient, although so supported, in Dublin.

But though we have a general conviction that the law respecting combinations is defective, and though we think that we perceive some of its deficiencies, we are far from thinking that we can state all its defects, and still further from supposing that we can point out the best remedies.

We believe that for these purposes a further and special inquiry is necessary; an inquiry which must be prosecuted on the spot, and by persons acquainted with the local criminal law. We believe that one of the errors of our previous legislation has been the attempt to legislate by one Act for countries so different in their common law, and in their forms of procedure, as England and Scotland, and so different in their habits as England and Ireland. We recommend that three persons, with the requisite qualifications, be directed to inquire simultaneously, but separately, in the principal manufacturing districts of the United Empire, into the operation of the laws respecting combinations, and to prepare (with the assistance, in the details, of an English, Irish, and Scotch solicitor) bills for its amendment. And that the law-officers of the Crown for England, Ireland, and Scotland be directed to consider the bills, and to bring them in with such alterations as they may think expedient. We believe that the inquiry, if confided to able persons, who could devote their whole time to it, need not take more than three or four weeks, and preparing the bills three or four weeks more—in which case they might be passed during the present session.

But although we admit our incompetence to report fully on the amendments necessary in the present law, we will venture to suggest those which, with our limited knowledge of the facts, we believe to be advisable.

In the first place, we think that some further relaxation of the common law respecting combinations is required both by expediency and by justice. We have already stated, that there is scarcely an act performed by workmen, as members of a trades' union, which is not still at common law an act of conspiracy and a misdemeanour. To what oppression this state of the law may be turned, we will show by an example, taken from the evidence given before the Committee of 1824, on Artizans and Machinery, p. 394.

In 1818 the propriety of an increase in the wages of the weavers in the north of England was discussed, both by the masters and by the men. It was agreed by many of the masters that an advance of 7*s.* in the pound on the existing wages should be made by two instalments, and they recommended the weavers to meet, and, if they were satisfied with this arrangement, to accede to it, and if any masters refused to do so, to leave them after completing their existing engagements, and work for those who agreed to make the advance.

To avoid the danger of disturbance, and the loss of time which a general meeting must have occasioned, the weavers called a "deputy meeting," that is, a meeting of persons deputed as their representatives by the weavers of the different districts.

At this meeting the following resolutions were agreed to:—

"1. That every individual present at this meeting agrees to take the advance of 7*s.* in the pound.

"2. That as it is in the power of the manufacturer to compel the weaver to weave out his work in the loom, or on hand, he is advised in such case to obey the dictates of the law; yet

* Report of Constabulary Commissioners, p. 165.

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no injunction is hereby laid on him by this meeting, and he is left entirely to his own discretion; but he is not to bring [take] any more work from any manufacturer [at a price] under the proposed advance."

For having been present at the meeting, and signed the resolutions, three working weavers, Ellison, Kay, and Pilkington, were arrested, and bail for 400*l.* demanded. It was obtained, however, and they were subsequently tried on an indictment at common law for a conspiracy, convicted, and sentenced, Ellison to one year, and Kay and Pilkington each to two years imprisonment in Lancaster Castle, an imprisonment which they all three underwent.

In less than four years after they had undergone their punishment, the 5 Geo. IV. declared the Act for which they had suffered to be perfectly innocent. And so it remained for about eleven months. But the 6 Geo. IV. has, as we have seen, revived the common law, except as respects meetings and agreements affecting only persons present at the meeting or parties to the agreement. The second resolution signed by Ellison, Kay, and Pilkington applied to absent parties. It was not therefore within the exception of the 6 Geo. IV., and the signing such a resolution, or even being an assenting party, is a misdemeanour punishable by fine and imprisonment, at the discretion of the Court.

It may be said that no one would now think of enforcing the common law in such a case. We believe that such has been the improvement in the sense of justice and in good feeling among the higher classes since the year 1818, that such proceedings, or such a sentence as those which we have just related, could not now take place. But legally they might take place, and those portions of a law which are too oppressive to be executed necessarily throw discredit on every part of it.

On the other hand, we recommend that the statutory process and penalties be extended to some acts now subject only to the severe punishment, but inconvenient process of common law. Such are agreements by workmen to strike for the purpose of forcing a master to discharge a given person, or to disuse a given sort of machinery, or generally to change his mode of managing his business. Such, again, are acts on the part of masters for the purpose of occasioning or promoting strikes on the part of the workpeople of other masters. We believe this conduct on the part of the masters to be so common, and so mischievous, that we recommend the penalty to be distinct and severe; and that, so far as it is pecuniary, it be recoverable by any party aggrieved, or by a common informer. We further recommend, that some acts be declared punishable, the criminal character of which has not yet been distinctly recognised.

As examples of the acts to which we refer, and also as confirmatory of our views, we insert the following passages, from the evidence of Mr. Alison, taken by the committee of 1838:

Mr Alison.

"2260. You have recommended that the Legislature should define where the law should take effect in preventing intimidation; can you specify the exact rule which should be laid down in practice?—I think it should be declared a punishable offence to intimidate by words or by gestures, or by assembling in such crowds as to inspire apprehensions in the mind of a person of ordinary firmness, at the time when a strike is going on, or with a view to interfere with the free disposal of labour.

"2261. I think it should be clearly and explicitly declared, that the putting guards round a mill, on the part of the association, though they did nothing, should be punishable; that the guards should be liable to immediate seizure. The practice of putting guards is universal; the moment a strike takes place, the mill is surrounded with men, who keep their eye upon everything that goes out and in. Now I think that should be declared punishable immediately, although the guards do nothing; it is evidently done for an illegal purpose; that is to say, I would recommend that the Legislature should declare that it was illegal, provided it was done with the illegal attempt at intimidating.

We further recommend that, for the purpose of facilitating the apprehension and conviction of persons guilty of outrage or intimidation, any master, workman, or other person aggrieved,* or any persons assisting him, including, of course, the police, be authorised to seize any persons so offending, without summons or warrant, to carry them before a justice, and there compel them to give their names and addresses. We recommend further, that the refusing to give a name or address, or the giving a false one, be a distinct and cumulative offence.

We further recommend that the justices have power to convict and punish without naming the convict, identifying him by description or otherwise.

* See a precedent for the power of the party exposed to apprehend in the Malicious Trespass Act, 7 & 8 G. IV., cap. 30, s. 24—28.

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The following evidence of Mr. Foster, the experienced magistrate in Manchester, delivered to the Committee of 1838, will explain the mo ves of our last recommendations.

Mr. Foster.

"3314. Are you of opinion that the laws respecting combinations ought to be altered in any respect, without interfering with the principle of combination?—I think that if they were altered it should be with a view to prevent violence and intimidation, and to render more easy the detection of offenders.

"3315. *Can you point out any way by which that might be done; has it occurred to you in your experience as a magistrate?—The practical difficulty one has met with has been this, that when a mill has been watched, it has been done on many occasions by parties who were not at all known, and whose names could not be obtained. In many cases such parties could not by law be apprehended upon the spot; and as no process can be issued against them, from want of knowing their names and residences, it becomes important that there should be a power of apprehending them.*

"3321. As I understand you, the difficulty in working out the present law is in getting evidence of intimidation; it can assume so many shapes before it becomes absolutely tangible that there is a difficulty?—Yes.

"3322. Now, have you on your mind any set of facts which ought to create a legal presumption of guilt, throwing on the party the necessity of a defence?—Yes; I think there are many cases in which it would be perfectly fair to do so, and where at present you cannot bring the matter home from want of knowing how to direct your process, and from not having the power to apprehend the party.

"3323. The case you put seems to be this: a manufactory under a general strike; parading or passing as sentinels a certain number of workmen before that manufactory; combining those two facts before the judge, whoever he was, or the jury, making it requisite for the person thus acting as sentinel to explain why he was there?—I think that in such cases the principle might be applied with great advantage.

"3324. Are you aware it is the French law of combination?—I am not.

"3325. Then, when a manufactory is under a strike, upon any proof of a crowd, which naturally would intimidate, the French law requires an individual proved to be in the crowd to explain why he was there?—It seems to me that would be a perfectly reasonable enactment under certain restrictions, guarding it in any way that may be thought fit, by a previous application and depositions before a magistrate, or otherwise. When there is proof that for perhaps a month or more a mill has been so watched that the owner has been unable to procure hands to work in it, and the parties cannot be effectually proceeded against, that seems to me to be a case which requires a remedy."

We also recommend that any serious injury inflicted on the persons or property of masters or workmen, in consequence of their resistance to a combination, or of witnesses, be repaid by the hundred or other similar district. Those who have had sufficient moral and physical courage to make such a resistance, or to give testimony against a combination, and have suffered for so doing, are martyrs in the cause of liberty. The community which has profited by their firmness is bound as far as it is possible to make good their losses.

The last amendment in the 6 Geo. IV., which we have to recommend is, the return to the Act of the 5 Geo. IV. by repealing the 12th section of the 6 Geo. IV., that by which an appeal to Quarter Sessions is given on every conviction, and judgment is suspended on the parties' own recognizance, and that of two sureties in 10*l.* We believe that this clause has contributed more than any of the other defects in the Act to its utter failure. The 10*l.* security can of course always be obtained from the funds of the combination, so that no one convicted under the Act need fear punishment before the period of appeal has arrived. And we know how much, even among educated persons, and still more among the uneducated, every evil and every punishment, even if certain, loses its terrors as it becomes more distant. But in the cases which we are considering, delay is almost always impunity. Few strikes last many weeks: an accommodation, or a treaty for an accommodation, generally takes place before the Quarter Sessions are held, and of course it is arranged or understood that the prosecutions appealed from shall be discontinued.

We have to add to this imperfect outline, only an earnest wish that no preamble be prefixed in the spirit of that of the 6 Geo. IV. denouncing combinations as "injurious to trade and commerce, and especially prejudicial to the interests of all concerned in them." We firmly believe in the truth of this preamble. We believe that the general evils and general dangers of combinations cannot easily be exaggerated. We believe that if the manufacturer is to employ his capital, and the mechanist and chemist his ingenuity, only under the dictation of his short-sighted and rapacious workmen, or of his equally ignorant and avaricious rivals; if a few agitators can command and enforce a strike which first paralyzes the industry of the peculiar class of workpeople over whom they tyrannize, and then extends

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itself in an increasing circle over the many thousands and tens of thousands to whose labour the assistance of that peculiar class of workpeople is essential—we believe, we say, that if this state of things is to continue, we shall not retain the industry, the skill, or the capital on which our manufacturing superiority, and, with that superiority, our power and almost our existence as a nation depends. But though we believe in the truth of these premises, they are not the grounds on which we wish now to proceed. Our immediate object is to give freedom to the labourer: and we firmly believe, that as soon as he is made master of his own conduct, he will use his liberty in the way most useful, not only to himself, but to the rest of the community.

Measures for diminishing the number of hand-loom weavers, or preventing its undue increase.

We have now given an outline of the principal measures which appear to us the most expedient for the purposes of increasing or rendering more steady the demand for the labour of hand-loom weavers, and cheapening or improving the commodities on which their earnings are expended. But we have already stated our conviction, that no increase in the demand for hand-loom labour, unaccompanied by measures for diminishing the number of hand-loom weavers, or at least for preventing its undue increase, could produce more than a temporary benefit, to be followed by distress differing from that which now exists only by being more widely diffused.

One measure for this purpose, however, we have already recommended. If the means which we have pointed out, or any others which the legislature may adopt, for repressing the tyranny of combinations and restoring freedom to the labour market, should be successful, one of the great causes which tend to increase unduly the number of hand-loom weavers will be at an end.

We have already stated our belief that the hand-loom weavers are repelled from engaging in other trades, or training their children to them, by the barriers interposed by combinations. The removal of those barriers is a necessary preliminary to any successful effort on the part of the weavers to take advantage of the increase of capital, and, consequently, of employment in the home market. And we entertain a strong hope, that when those barriers no longer exist, the general tendency of mankind to better their condition will induce a portion of the weavers to press into more highly paid occupations. This will of course benefit in two different ways the existing body. It will benefit those who quit for better trades their present miserable employment, and it will benefit those who remain weavers by diminishing their number in proportion to the demand for their labour.

Having made this remark, we now proceed to consider what other means exist for remedying the distress of the hand-loom weavers by either diminishing their number or preventing its undue increase.

We believe that these remedies may be reduced to two—Emigration and Education.

Emigration.

The most obvious is Emigration. In the cases to which it is applicable it is the most immediate cure or palliative of a redundant population, and no period within our recent history has been so favourable to its application as the present. During the later portion of the last century, and the first thirty years of this century, our colonies offered scarcely any relief to the surplus population of the labouring classes. As neither the general government nor any local authorities had the power to raise funds towards the expense of transit and out-fit, emigration was confined to those who could supply that expense themselves, and who belonged, therefore, rather to the middle than to the labouring classes, and to those, much fewer in number, who were sent out by private liberality. Improvident sales, improvident grants, and improvident reserves of the unappropriated lands in most of the colonies, retarded their settlement and improvement; and those which were least affected by these calamities were avoided by many honest and industrious settlers as the habitations of slaves or of convicts.

During the last ten years all these obstacles have been removed. Slavery no longer exists in any British colony; the transportation of convicts is confined to one small penal settlement, and, when the inconvenience and expense of establishing our principal prison in the antipodes is better understood, must terminate altogether. The Poor Law Amendment Act in England, and the Act of 1838, establishing a Poor Law in Ireland, authorise the local authorities to raise funds to defray the expense of Emigration. The extravagant or corrupt grants, the inconsiderate sales, and the absurd reserves of former colonial administration have ceased, and, we trust, can never be repeated. They have been superseded by a system under which the wild lands are sold, and the produce is in most cases em-

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ployed in the transport of labourers to aid in their cultivation; and a Colonial Land and Emigration Board has been established for the purpose of obtaining and circulating information, and enabling the resources of the State and of individuals to be employed in the most beneficial manner.

Emigration.

The result has been a singularly rapid growth of our colonial empire. Within the last three years, three new colonies, New Zealand, South Australia, and Port Philip have been actually founded; others are in contemplation, and companies have been formed for supplying them with capital. We repeat, therefore, that the present times are eminently favourable to emigration. And yet we fear that, except so far as it may afford a general relief to the labour market, the hand-loom weavers have little to hope from it; and we believe that this is their own opinion. It will be observed that only five of our Assistant Commissioners, Mr. Muggeridge, Mr. Miles, Mr. Austin, Dr. Harding, and Mr. Symons, have thought it worth while to advert to the subject.

Mr. Muggeridge.

Mr. Muggeridge states, that in the course of his inquiries in the north of Ireland, Emigration was much dwelt on as a remedy;"* but he does not say by what class of witnesses. Of those whose examinations he has reported, one only, Henry Adams, mentions the subject. His evidence is favourable. He is a weaver, himself an emigrant to Upper Canada, whence he returned in alarm from the rebellion. He expresses great wish to go back to Canada, and great confidence in the advantage which he would derive from being enabled to do so, and adds that the same feelings prevail among his fellow workmen.†

Mr. Miles.

Mr. Miles says, that the weavers in the Gloucester clothing district are anxious to go, but that the difficulty lies in persuading those intrusted with the selection of emigrants to accept them.‡ On the whole, however, it appears that Uley, Bisley, and the neighbourhood, have successfully applied emigration to the relief of local congestion.

Mr. Austin.

Mr. Austin's experience of the feelings of the same class of workpeople in the south-west of England was less favourable.

"Few," he says, "of the ill-employed class on whose condition I am now making my report, have availed themselves of the opportunities which the Government have afforded for emigration. They are by no means (I am speaking of the woollen cloth districts) adapted for that sort of life; they are the sons, grandsons, and great grandsons of weavers, and are little fitted for any other occupation. Those to whom I have proposed it as a remedy have scouted the idea; 'however hard their fate, they prefer to live and die in old England, but wish that trade was better.' This was said by general acclamation at different meetings, without one dissentient voice." §

Mr. Symons.

Mr. Symons, reporting from the south of Scotland, says that

"Emigration is not deemed acceptable by the weavers generally, as a means of relief: they conceive that the number emigrating must be immense, to effect any change in the condition of those who remain; and that as to those who go, it would be preferable to bring food to the people, instead of taking the people to the food." ‖

Dr. Harding.

Dr. Harding, from the east of Scotland, who thinks well of the success of the weavers, at least of a portion of them, as emigrants, yet adds, that of all the witnesses examined by him, not more than three or four individuals mentioned the subject.¶

We have no doubt that a large and well managed system of emigration may be generally beneficial to a whole nation; and that a small emigration may be usefully employed for the specific purpose of relieving a single district from its surplus population. But we do not believe that, in the present state of the British Empire, emigration is likely to afford specific relief to a class so numerous and so constituted as the hand-loom weavers. The population of the British Islands may be estimated at 25 millions, of whom the hand-loom weavers, including their families, form about 800,000. One hundred thousand persons a-year, or four per thousand of our whole population, is the largest emigration that can be expected for some years. Supposing the hand-loom weavers to contribute their full proportion to this emigration, the annual abstraction of four persons out of every thousand could not materially affect the condition of those who remained. But they ought not to emigrate in that proportion, and we feel certain that they will not. They have no skill in the labours which constitute the chief employments in the recently settled agricultural countries to which European emigration

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* Assistant Commissioners' Report, Vol. I. p. 722.
‡ Ibid., Vol. II., p. 526.
‖ Ibid., Vol. I., p. 75.
† Ibid. p. 715.
§ Ibid., Vol. I., p. 468.
¶ Ibid., p. 197.

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is directed, and their habits render them incapable of enduring the hardships which such countries impose. The second of these objections is the most important. The skill necessary for the field-labour of a new country, in which very imperfect farming is productive, and for the rough constructions and fabrications which in such a country must be effected on the spot, is easily acquired: but the sedentary and in-door labour of weavers generally unfits them for resisting cold and exposure, and for active muscular exertion. We are inclined to believe that the climate which would be most favourable to them is that of the elevated lands within the tropics, such as the mountain ranges of Jamaica, which enjoy the average temperature of an English summer. The agriculture of these regions, consisting principally of coffee and cotton for exportation, and provisions for home consumption, requires little labour or skill, and consequently offers employment to women and children. We rejoice, therefore, to find from the valuable collection of Reports from the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, that the means for promoting an emigration of this kind are under consideration.* The climate of New Zealand is also mild; and in some districts, particularly in the north of Ireland, the linen weavers are already accustomed to the cultivation and preparation of flax.

But we must repeat our opinion, that emigration is not one of the means by which the condition of the hand-loom weavers as a body is likely to be materially improved.

Education.

There remains, therefore, only one mode by which the number of the hand-loom weavers can be proportioned to the demand for their labour: and that is, the great means to be resorted to in every decreasing or even stationary trade, namely, the conduct of the weavers themselves. On their activity and intelligence in seeking other employments for themselves and for their families, and in pursuing those employments when found; on the self-denial of the married in placing their children in occupations less immediately productive than the loom and its subsidiary businesses, and of the unmarried in abstaining from incurring the responsibility of a family, when their own wages are scarcely equal to their own support—on their conduct, in these respects, must mainly depend the proportion of their numbers to the demand for their labour, and, so far as it is dependent on that proportion, the improvement or the further depression of their condition. But we must add, and we make the statement with great sympathy for the persons on whose situation we are commenting, that there are branches of hand-loom weaving which no conduct on the part of those engaged in them is likely to make adequate sources of comfortable support for a family. In the occupations which require only the skill and strength of women and children, the average wages of women and children are the utmost that can be permanently expected. The man who devotes himself to such work abandons all advantage from his superior powers, and must be content to receive the wages of a woman or of a child. Such occupations, and many branches of hand-loom weaving are such, may afford, as they do in Switzerland and in other parts of Europe, useful additions to the general income of a family, the head of which devotes himself to manly work; but, if they are the only resource, it will generally be a miserable one. Again, a business for which the ordinary strength of a man is required, but the necessary skill is easily obtained, is likely, unless it be peculiarly disagreeable in itself, to become the usual resort of unemployed labourers. We have shown that many kinds of hand-loom weaving require no more skill than can be acquired in a few months, or even weeks, and that, so far from being disagreeable, they enjoy a freedom from restraint and from exposure to the seasons, which renders them peculiarly attractive. In an old community, especially in one in which large bodies of persons are dependent on the accidents of commerce, the number of those whom their own misconduct or misfortune, or that of their employers, has deprived of their usual work, will always be large: and the business into which they usually crowd must be overstocked with hands. No conduct on the part of those engaged in it can prevent it from being at the bottom of the scale. It can improve only under the influence of causes which raise the condition of the whole body of labourers.

There are, however, some branches of hand-loom weaving which, from the high degree of skill, or from the combination of strength and skill which they require, are exempt from these inconveniences, and in those branches the work-people, by the exercise of the activity, intelligence, self-denial, and prudence to which we have alluded, might so proportion their numbers to their employment, as to secure good average wages.

But activity, intelligence, self-denial, and prudence, are the results of good edu-

* Printed 8th August, 1840. No. 613, p. 158.

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cation, and we lament to say, that few of the labouring classes in the British Islands have received, or are receiving, a good education, or have the means of obtaining one. The first element of good education—an adequate supply of good schoolmasters—is wanting. The supply of schools, though very far exceeding that of good masters, is lamentably deficient

"After having visited," says Mr. Hickson, "a greater number of schools provided for the poorer classes than most persons who take an interest in education, I have been forced to the conclusion, not hastily formed nor adopted without consideration, that a very large proportion of these schools are rather doing harm than good: schools in which religion is not taught, or taught only as so much conventional formality, neither affecting the heart nor reaching the understanding; schools in which moral training is neglected altogether, or in which, instead of attempting to mould the disposition of a child, the master, by employing a severe and injudicious discipline, degrades a lad in his own eyes, sours his temper, crushes his affections, and renders him churlish, spiteful, or sullen; schools in which the favouritism of monitors, and the caprices of incompetent masters, create habits of dissimulation and lying; schools in which, in regard to intellectual instruction, children are shut up, in order, as it would almost seem, that knowledge might be shut out; in which writing and arithmetic are often forbidden to girls; the geography, even of their own country, to boys, and none of the principles of any of the mechanical processes taught by which they may have to get their living; schools from which all that has a tendency to refine the tastes or soften the manners of the rising generation are excluded altogether, and in which no attempt (beyond that of teaching sewing) is made to form habits of industrious application.

"Education may be for good, or it may be for evil, according to the nature of the education given, and the manner of imparting it. It is a great error that four walls are sufficient to constitute a school, and any broken-down tradesman or discarded servant a schoolmaster. Although in my visits to prisons I did not find that, upon an average, more than one-third of their inmates are able to read with sufficient fluency to derive enjoyment from reading, I was sometimes startled by the amount of schooling many professed to have received."*

And a still more painful deficiency is the want of will, or of means, or of both, on the part of parents, to give to their children the benefits, such as they are, of the existing schools.

A detailed statement of the deficiencies of our provision for education, and detailed suggestions for its improvement, would be out of place in such a Report as th s, which, from the number and the variety of the subjects to which it must advert, can give only a cursory attention to any one. For such details we refer to Mr. Hickson's separate Report, where the questions are treated at length.† But we cannot close our labours without expressing our conviction, that in the matter of education the Government of this country owes a duty to its people which it has not performed. Much, without doubt, has been done by the institution of the Irish Education Board, and much has been admirably begun by the Committee of the Privy Council. But the 50,000*l.* annually voted to the former is only one-fourth part of the sum which the Board declares to be necessary to carry out its purposes,‡ and the 30,000*l.* annually assigned to the latter is too small to be more than the means of an experiment.

The great question, whether a parent, who is by law required to provide for the bodily wants of his child, ought also to be required to attend to its mind? has indeed, in a very limited degree, and with respect to a narrowly limited class, been decided by the Factory Act.§ By prohibiting, in certain of the factories using steam or water power, the employment of children under 13, without a certificate of their attendance at school, the legislature has acknowledged the duty of the parent to provide for the instruction of his child, and has, in fact, imposed on him for its non-performance a fine of 20*s.* if the child is employed; and if unemployed, on that account then a fine equal to the wages which it might have earned. Another question, of almost equal importance, has been decided by that Act. After declaring that it is the duty of the parent to see that his child is educated, it has declared that it is the duty of the community to make the performance of the parents' obligation possible, and for that purpose to provide for the existence and the efficiency of the school to which he is ordered to send his child. By the 22d section, therefore, it has enacted, that wherever it shall appear to any inspector of factories that a new or additional school is necessary to enable the children employed in any factory to receive the education required by the Act, he is authorized to establish or procure the establishment of such school. And by the 23d, that if upon examination and inquiry he shall be of opinion that any schoolmaster or schoolmistress is incompetent or unfit, it shall be lawful for him

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* Mr. Hickson's Report, p. 65.

Ibid. Report, No. 4; Sections from 77—134, pages 44—69.

‡ See the Second Report of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, 1835. 200,000*l.* a-year is the sum which the Board states to be necessary for current expenses, after the greater expenses of outfit shall have ceased.

§ 4 & 5 W. IV. c. 183.

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to disallow the salary of such schoolmaster or schoolmistress. But with an apparent inconsistency, of which we have not seen the explanation, the clauses by which the districts in which schools were thus to be established were enabled to raise funds for their support, were struck out of the Bill in the House of Lords, and the 22d and 23d sections of the Act have consequently been inoperative; and a further consequence has been, that the clauses directing that, as a condition of employment, children shall pass two hours a-day in school, have been, in many cases, perhaps in a majority of cases, not inoperative, but positively mischievous. The schooling has been imprisonment in the atmosphere of a small crowded room, under the inspection of an illiterate guard, neither willing nor able to do much more than keep his little sufferers in order, and watch the door. Idleness in the fresh air would be better than a confinement which must associate education with merely irksome and disgusting recollections.

The merit therefore of the education clauses in the Factory Act is not what they have done, but what they have acknowledged. It is obvious at first sight, that the legislature, which fines a parent for sending a child to work at a power-loom without having sent it the day before to a school, cannot consistently exempt from the same obligation the parent who sends his child to a silk-mill, or to a hand-loom factory, or to a mine, or, in fact, to any other employment beyond his own doors. And we think that, on reflection, every one must feel that the mere accident of the child's being employed in the house of a stranger, or in that of his own parent, and to go a step further, of his being or not being employed at all, does not affect the parent's obligation, or the duty of the state to enforce it. It is equally obvious that, if the state be bound to require the parent to educate his child, it is bound to see that he has the means of doing so. The voluntary system, therefore, the system which leaves to the ignorance, or negligence, or debauchery, or avarice of the parents of one age to decide how far the population of the succeeding age shall or shall not be instructed beings, has been repudiated: and we trust, that, in a matter of this importance, the most important perhaps of the many subjects requiring the attention of the Government, a system which has been repudiated on principle will not be permitted to continue in practice.

On the details of the measures by which this great change may be effected, and the performance of the parents' moral duty rendered binding by a legal obligation, and by the creation of the requisite instruments, it would be presumptuous in us to dwell at any length.

We will venture however to suggest, with respect to the obligation on the part of the parent, guardian, or master, that every person in whose family a child under a certain age is domiciled, be required to show that, unless prevented by infirmity or unavoidable accident, it attends school or possesses the average information of an educated child of its age. And with respect to the obligation on the part of the state, that the providing inspectors and training establishments for masters* should be incumbent on the Government, and be defrayed out of the national revenue; and that all other expenses should be provided for by local assessments on the district benefited by each school, aided by such payments as it may be thought right to require from parents, guardians, or employers.

Under the scheme which we have ventured to suggest, the inspectors must be numerous, and their duties arduous, as they would have to ascertain the proficiency not only of the children at school, but also of those retained at home: and we do not think that the selection, or superintendence, or remuneration of such officers could be safely left to the local authorities. Nor could the expense of the training establishments for masters, of which the whole country is to receive the benefit, be in the first instance properly imposed on any particular districts. Eventually, however, it might be locally defrayed, if every school receiving a trained master were required to contribute to the charge of his previous education, or to that of the pupil who succeeded him in the establishment.

All other expenses we would raise locally, because, in the first place, we believe that direct local taxation is, on the whole, less injurious than the indirect taxation through which nearly the whole of the public revenue is obtained; and because, secondly, a contribution of which the payer can, in some measure, control the application, and from which he receives, or sees that his neighbourhood receives immediate benefit, is more cheerfully submitted to than one which swells the public revenue, and is distributed in channels of which the contributor loses sight.

* For an account of what we believe to be the most efficient establishment of this kind in Great Britain, see the Report of Dr. Kay and Mr. Ed. Tufnell on the Training School at Battersea, inserted in the Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, on the Training of Pauper Children, 1841; p. 201. This establishment was founded, and has as yet been supported, by the munificence and devotion of two individuals, Dr. Kay and Mr. Edward Tufnell, with some assistance from their friends.

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The latter is felt as a burthen, the former as only a mode of expenditure. We may add, that in almost every district the local assessments might be assisted, and in many almost entirely superseded, by having recourse to the foundations already existing, either generally for the relief of the poor, or specially for education.

The former class of charities, those for the general relief of the poor, are inconsistent with the present organized system of relief. When applied, as is often the case, in aid of the poor-rates, they are innocently, but not legally administered. And on the other hand, their application as alms, though legal, is almost always mischievous, and tends to create the poverty which it relieves. Applied to education, they would produce benefits of the highest kind, and totally unmixed with evil.

Of the latter class of charities, those specially founded for the purposes of education, many, from the increased value of the lands with which they are endowed, or from the migration of population, have outgrown the districts for whose benefit they were created; and others, belonging to the period when Greek and Latin were supposed to be education, are unsuitable to the present wants of the mass of the population.

We rejoice to be able to support, by the great authority of the present Bishop of London, our opinion that the general intent of the founders of those charities, namely, improving the condition of the poorer classes, ought to be carried into effect by sacrificing their particular intent, namely, the adoption of means which are no longer serviceable.

In the concluding passage of the Poor Law Report,—a passage which is understood to have been written by his Lordship, and which carries the impression of his vigorous sense and of his appreciation of education,—the Commissioners say,

"It will be observed, that the measures which we have suggested are intended to produce rather negative than positive effects; rather to remove the debasing influences to which a large portion of the labouring population is now subject, than to afford new means of prosperity and virtue. We are perfectly aware, that for the general diffusion of right principles and habits we are to look, not so much to any economic arrangements and regulations as to the influence of a moral and religious education; and important evidence on the subject will be found throughout our Appendix. But one great advantage of any measure which shall remove or diminish the evils of the present system is, that it will in the same degree remove the obstacles which now impede the progress of instruction, and intercept its results; and will afford a freer scope to the operation of every instrument which may be employed for elevating the intellectual and moral condition of the poorer classes. *We believe, that if the funds now destined to the purposes of education, many of which are applied in a manner unsuited to the present wants of society, were wisely and economically employed, they would be sufficient to give all the assistance which can be prudently afforded by the State.* As the subject is not within our Commission, we will not dwell on it further, and we have ventured on these few remarks only for the purpose of recording our conviction, that as soon as a good administration of the Poor Laws shall have rendered further improvement possible, the most important duty of the Legislature is to take measures to promote the religious and moral education of the labouring classes."*

The period contemplated by the Commissioners has arrived: a good administration of the Poor Law has rendered further improvement possible; and the Legislature has begun, but as yet very slowly and timidly, to take measures to promote the religious and moral education of the labouring classes.

If we might hazard another suggestion, it would be, that a further step should be made towards the introduction of a system of general education, by the issuing of a Royal Commission to inquire into the state of the education of the poorer classes in Great Britain, and to suggest measures for its improvement and for the establishment of a system of national education. We say Great Britain, because we do not think it would be safe to interfere with the Education Board of Ireland, which up to the present time has conducted its difficult task with admirable discretion and diligence, and with a success far greater than could have been expected from its limited means. The cost of such a commission would be from six to seven thousand pounds: a sum which would be cheaply expended in making even a small advance towards its great purpose. But we believe that the assistance which it would give would be very great. The attention of many who now neglect the subject would be roused by an account of the number of the population unprovided with schools, and of the nature of the majority of the places which are dignified by that name. A comparison of our methods and of our extent of instruction with those of nations on whose civilization we presume to look down,

* Report of Commissioners of Inquiry, p. 362.

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would be a useful stimulus to the exertions of some, and a useful sedative to the national vanity of others. Some prejudices might be softened, some hopes inspired, and some useful examples exhibited, by a statement of the success with which the difficulties arising from religious discrepancies have been surmounted.

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The agitation of the question of obligatory education, the circulation of queries by the Commissioners, and the visits and inquiries of their assistants, would give to the public mind the preparation which is necessary to the cordial adoption of any extensive change. And a plan might be submitted to the Government, the result of the consideration of several minds concentrated on one subject, and assisted by the suggestions of hundreds, or perhaps, as was the case on the Poor Law Inquiry, of thousands of witnesses and correspondents.

Summary of Report.

We have now fulfilled, as far as it lay in our power, the duties imposed on us by Your Majesty's Commission. We have inquired into the condition of the Hand-loom weavers throughout the United Kingdom. We have stated that, as a body, they are in a state of distress; that the great cause of this distress is a disproportion between the supply of hand-loom labour and the demand for it; the demand being, in many cases, deficient, in some cases decreasing, and in still more, irregular, while the supply is, in many branches, excessive, in almost all has a tendency to increase, and does not appear in any to have a tendency to adapt itself to the irregularities of the demand.

In considering the second of the objects proposed to us by Your Majesty's Commission, namely, the reporting whether any, and if so, what measures can be devised for the relief of the hand-loom weavers, we were governed by the result of our previous inquiry. It having been ascertained that the principal cause of the low earnings of the hand-loom weavers is the disproportion between their numbers and the demand for their labour, it follows that no measures can effectually raise their earnings, except by getting rid of that disproportion; or even improve them, except by diminishing it; but even while the disproportion continues, the condition of the weaver would be improved by any cause which should render the demand for his labour more steady, or diminish the price, or improve the quality of the commodities on which his wages are expended.

The remedies for the distress of the weavers appeared, therefore, to be reducible to three classes:—first, those which aim at increasing or rendering more steady the demand for their labour:—secondly, those which aim at cheapening or improving the commodities on which their wages are expended: and, thirdly, those which aim at diminishing their number, or preventing its undue increase.

We then gave an outline of the principal measures which appeared to us the most expedient for the purposes of increasing or rendering more steady the demand for the labour of hand-loom weavers, and of cheapening or improving the commodities on which their earnings are expended.

As the principal means by which all these purposes may be effected, by which the trade of the country, both internally and externally, may be made more steady; by which the exportation of the products of our own looms may be promoted, and the food and habitation of our labouring population may be improved, we have recommended the substitution, for the present anomalous and fluctuating corn duty, of a duty, either to be annually reduced, or to be permanently fixed at a low rate; and such a change in the duties on timber as may no longer exclude, from all buildings intended for the use of the great majority of the people, the timber which is cheapest and best. And we have recommended further measures for promoting the healthiness of the dwellings of the labouring classes, and for the improvement of our foreign trade.

In order to cheapen the material on which one class of weavers are employed, and thereby increase the demand for their labour, we have recommended the abolition or diminution of the duty on organzine.

For the purpose of further increasing that demand by the improvement of British patterns, we have recommended the extension and protection of copyright in designs; the establishment and promotion of schools of design, and the general cultivation of the popular taste.

Believing that the cost of production to the manufacturer is much increased, and, consequensly, the demand for hand-loom labour much diminished by the embezzlement of woven goods, and of the materials of weaving, we have recommended measures for its more effectual repression.

Believing the restrictions on the manufacture and sale of Irish linen to be mischievous, we have recommended their abolition.

Summary of Report.

And believing that hand-loom weavers suffer even more than the labouring classes in general under the obstacles to the free use and circulation of labour imposed by combinations, we have recommended measures for restoring liberty to the working classes by depriving combinations of their powers of intimidation.

We have, lastly, considered the means by which the number of hand-loom weavers may be diminished, or their undue increase prevented. After remarking that the restoring freedom to the labour market will, to a certain degree, effect these purposes, we have directed our attention to two auxiliary measures—Emigration and Education. We have stated our fears, that the weavers will not derive much direct and specific advantage from emigration. Nor have we encouraged the hope that they will be peculiarly benefited by the extension of education. But believing most firmly that the whole body of the labouring classes would derive benefit from a general system of education, under which the community should be bound to supply the means, and parents, and all others filling the place of parents, to use them, we have suggested an outline of a plan by which such a system may be introduced.

All which we humbly certify to Your Majesty.

(L. S. O.) NASSAU W. SENIOR,
(L. S. O.) SAMUEL JONES LOYD,
(L. S. O.) WILLIAM EDWARD HICKSON,
(L. S. O.) JOHN LESLIE.

London, February 19, 1841.

APPENDIX.

Appendix No. 1.

Appendix No. 1. INSTRUCTIONS from the Central Board of the Hand-Loom Weavers' Inquiry Commission to their Assistant Commissioners.

HER Majesty's Commission, issued in compliance with an address of the House of Commons and following the words of that address, directs the central Commissioners to inquire into the condition of the unemployed hand-loom weavers in the United Kingdom, and to report whether any, and, if so, what, measures may be devised for their relief. The first inquiries instituted by the Commissioners lead them to the belief that there are few unemployed hand-loom weavers, and consequently, that if the terms of the Commission were strictly followed, the inquiry would be short and unproductive. There appear, however, to be grounds for thinking that, although the hand-loom weavers are generally employed, many classes of them were, at the time when the address was presented to Her Majesty, and are now, in a state of great privation and distress, arising immediately not from want of employment, but from insufficient wages and excessive toil. Under such circumstances, the Commissioners believing it to be Her Majesty's intention that the sufferings of this large and meritorious portion of her subjects, whatever be their proximate cause, should be investigated, and remedies, if any be practicable, be suggested, have requested and obtained permission to consider the word "unemployed" as a qualification not intended to confine their inquiries. The Commission is therefore to be acted upon as if it did not contain that word.

In considering the mode in which the wide inquiry now opened to the Commissioners can be best conducted, the first remark that occurs is that under the term hand-loom weavers are included many different classes of artificers following their respective occupations under dissimilar circumstances; and that the situation of each class is therefore likely to be different; to be affected by different causes; and to be susceptible of improvement by different means.

It is probable that the principal distinction between the separate trades in all of which the hand-loom is used, arises from the material on which the weaver works, and that hand-loom weavers may therefore be first divided into four classes.

Those employed—

1. On cotton.
2. On woollen.
3. On flax.
4. On silk.

And that these four great classes may also, for the purpose of this inquiry, be further subdivided. Those who make carpets, or blankets, or fine cloths, are all hand-loom weavers employed on woollen: those who make damask hangings and those who make ribbons are both hand-loom weavers employed on silk; but it is probable that there is much dissimilarity of condition among those who are engaged in processes so dissimilar. The first duty of those who have to prosecute the details of the inquiry is to ascertain the number of separate trades into which hand-loom weaving is divided, and the principal distinctions which characterise each trade.

The inquiry respecting each class of weavers will then naturally fall under three heads—

1. Their actual condition.
2. The causes of that condition.
3. The means, if any, by which it can be improved.

The last is, of course, the practical object of the Commission: it is the point to which all the other inquiries tend; but though it must be constantly borne in mind, yet, as it is the last point for actual consideration, it will be most natural to advert to it last in these instructions.

On the first head, the actual *condition* of the hand-loom weavers, much information has already been laid before Parliament. Unless the Assistant Commissioner is already master of that evidence, as printed in the Parliamentary Reports of 1834 and 1835, it will be his duty to become so before he begins his inquiry. The address, however, which led to the issuing of the present Commission, shows the opinion of the House of Commons that the existing evidence is incomplete or unsatisfactory.

To supply that deficiency through his own personal investigation, is the first business of the Assistant Commissioner.

For this purpose having ascertained the number of separate trades into which hand-loom weaving, as practised within the district assigned to him, is divided, and the principal distinctions by which they are separated, he will endeavour to ascertain, with respect to each separate trade, the number of families of hand-loom weavers employed in it, considering each person

who manages his own concerns as constituting a family, and the number of persons in each family. He will also endeavour to ascertain what variations have occurred at different periods in the number of persons employed in each separate trade, and the circumstances under which each increase or diminution of such numbers has occurred.

He will then inquire—

I. With respect to the *pecuniary condition* of the weavers.

1st. What proportion in each trade are exclusively employed in hand-loom weaving, and what proportion engaged in it themselves, or through any members of their family, only in the intervals of other and what pursuits.

2nd. The amount of money which can be earned per hour in each department of each trade, by men, women, and children, respectively, distinguishing the earnings of each according to age and sex, and distinguishing between skilled and unskilled persons; and stating particularly what period of previous practice is necessary to enable a given person to earn a given sum per hour; and also stating the number of looms possessed or used by the same family, and the collective earnings of such family.

3rd. The deduction to be made from these earnings for expenses incident to their acquisition, such as winding, candles, standing for loom, and the wear and tear of the loom, and other apparatus, and interest on its value. With respect to the last point, it will be necessary to ascertain whether the loom belongs to the weaver, or is hired by him, or belongs to his master, whether himself a hand-loom weaver, or the master of a factory. The rate per week at which a loom and the other tools of a weaver can be hired, will afford some ground for estimating the sum which ought to be deducted from wages for the mere services of the weaver, and considered as profit on his capital.

4th. With respect to those who, either by themselves or by any members of their family, are engaged in any other pursuits, the amount of wages per hour, or per day, obtained by them respectively in those other pursuits.

5th. The constancy of employment in each trade. That is to say, for what number of hours per week each individual can obtain work.

With respect to the 2nd, 4th and 5th of these inquiries, it is obvious that average results only can be obtained; and it must be recollected that by the actual condition of the weavers is meant, not their actual condition on the day on which the inquiry is made, but for such a previous period as may indicate the condition in which they may expect to continue. The inquiry, therefore, even for this purpose alone, must be spread over a period of at least two years—that period being the shortest that will afford average results.

The results of these inquiries will show what amount of net wages the hand-loom weavers in their several departments are *able* to earn. But in order to ascertain what wages they actually *do* earn, the Assistant Commissioner must endeavour to learn to what extent they use the opportunities afforded to them.

For this purpose he will inquire—

6th. How many hours per day, and how many days per week, the persons employed as hand-loom weavers in each trade usually work, when employment is to be had, distinguishing them according to age and sex. Some evidence on this head may be obtained by ascertaining from the masters who put out work, within what period they reckon on its being finished; that is to say, within what period they reckon on being able to complete a given order requiring the labour of a given number of men, women and children for a given number of hours.

7th. He will inquire to what extent the weavers in each trade are in the habit of receivfng apprentices or journeymen, and the average proportion of the earnings of the apprentice or journeyman received by the hand-loom weaver who is his master, or the owner or hirer of the loom on which he works.

8th. He will inquire to what extent either parochial assistance or aid from individuals or from subscriptions has been afforded to them, and in those towns in which electioneering abuses prevail, to what extent the weavers have profited by them.

The answers to these inquiries will show what is the actual *pecuniary condition* of the weavers, since they will show their average net incomes per head and per family during the last two years.

But the pecuniary state of the weavers is not the only or indeed the principal subject of inquiry. Their moral condition is far more material both to themselves, and to the rest of the community; and it is placed in this paper subsequently to the pecuniary inquiry, not because the Commissioners undervalue its relative importance, but partly because it is less susceptible of accurate statement, and partly because it is in a great measure dependent on the former. It is true, indeed, that the two are mutually dependent; but among bodies of artizans inhabiting the same district, and surrounded by the same degree of civilization, and the same means of instruction, it is, perhaps, more probable, that pecuniary distress, or, what is more mischievous, great and sudden alternations of prosperity and adversity will produce a low moral condition, than that a low moral condition will occasion pecuniary distress.

II. With reference therefore to the *moral condition* of the hand-loom weavers, the Assistant Commissioner will investigate the religious, intellectual, and moral cultivation of the *adults* in their respective trades.

For this purpose he will inquire—

1st. To what extent they appear to possess elementary Scriptural information, and frequent places of worship.

2nd. The extent of their knowledge, with particular, but not exclusive, reference to their own trade; how fart hey understand the principles of the machinery and implements which they employ, and the means of improving them; whether they are acquainted with the number and comparative accessiblenness of the markets for their labour, or generally with the

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means of bettering their condition; whether they subscribe to book societies, or frequent mechanics' institutes, or show any and what desire of intellectual pleasure or improvement.

3rd. Their habits, with reference to diligence, providence, frugality, honesty, and temperance. To their diligence, attention has already been directed. As to their providence and frugality, the Assistant Commissioner will inquire into the modes of their expenditure, whether economical or wasteful, and whether for purposes of immediate or permanent enjoyment; to what extent they save when their earnings exceed the average, and how their savings are invested; whether they subscribe to benefit or friendly clubs, or savings banks, or to other institutions of a similar nature; what is the average age of marriage in each sex, and the capital, or stock, if any, previously accumulated, and whether in money, clothes, furniture, or in what other form. As to their honesty, he will inquire into the degree in which embezzlement of their masters' property, which has been attributed particularly to the silk-weavers, prevails; and, generally, what are the frauds to which they are peculiarly tempted in their respective trades, and how far those temptations are yielded to. And with respect to their temperance, he will inquire to what extent they use stimulants, and of what kinds, and what is the effect on their bodies and minds.

With respect to the *children* of the hand-loom weavers in their respective trades, the Assistant Commissioner will inquire to what extent they frequent places of worship and Sunday-schools; to what extent, and for how many hours per week, and at what ages, they attend week-day schools, distinguishing infant-schools from others, and noticing particularly such industrial schools as may tend to fit them for any other and what employments; the expense of such attendance, either in loss of the child's time, or in money, and if in money, by whom paid; the salaries, earnings, and capacities of the masters; the nature and extent of the knowledge there acquired, and the degree in which the attendance of the children is interrupted, either by their own employment, or by the poverty, or neglect, or selfish indulgence of ther parents. And he will endeavour to ascertain, by personal examination of children of different ages, and in different trades of hand-loom weavers, the degree of their religious, intellectual, and moral cultivation. Among the most decisive tests of the religious, intellectual, and moral condition of the adults, are the nature of the education which they actually give to their children, the degree in which they appear to be anxious that their children shall obtain a better education, and what sort of improved education they desire for them, and what are the sacrifices which they really make, or appear willing to make, for the improvement of their children.

It is believed that the principal points of inquiry respecting the *condition* of the weavers have now been indicated. For the purpose of ascertaining, however, how far the hand-loom weavers, or any portion of them, have a claim to any interference in their behalf, extending beyond the general and impartial superintendence which the legislature ought to extend to every class of Her Majesty's subjects, it will be necessary that the Assistant Commissioner should compare the condition of the hand-loom weavers, in each trade, with that of other classes of hand-loom weavers, and also with that of the labouring classes in general. Considering, however, the nature and extent of the investigation specially directed by the Commission, and the time which the Assistant Commissioner will be able to devote to it, it is obvious that all collateral inquiries must be comparatively restricted. As far, however, as it may be practicable, he will institute such a comparison.

II. The second branch of the inquiry incumbent on the Commission respects the *causes* of the condition of the hand-loom weavers. In the preceding instructions it has not been assumed that their condition differs materially from that of the labouring classes by whom they are surrounded. If it should turn out that there are no grounds for assuming that there is such a difference; if it should turn out that in their respective trades they are on the whole as well off as their fellow workpeople, no further inquiry will be necessary. The labouring classes in Great Britain, though far from being in the condition which is to be wished, or even in that to which the continuance of tranquillity, the extension of education, and greater commercial freedom may be expected to advance them, are yet more prosperous than the corresponding classes in any other considerable population in Europe; and although Ireland offers a lamentable contrast, yet if the hand-loom weavers in that country are subject to no peculiar suffering, the Commissioners would scarcely be justified in seeking for and suggesting measures for their peculiar and exclusive benefit. Under such circumstances, it would not be necessary for the Assistant Commissioner to investigate the causes of a condition not different from that of the bulk of the population, and the Commissioners having no special recommendations to offer, would fulfil their duty by reporting the condition of the hand-loom weavers to be similar to that of the other labouring classes in the country, and therefore, not to require any peculiar legislative interference.

But unhappily there are grounds for anticipating, from the investigation that has been directed, a different result. The evidence that was received by the Committee of the House of Commons in 1834 and 1835 shows that in those years there prevailed among many branches of hand-loom weavers, and in many parts of the kingdom, severe distress and a low moral condition: and the information which has been received by the Commissioners, during the short time that they have been assembled, does not encourage them to hope that the condition of the hand-loom weavers has undergone any essential change since that time.

If this anticipation should prove correct, and the Assistant Commissioner should find any class of hand-loom weavers to be in a condition less favourable than that of the labouring classes in general, his earnest attention must be directed to the *causes* of their condition.

For this purpose he will inquire—

1st. As to the condition of the peculiar branch of the hand-loom trade in question, either during the last fifty years, or, if the manufacture is of later origin, from its commencement.

The Committee of the House of Commons in 1835 reported, that "the *general* fall of

wages and consequent distress of the hand-loom weavers has been *rapidly progressive* ever since the termination of the late war." Some of the witnesses examined before that Committee state the distress to have lasted much longer. Mr. Marshall, for instance (p. 28, question 193). states that they have been getting uniformly worse in condition since the year 1793. The accuracy of these statements is one of the most material points in the investigation.

At whatever period he finds distress to have been prevalent among the weavers employed in that trade, he will compare their condition at such periods with that of other classes of hand-loom weavers, and also with that of other mechanics; and, finally, with that of the agricultural labourers.

2nd. If he finds its distress peculiar, he will endeavour to ascertain to what peculiar influences it has been subjected. These may arise from causes either unconnected with the conduct of the workpeople (A) or depeuding on that conduct (B).

A.

Under the first head (A) are comprised—

A 1. First, the diminution of the demand for their labour, arising from a diminished demand for the articles on which it is employed, as in the case of the substitution of woollens for silks, or from a different mode of manufacturing the same articles, as in the case of the substitution of the power-loom for the hand-loom, or of foreign for British weavers, occasioned either by the importation of foreign goods, or by the promotion of foreign manufactures by the export of yarn, or by restrictions imposed by foreign states on the import of British manufactures.

A 2. Secondly, legislative enactments—affecting only a peculiar trade, such as the Spitalfields Weavers' Act; or affecting peculiar manufactures, such as the duty on raw cotton, or that on thrown silk.

A 3. Thirdly, according to much of the evidence taken by the Committee of the House of Commons in 1834 and 1835, the laws affecting the importation of corn.

A 4. Fourthly, according to the opinion of that Committee, the resumption of cash payments and the general pressure of taxation.

A 5. Fifthly, according to much of the evidence taken by that Committee, a reduction of wages by the master manufacturers uncalled for by the circumstances of the trade.

A 6. And, sixthly, according to portions of that evidence, frauds practised by the masters respecting the measurement of their work.

B.

Under the second head, the causes of peculiar distress, arising from the conduct of the work-people themselves, are comprised.

B 1. First, according to portions of the evidence, combinations, and strikes.

B 2. Secondly, according to other portions of the evidence, the want of combinations and strikes.

B 3. Thirdly, the increase of their numbers, without a proportional increase in the demand for their labour, or even under a diminished demand for it.

B 4. And, fourthly, want of diligence, honesty, frugality, or temperance.

The Assistant Commissioner will inquire into the existence of these different causes of peculiar distress, and what effects, if any, on the trade in question they respectively have produced.

In some cases, if the existence of the supposed cause be admitted, the supposed effects appear necessarily to follow. Thus, if it be true, according to the statements of many of the witnesses examined by the Committee of the House of Commons, that the wages of the weavers depend on the will of the master-manufacturers, and that the master-manufacturers are forced all to follow the example of those among them who offer the lowest wages, it must follow that the wages of weavers can never long exceed the minimum of subsistence; for the instant they exceed that point, it certainly would be to the interest, and is supposed to be in the power of some masters, to lower wages in order to undersell their rivals, and it is supposed that all the rest must follow their example. On this point, therefore, the Assistant Commissioner will endeavour to ascertain whether there are, in the different trades to which the hand-loom is applicable, any and what peculiarities which give to the employer of hand-loom weavers a power not possessed by the employers of labourers in other trades, of fixing the wages of those whose labour is essential to him, or which enable the master who reduces wages to force others to follow his example.

In other cases, the supposed cause may be an acknowledged fact, and the only doubt may be how far the distress of any branch of hand-loom weavers is connected with it. In order to ascertain, for instance, whether that distress can be traced to the admitted facts of the resumption of cash-payments, or the pressure of general taxation, the Assistant Commissioner must ascertain whether there are any special circumstances attending any branch of hand-loom weavers, rendering them peculiarly liable to be affected by causes which have not prevented the general prosperity of the manufacturing population.

In other cases, both the existence and the consequences of the supposed cause of distress may admit of comparatively easy proof; and the business of the Assistant Commissioner will be to ascertain the circumstances which led to its existence. The fact, for instance, that the number of persons engaged in any given branch of weaving has increased beyond the demand for their labour, may in general be easily ascertained whenever it has occurred, and no one can doubt that distress severe in proportion to the undue supply of labour must have been the result.

In such a case it will be the duty of the Assistant Commissioner to endeavour to trace the origin of that increase, and to ascertain whether it may have arisen from the slight degree of skill or of strength required by the business in question, or from its freedom from the control

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and regular hours of a factory, or from the stimulus of occasional periods of extraordinary prosperity, or from the ignorance of an uneducated body of work-people accustomed to early marriage and to training their children to their own business, or from abuses in the administration of parochial relief, or from individual charity or public subscriptions excessive or ill-directed, or from any other and what causes.

With respect to the whole of this branch of the inquiry, the Commissioners repeat their conviction of the necessity of comparing the condition of each class of hand-loom weavers that appears to be at present, or to have been at any former period, distressed, with that of the other classes of hand-loom weavers, and also with that of other labourers at corresponding periods. If, for instance, distress is attributed to any class of cotton-weavers, and the power-loom is the cause assigned, the Assistant Commissioner will carefully inquire into the state at the same period of other classes of hand-loom weavers free from the interference of the power-loom. If they appear to have been then equally distressed, a suspicion will arise that the common distress was occasioned by a common cause. But if the distress of the cotton-weavers appears to have been peculiar, and to have arisen and to have spread simultaneously with the introduction and the extension of the power-loom, a *primâ facie* probability of their connection will of course be established. Again, if a sudden diminution of the demand for the labour of the hand-loom cotton-weavers, occasioned by the state of the foreign market, is assigned as a cause of occasional distress, and it should appear that the power-loom weavers, though working for the same market, were less affected, the causes of this difference must be carefully investigated; and if it should be found that the two trades differ principally in the large amount of fixed capital invested in the one, and the small amount in the other, the greater steadiness of wages or of employment in the one than in the other may perhaps be accounted for. It is probable, also, that valuable results may be obtained by subdividing the weavers in a single trade, according to distinctions not connected with the trade itself, and by comparing with one another the subclasses thus formed; by comparing, for instance, the condition of Irish, Scotch, and English hand-loom weavers, all engaged in the same business, at the same time and place. If, on such a comparison, marked differences of condition should appear, causes unconnected with the trade itself must be searched for.

III.—The last and most important of the duties imposed by the Commission is the inquiry whether there are any, and what, remedies for the existing distress. The remedies actually proposed by the Committee of the House of Commons appear to be these:—

1st. The enactment of the law proposed by Mr. Fielden—"That returns shall be made every three or six months of the prices of weaving paid by the smallest number of manufacturers, who collectively make one-half of the goods of any description, in the parish or township whence the returns are sent, and the average of the highest prices paid by a majority of such manufacturers shall be the lowest price to be paid in such parish or township during the succeeding three or six months."

2nd. A more exact specification of the length and breadth of the pieces of goods to be manufactured.

3rd. A cheaper legal form of indenture of apprentices, and a reduction of the stamp-duty to 5*s*.

4th. A more summary and effectual protection against embezzlement of weaving materials.

Considering the authority by which these suggestions are recommended, the Assistant Commissioner will carefully attend to them; and, with reference to them, he will consider—

1st. How far a more exact specification of the length and breadth of the pieces of goods to be manufactured would tend to prevent fraud on the part of the masters, and how far it can be adopted without vesting in third persons the right of interfering with and controlling the manufacturer in the management of his own business.

2nd. How far a cheaper legal form of indenture of apprentices, and a reduction of the stamp-duty to 5*s*., would tend to increase the number of persons brought up to hand-loom weaving, and whether such an increase be desirable.

3rd. By what means a more summary and effectual protection against embezzlement of weaving materials can be provided, without diminishing the safety of persons innocently accused, or imposing a vexatious system of checks; and

4th. What would be the probable effects of a law which should attempt to provide that the money paid for weaving by the hand-loom each description of article should be incapable of diminution.

It is obvious, however, that with respect to these inquiries he will be able to do little until he has made some progress in ascertaining, with respect to each branch of hand-loom weaving, the nature, the extent, and the causes of the existing distress. So far as that distress arises from a diminished demand for the labour of the weaver, it must be aggravated by a law which would make his labour more expensive, without being more productive. So far as it may arise from want of diligence or skill, it is not likely to be diminished by a law endeavouring to equalize wages, and to apportion them to the quantity of work done, not to its quality.

But if the Assistant Commissioner should be able to trace the distress in any trade to a power, possessed and exercised by the masters, of lowering at their will the workman's remuneration, the proposed remedy will, at least, be plausible.

The same general remarks apply to the other recommendations made by the witnesses examined by the Committee of the House of Commons, or which have been already forwarded to the Central Board, for their own use and that of the Assistant Commissioner, or which may be expected to be suggested to the Assistant Commissioner. He will carefully consider them all, but it is not likely that he will be able to decide either for or against any of them, until

his inquiry into the condition of the weavers, for whose distress the remedy is proposed, and into the causes of that condition, has been nearly concluded.

The Commissioners, however, believe that a careful attendance to the following rules will, in every case, facilitate his decision :—

1st. To require every person who proposes a remedy to explain in detail both the object to be effected, the means to be used, and the process by which the proposed means are to produce the contemplated effect. Those means should be stated with the fulness and precision of a law; so that, if the suggestion were adopted, the law for effecting it would be ready. In many cases remedies have been suggested in words so vague as to include many different proposals. The extension of education among weavers' children has been frequently proposed; it is a remedy to which the Assistant Commissioner must give his earnest attention; but those who have proposed it have not stated whether the education is to be voluntary or compulsory; if voluntary, to what extent it is likely to be accepted; if compulsory, whether to be enforced by requiring attendance in schools, or by a test of proficiency; if by requiring attendance at schools, at whose expense the schools should be established, and by whom the masters selected; and whether the parent or the employer should be punished for the child's non-attendance; if by a test of proficiency, what that test should be, and how enforced.

2nd. To inquire into the probable effect of any proposed remedy, not only on the branch of trade for whose relief it may be proposed, but also on the community in general; stating specially what class of persons, and how, and to what extent, would be peculiarly benefited or injured by it. And where the proposed measure, if adopted, would extensively affect the whole community, in the case, for instance, of a repeal or alteration of the corn-laws, or a debasement of the currency, the Assistant Commissioner will require the persons recommending such a measure to point out with precision the process by which it will relieve the distress peculiarly affecting any branch of hand-loom weavers, and restore them, as respects wages and condition, to the general level of the labouring classes of the country. His inquiries upon such subjects must be confined within these limits.

3. To distinguish, in all cases, between the immediate and the remote effects of any proposed measure.

It is possible that immediate relief might be obtained from remedies which in time would cease to be efficient, or would even aggravate the evil now complained of; or which, though immediately innocuous to the rest of the community, would in time become mischievous; and it is possible that measures may be proposed trifling in their good effects, or even onerous at their commencement, but ultimately and permanently efficacious.

The Commissioners have now given a brief outline of the services which they expect from their Assistant Commissioner. Their object has been not to state the details, but to indicate the principal heads of inquiry. They believe, however, that they have said enough to enable every one who ventures to undertake the office to understand the nature of his duties, and the extent of his responsibility. He will enter on an inquiry vast in its extent, and multifarious and dissimilar in its branches. He will have to ascertain the moral, intellectual, and physical condition of a numerous and widely scattered population, differing in religion, in habits, and in circumstances, and connected only by the use of the hand-loom. He will have to ascertain that condition not only at present, but during many previous years, and to compare it at corresponding periods with that of all the other labouring classes in the community. All the facts which he establishes he will have to trace to their causes, both immediate and remote. And lastly, he will state, with the completeness of their practical details, the measures, if any, of which he can recommend the adoption. He will have to sift the evidence of witnesses, of whom the majority may be hoped to be honest and intelligent, but many must draw their notions from a narrow experience, and some undoubtedly will endeavour to mislead him. He will have to combat many favourite theories, and may disappoint many vague or extravagant, but long-cherished expectations. It is scarcely necessary to state that the most patient attention must be shown in his intercourse with those who are the subjects of his inquiry. Their complaints must be attentively heard, their grievances must be carefully investigated, and every plan suggested for their relief must be examined, with the most anxious desire to secure to them every protection and encouragement which does not either militate against their own ultimate interests, or involve injustice towards other classes of the community.

Under these feelings the Central Board are confident that their Assistant will uniformly act; and that in all his discussions with the distressed weavers themselves he will bear in mind that patience cannot be carried to an excess.

He will hear their statements with attention; he will inquire into the grounds of them with care; he will receive every suggestion in a friendly spirit, while he will search into its nature and merits with the strictness which is due to truth. Where he meets with prejudice or ignorance he will endeavour to remove them by patient and temperate discussion, always remembering that, if the evil itself cannot be removed, the next duty owed to the distressed class, and the greatest service to be rendered to them, is that of clearly explaining to them their errors, and teaching them to understand their true condition, and the circumstances on which it really depends.

It is by such means only, and not by compliance with prejudice, or a dishonest sanction of false propositions, that the duties imposed upon the Assistant Commissioner can be faithfully discharged, or the welfare of the classes whose interests are now placed as a trust under his care can be effectually promoted.

NASSAU W. SENIOR. WILLIAM EDWARD HICKSON.
SAMUEL JONES LOYD. JOHN LESLIE.

Appendix No. 2.

Bill to Amend and render more effectual the Laws, now in force in Scotland, for the Conviction and Punishment of the Resetters and Fraudulent Receivers of Cotton, Silk and Woollen Yarns, and of goods made of any one, or any mixture, of these materials.

Preamble.

Whereas by an Act, passed in the twenty-second year of the reign of His Majesty George the Second, intituled "An Act for the more effectual preventing of frauds and abuses committed by persons employed in the manufacture of hats, and in the woollen, linen, fustian, cotton, iron, leather, fur, hemp, flax, mohair, and silk manufactures, and for preventing unlawful combinations of journeymen dyers and journeymen hotpressers, and of all persons employed in the said several manufactures, and, for the better payment of their wages," it was enacted that any of the said persons guilty of purloining, embezzling, or otherwise unlawfully disposing of any of the said materials, should, on conviction by one or more of His Majesty's justices of the peace, be committed to the house of correction, and be publicly whipped. And, whereas by another Act, passed in the seventeenth year of the reign of His Majesty George the Third, intituled "An Act, for amending and rendering more effectual the several laws now in being for the more effectual preventing of frauds and abuses by persons employed in the manufacture of hats, and in the woollen, linen, fustian, cotton, iron, leather, fur, hemp, flax, mohair and silk manufactures, and also for making provisions to prevent frauds by journeymen dyers," the enactments of the first recited Act before specified, and other enactments thereof, were repealed, and certain punishments, by fine, were substituted in lieu thereof, and extended to the receivers, or resetters, or purchasers at an undervalue of the articles aforesaid. And, whereas the provisions of the said two recited Acts have been found ineffectual to prevent, or even materially to check, the theft and embezzlement of cotton, silk and woollen yarns, and of goods made of any one, or of any mixture, of these materials, in Scotland; on the contrary, such theft and embezzlement are practised to a great and most injurious extent, particularly in manufacturing towns and districts, and have been much increased by the establishment of an extensive system of receiving, or resetting, or purchasing at an undervalue, the yarns and goods so stolen, purloined, or embezzled, and which yarns are resetted, received, or purchased at an undervalue, with almost complete impunity, from the difficulty of identifying and detecting the same, especially when the yarns are intermixed with each other, or with other yarns. And, whereas so far as regards the resetters, or receivers, or purchasers, in Scotland, of cotton, silk or woollen yarns, or of goods made of any one, or any mixture, of these materials; and, with a view of putting an end to a system which has led to a great increase in the crimes of theft and embezzlement by tempting needy persons to steal, and weavers and other operatives entrusted with such yarns and goods, and servants employed in shops, warehouses and factories, in which such yarns and goods are kept or used, or sold, to purloin and embezzle the same, it is expedient that the powers conferred by the said two recited Acts should be extended, and the provisions thereof amended as after specified:

Powers conferred on one or more of His Majesty's justices by two recited Acts extended to sheriffs and magistrates of royal burghs.

I. Be it therefore enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in the present Parliament assembled, and by authority of the same, that the whole powers conferred by the said two recited Acts on one or more of His Majesty's justices of the peace, shall be conferred, and the same are hereby conferred, on all sheriffs and sheriff substitutes, and magistrates of royal burghs, within their respective jurisdictions, in Scotland, and, accordingly, it shall be competent to any one of the said sheriffs or sheriff substitutes, or magistrates of royal burghs, whether sitting in his ordinary court, or in a special court, or in a police court, to convict and punish resetters and receivers of stolen, purloined or embezzled cotton, silk and woollen yarns, or goods made of any one, or any mixture of these materials, as provided by the said two recited Acts, and by this Act. And in all prosecutions brought under this Act, whether concluding for fines or imprisonment, where said fines, exclusive of costs, shall not exceed *ten* pounds sterling, or where such imprisonment shall not exceed four months, the procedure against offenders shall be of a summary nature, without its being necessary to preserve a record of any part thereof, except the charge and the judgment pronounced.

Persons in whose possession stolen, purloined or embezzled property found, unless they show that the same came there without their knowledge, or was received under circumstances not calculated to excite suspicion, to be guilty of reset of theft.

II. And be it enacted, that any person or persons in whose possession, or within whose premises, stolen, purloined or embezzled cotton, silk or woollen yarns, or goods made of any one, or any mixture of these materials, shall be found, and without its being requisite to produce evidence that he, she, or they knew that such materials or goods were dishonestly come by at the time they were received, shall in addition to being deprived of such materials or good without compensation, though they may have been purchased and paid for, or money advanced upon them, be deemed and adjudged guilty of reset of theft, and shall be punished in manner hereinafter-mentioned, unless he, she, or they shall prove to the satisfaction of the sheriff, justice of the peace, or magistrate before whom the case is tried, that such yarns or goods were purchased or received by him, her, or them, either under circumstances calculated to afford no ground of suspicion that they were dishonestly come by, or that they were clandestinely introduced into his, her, or their premises, without his, her, or their knowledge or consent, either direct or implied, and without its being intended that he, she, or they should ever possess or participate in the same: provided always, and be it further enacted, that if any such materials or goods be clandestinely introduced into any person's premises by a servant, or persons therein employed, or by any other individual, without the consent, either direct or implied, of the occupier or occupiers of said premises, and without it being intended that he, she, or they should ever possess or participate in the same, then, and in that case, the servant or person who clandestinely introduced the same into such premises, shall be the party

Those convicted of having clandestinely introduced such property, then to be held guilty of reset of theft.

who shall be deemed and adjudged guilty of reset of theft, and shall be punished in manner hereinafter-mentioned.

Officers, constables and others to apprehend persons suspected of carrying such property, and lodge them with the property in police office, or other place of security.

III. And be it enacted, that every sheriff officer, burgh officer, constable, and every police and criminal officer in any county, burgh or town corporate, or other place, and every watchman, during such time only as he is on duty, shall and may apprehend, or cause to be apprehended, all and every person or persons who may reasonably be suspected of having, carrying, or in any way conveying, stolen, purloined or embezzled cotton, silk, or woollen yarns, or cotton, silk, or woollen yarns, or goods made of any one, or any mixture of these materials, suspected of being stolen, purloined or embezzled, and together with the suspected property, may lodge him, her, or them in a police office or other place of security, in order that he, she, or they may be brought up for trial before the sheriff, or justice of the peace, or other magistrate, as soon as convenient; and if the person or persons so apprehended for having, carrying, or conveying such property, shall not give an account how he, she, or they came by the same, so as to satisfy the said sheriff, justice of the peace, or other magistrate, before whom the case is tried, that the property is honestly come by, and lawfully obtained from a person or persons duly entitled to dispose thereof, (meaning thereby either the previous rightful owner of said property, or an agent directly or indirectly authorized by the rightful owner to sell or transmit the said property,) or shall not produce, if required so to do, at least one credible witness to testify upon oath, or (being of the people called Quakers, or of those called Moravians) upon solemn affirmation, to the truth of the account given, and to answer any other questions that may be asked, in order to enable the said sheriff, or other judge before whom the case is tried, to determine whether or not the said property is honestly come by, then the said person or persons so apprehended shall be deemed and adjudged guilty of reset of theft, and be punished in manner hereinafter-mentioned, although no proof shall be given to whom such property belongs.

Persons purchasing certain manufacturers' materials, except from regular dealers to be guilty of reset of theft.

IV. And, whereas, cotton, silk, and woollen yarns are frequently purchased from persons whom the purchaser has every reason to believe could only come to be possessed thereof by dishonest means, be it therefore enacted, that any person or persons who, after the passing of this Act, shall purchase, or who in any other way shall receive into his, her, or their premises or possession, silk, cotton, or woollen yarns, from hand or power-loom weavers, winders, warpers, or other operatives, or who shall purchase, or under any attempted evasion of this law shall receive such articles from persons of any description, except regular and *bonâ-fide* public selling dealers in the said yarns, or manufacturers thereof, or persons directly or indirectly authorized by the aforesaid regular and *bonâ-fide* public selling dealers in, or manufacturers of the said materials, to sell or deliver the same on their account, shall be regarded as indirectly encouraging the dishonest retention, theft, purloining, or embezzlement of said materials, and for every such offence shall be deemed and adjudged guilty of reset of theft, and shall be punished in manner hereinafter-mentioned.

Persons buying or selling, &c. in such a manner that seller is concealed from the view of the purchaser to be guilty of reset of theft.

V. And be it enacted, that any person or persons who, in conducting their business, shall either by themselves or their servants, or others employed by them for the purpose, purchase, or receive, whether in pawn or otherwise, or sell or barter cotton, silk, or woollen yarns, or goods made of any one, or any mixture of these materials, in such a manner that the person who purchases, receives, sells or barters, is intentionally concealed from the view of the person with whom he or she is dealing, shall be deemed and adjudged guilty of reset of theft, and for every such offence shall be punished in manner hereinafter-mentioned.

Superintendents of police and procurators fiscal empowered to search the premises of resetters and receivers of purloined or embezzled property.

VI. And be it further enacted, that all superintendents of police, and procurators fiscal in Scotland, upon receiving information that stolen, or purloined and embezzled cotton, silk, or woollen yarns, or goods made of any one, or any mixture of these materials, or that such yarns or goods suspected of being stolen, or purloined and embezzled, are deposited in certain specified premises, shall henceforth have power by their officers or by constables, or by other persons specially appointed by them, to search the said premises, and to seize such yarns or goods, and either, at their earliest convenience, to summon the person or persons within whose premises the same shall be found, and who shall be bound to answer said summons, under a penalty not less than ten, and not exceeding forty pounds; or to apprehend the person or persons within whose premises the same shall be found, and to lodge the yarns or goods so seized, and the person or persons within whose premises the same shall be found, in a police office, or other place of security, in order that they may be brought to trial before the sheriff, justice of the peace, or other magistrate, as soon as convenient; and if the said person or persons, upon being brought up for trial, shall not give an account how he, she, or they came by the seized property, so as to satisfy the sheriff, justice of the peace, or other magistrate, before whom the case is tried, that it is honestly come by, and lawfully obtained from a person or persons duly entitled to dispose thereof, or shall fail in proving to the satisfaction of the said sheriff, or other judge, that the seized property was purchased or received either under circumstances calculated to afford no ground of suspicion that it was dishonestly come by, or that it was clandestinely introduced into his, her, or their premises, without his, her, or their knowledge or consent, either direct or implied, and without its being intended that he, she, or they should ever possess, or participate in any benefit or profit arising therefrom, then, and in that case, the person or persons so offending shall be deemed and adjudged guilty of reset of theft, and shall be punished in manner hereinafter-mentioned, although no proof shall be given to whom the seized property belongs.

Penalties for reset of theft.

VII. And be it enacted, that whoever shall be deemed and adjudged guilty of reset of theft, agreeably to any of the previous sections of this Act, shall be fined in a sum not less than *five*, and not more than *ten* pounds, for each offence, if tried in a summary manner as hereinbefore provided for, and in a sum not under *twenty*, and not above *forty* pounds, if tried otherwise; and, in default of the immediate payment of the fine, the person or persons so found guilty

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shall, if the trial has been conducted in a summary manner, be incarcerated in the county or city gaol, bridewell, or house of correction, for a period not less than *three*, and not exceeding *four* months; and, if the trial has been conducted otherwise, shall be incarcerated for a period not less than *six*, and not exceeding *twelve* months, as the judge, in his sentence of condemnation, shall fix and determine, and a certified copy of the judgment pronounced, under the hands of the clerk of court, countersigned by the procurator fiscal of such court, certifying that the fine has not been paid, shall be a sufficient warrant for the gaoler or keeper of the house of correction, to receive and detain the person or persons so sentenced for the prescribed period of imprisonment, or till payment of the fine; and, upon expiry of the said period of imprisonment, or upon payment of the fine, the person or persons so found guilty shall be liberated: Provided always, and it is hereby further enacted, that the procurator fiscal, who takes up the case for the public benefit, is hereby exclusively entitled to decide, and to exercise his discretion, as to whether he shall take it up in a summary manner or otherwise.

Persons refusing when required to give up suspected property, to be guilty of an additional offence, and liable to an additional punishment.

VIII. And be it enacted, that if cotton, silk, or woollen yarns, or goods made of any one, or any mixture, of these materials, which have been stolen or fraudulently obtained, shall be found in the possession of any person or persons, they are hereby required, on being informed by any officer, constable, or other duly authorized person, that such yarns or goods were stolen, or fraudulently obtained, to deliver up or deposit the same with the superintendent, or other superior officer of police, or with the fiscal, in order that they may be produced in such manner as may be necessary for the ends of public justice, and restored to the proper owner or owners thereof; and every person or persons who shall not instantly deliver up, or deposit any such yarns or goods, stolen or fraudulently obtained, on being required so to do, as aforesaid, shall, for every such offence, forfeit the sum of *five* pounds; and this fine shall be additional, and without prejudice to the penalty imposed, for being adjudged guilty of reset of theft; and, failing payment of this additional fine, the said person shall be incarcerated for *two* months beyond the period of imprisonment for default of payment of the fine, imposed for being adjudged guilty of reset of theft.

Actions to be in name and at the instance of procurators fiscal.

IX. And be it also enacted, that all prosecutions brought under authority of, and in virtue of this Act, shall be in the name, and at the instance of the procurator fiscal of the court before which the case is pursued, who shall have power, and power is hereby conferred upon him, and who is hereby required to take up and conduct for the public benefit the prosecution of all cases of reset, included under this Act handed him, or occurring within his jurisdiction, where sufficient evidence to convict is or can be obtained. And the fines awarded in all such cases, and all forfeitures incurred, and the proceeds of the sale of all unclaimed property, confiscated under this Act, shall be made payable to, and be recoverable by the said procurators fiscal, respectively, they being accountable for the same as hereinafter provided.

Appropriation of penalties for rewards, &c.

X. And whereas to facilitate the conviction of the resetters of stolen property, and the receivers of purloined and embezzled property, it is expedient to create a general interest among the community, to give information against them, and also to make it the interest of those whose assistance and services are required, in order to their prosecution, to further the object and intention of this enactment: be it therefore, and it is hereby enacted, that when any person shall be convicted of reset of theft, and fined agreeably to the previous sections of this Act, and the fine shall be paid, or, in case of bail entered either by pledge, bond, or letter of security, being forfeited, then one-half of all said fines and forfeitures shall be divided into two equal shares, and disposed of in premiums as follows: one-half of the sum allotted for premiums shall become the property of the burgh or county fiscal, or other public prosecutor who conducts the prosecution of the resetter or receiver for the public benefit, and in consideration thereof, is to do so without expense either to the informer, or other person seizing stolen, purloined, or embezzled yarns or goods aforesaid, or such yarns or goods suspected to be stolen, purloined, or embezzled, or to the apprehender of a person reasonably suspected to have such property in his or her possession, and this half of the premium hereby allotted to the burgh or county fiscal, or other public prosecutor, who shall have conducted the prosecution, is over and above, and not in lieu of expenses incurred in prosecuting resetters or receivers aforesaid, which are to be paid in the same manner, and from the same source as expenses incurred in prosecuting other criminals, were paid before the passing of this Act. The other half of the sum allotted for premiums shall be paid free of all deduction to the informer who gives information where stolen, purloined, or embezzled yarns or goods aforesaid are deposited, and in order to obtain a right to this portion of the premium, such information must be communicated, either to the superintendent of police, or to a burgh or county fiscal, or to a procurator fiscal in a justice of peace court, or to some person acting as substitute for one or other of these persons. Should a person or persons be fined for having stolen, purloined, or embezzled yarns or goods aforesaid, found within his, her, or their premises, or should a person be fined for having, carrying, or otherwise conveying such property, and there happens to be no proper informer, the officer, constable, or watchman, who searched the premises, and discovered, and made seizure of such property, or in the other case who arrested the person having, carrying, or otherwise conveying such property, shall be entitled to the informer's half of the premium, and, should the aforesaid officer, constable, or watchman, who searched the said premises, and made seizure of such stolen, purloined, or embezzled property, or who arrested the person having, carrying, or otherwise conveying such property, be then employed and paid by a police establishment, the superintendent of said establishment shall, in that case, be entitled to a moiety of his half of the premium. In case of a person convicted of reset of theft, being unable, or refusing to pay the fine imposed on him, and in lieu thereof incarcerated, the total amount of premium to be given upon the conviction of said person, is hereby reduced to one pound, which is to be divided into two equal parts of ten

shillings each, and allotted in the manner previously mentioned in this section. And should any difficulty, doubt, or difference of opinion occur, relative to the mode of allotting and dividing the premiums intended by this Act, the sheriff, justice of peace or magistrate, before whom the case is tried, is hereby authorized and required to decide and finally settle every such question: provided always, and be it further enacted, that it shall be no objection to the admissibility of any witness, that he or she is to share in the fine that may be imposed, the judge being to determine upon the credibility of the evidence.

Account of fines and proceeds of confiscated and unclaimed property, &c. to be kept by procurators fiscal, and farther provision as to application thereof.

XI. And be it enacted, that each procurator fiscal shall keep an accurate account of all fines, forfeitures, and expenses recovered by him, under proceedings taken under authority of this Act, and of the proceeds of all property sold under authority of the same, and out of the sums so recovered he shall, in the first place, be bound to pay the rewards allowed to informers and other persons as hereinbefore enacted: next, provided no other sufficient provision be made for payment of the expenses he may incur in criminal prosecutions, he shall be entitled to retain his own expenses incurred in prosecutions taken under this Act, as the same shall be modified and ascertained by the judge in each case; and should any surplus remain, after satisfying such rewards and expenses, the same shall be paid over by the procurators fiscal respectively, annually, into the fund from which they respectively draw the expenses of such proceedings, as they may severally follow out in the exercise of their respective offices, and the costs whereof they may not recover directly or indirectly from the party or parties prosecuted, and it shall be the duty of the court, before which the procurators fiscal respectively act, to see that this enactment is strictly complied with: provided always, that if the funds levied and money received under authority of this Act, by such procurators fiscal, shall be found insufficient to defray such costs as may be incurred by them, in following out proceedings taken under this Act, the balance remaining unsatisfied shall be defrayed from the fund or funds, out of which payment for the other business of their office is allowed.

Bail to be taken from persons apprehended.

XII. And be it enacted, that, before a person who is apprehended, and is to be tried, under the authority of this Act, can be liberated, bail must be given for his or her appearance at the time appointed for trial, to the amount of no less than *ten*, and not more than *forty* pounds, and that either by pledge or letter of security from a responsible person, in such form, however simple, as may be satisfactory to the person receiving the same, it being hereby provided and declared that all such letters of security so given and received shall be valid and binding on the granter thereof, and it shall not be competent to state any objection thereto on account of any informality therein: provided always, that nothing herein contained is to prevent the immediate liberation, without giving bail, of any person apprehended by mistake, or against whom there appears to be no evidence.

Adjournments of diets allowed on prisoner finding bail.

XIII. And be it further enacted, that it shall be competent for the party accused, in all prosecutions brought under authority of this Act, to move for and obtain an adjournment of the diet fixed for trial, for such a reasonable time as may appear to the judge to be necessary for the party accused to obtain evidence to forward the ends of justice; but the party or parties accused and requesting such adjournment shall be bound to find satisfactory security, under such penalty as the judge may fix, that he, she, or they will appear, and answer at all future diets of court, and he, she, or they may be detained in custody, or committed to prison, till the day of trial, or till such security be given.

How property which has been seized, and is unclaimed or confiscated, to be disposed of.

XIV. And be it enacted, that it shall be lawful for the sheriff, magistrate, or justice of the peace aforesaid, to grant warrant for selling such yarns or goods as shall be seized and forfeited, or seized and not claimed, under authority of this Act, but such sale shall not take place sooner than four months after such forfeiture or seizure, and shall be duly advertised: the proceeds to be paid to the procurator fiscal of the court under whose authority the same is made, to be applied as hereinbefore provided, with respect to fines recovered under authority of this Act: provided always, that if it appear to the judge that the said yarns are of such a kind as, if sold in an unwrought state, would be liable to be purchased by fraudulent dealers, to be used by them as a cover for their fraudulent transactions, the said judge may ordain the same to be delivered to the keeper of the nearest house of correction, to be wrought up and disposed of under his inspection, the free proceeds of the same, when sold, being to be paid to the procurator fiscal of the said court, to be applied as before-directed.

Cost of suit may be decerned for.

XV. And be it enacted, that the said sheriff, magistrate, or justice of peace, respectively shall be, and they are hereby empowered, in all cases, as they may think fit, to decern not only for the pecuniary penalties awarded, under authority of this Act, but also for the costs of suit.

Sentences and interlocutors pronounced under this Act to be final, or only reviewable by the Circuit Court of Justiciary or Quarter Sessions.

XVI. And be it enacted, that no sentence or judgement, interlocutory or final, pronounced under authority of this Act, shall be liable to be suspended, advocated, or submitted to the review of any superior court, every such judgment pronounced being, to all intents and purposes, final and conclusive: provided always, that it shall be competent for any person or persons considering himself, herself, or themselves aggrieved by any sentence pronounced, or anything done in virtue or in pursuance of this Act, to appeal against the final judgment of any sheriff or magistrate, to the next ensuing Circuit Court of Justiciary of the district in which the sentence is pronounced, or to appeal against the judgment of any one or more justices of the peace, to the next quarter sessions for the county where the trial takes place, the appellant or appellants giving sufficient caution to the amount of the fine awarded, besides security to pay any expenses of the appeal which may be decerned for to be paid by him, her, or them, to the party prosecuting.

Limitations as to actions of damages for things done under this Act.

XVII. And be it also enacted, that no action of damages for injury suffered, in any manner of way, by any person or persons, by means of any proceedings taken or followed out, or anything done in pursuance of this Act, against any judge, prosecutor, officer of court, informer,

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or other person acting under authority and in virtue of the provisions of this Act, shall be sustained, unless raised and executed within one month of the time when the injury complained of is alleged to have been caused, and to have been suffered, and unless ten days' previous notice of such prosecution shall have been given to the party or parties complained against: provided always, that, in all such actions of damages, the pursuers shall be bound to establish not merely that damages have been suffered by them, but that the same have been wilfully and maliciously caused by the person or persons against whom they complain: and, provided also, that, if the pursuers shall fail in their action, he, she, or they, shall be subjected in double costs.

Former laws to be still in force.

XVIII. And be it enacted, that nothing herein contained shall extend or be construed to extend to repeal any former law or laws now in being for the punishment of any of the offences hereinabove specified; but that the same, with the alterations thereof and additions thereto, herein contained, and so far as not altered by, or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, shall remain in full force and effect.

Act may be altered in present session.

XIX. And be it enacted, that this Act may be amended, altered, or repealed in the present session of Parliament.

Act to be deemed a Public Act.

XX. And be it enacted, that this Act shall be deemed and taken to be a public Act, and shall be judicially taken notice of as such by all judges, justices, and others, without being specially pleaded.

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